



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE ^{OF} AMERICA

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GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLITAN ANTHONY OF SAN FRANCISCO DIES FOLLOWING SHORT ILLNESS

New York, NY - His Eminence Metropolitan Anthony, spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, died today, December 25, 2004, following a short illness. Metropolitan Anthony was diagnosed with Burkitt's lymphoma, a rare form of cancer, in November. He was 69 years old.

In announcing the passing of Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, deeply moved, issued the following statement:

“Today, at the evening of Christmas day, a very prominent and beloved Hierarchy of our Church in America, Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco, was called by Jesus Christ our Lord to leave this perishable world, and meet Him, and be forever with Him in the company of the saints and the righteous. His life epitomizes the statement by St. Paul the Apostle, ‘If we live we live to the Lord, and if we die we die to the Lord’ (Rom. 14:8).

Deeply saddened by the sudden separation, we are comforted by the certainty that our beloved brother is with God, leaving behind a precious legacy of a total dedication to Christ and His Church, an amazing episcopal work, a remarkably strong love for the people, a burning passion for Orthodoxy, and a joy for multidimensional ministry. We are sure that now the Holy Metropolis of San Francisco has a permanent, strong ambassador to God in the person of her departed Hierarchy and we fervently pray for the repose of his soul among the great saints and pastors of the triumphant Church in heaven.”

According to Father Paul Schroeder, Chancellor of the Metropolis of San Francisco, a Trisagion (Prayer) Service will be held at the Annunciation Cathedral, San Francisco on Tuesday, December 28 and the Divine Liturgy and the funeral service will take place on Wednesday, December 29 at the Ascension Cathedral, Oakland, CA.

Archbishop Demetrios will preside over the Divine Liturgy and funeral service at the Cathedral. In both services, members of the Holy Eparchial Synod will concelebrate with the Archbishop, assisted by clergy of the Metropolis.

Metropolitan Anthony was enthroned as the first bishop of the newly-created Diocese of San Francisco on June 7, 1979. He served as the Bishop and later Metropolitan of San Francisco for over twenty-five years, overseeing the western states of California, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Metropolitan Anthony was born March 2, 1935 in the village of Avgeniki on the island of Crete, Greece, the third of six children, growing up during the brutally difficult years of the Nazi occupation. He attended the ecclesiastical school of Chania, Crete; following graduation he entered the internationally renowned Halki Theological School of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, receiving his degree in Orthodox Theology in 1960. He was ordained a deacon on July 27, 1958, and a priest on September 29, 1960.

After his ordination to the priesthood, he came to the United States to pursue graduate studies and serve the Church in this country. While serving as a parish priest, he earned a Masters of Divinity at Yale University and pursued doctoral studies in Contemporary Church History at the University of Chicago, and in Russian and Balkan History at the University of Wisconsin. In 1974, he was appointed Dean of the St. George Cathedral in Montreal, Canada, where he remained until his elevation to the episcopacy on May 21, 1978. As titular Bishop of Amissos, he served the Eighth Archdiocesan District in Denver, Colorado, until his election as Bishop of San Francisco in 1979.

During that time, he was responsible for a tremendous expansion of ministries and programs, an unparalleled period of vitality and renewal. His tenure saw the founding of over twenty new parishes and missions in the Metropolis of San Francisco, as well as the establishment of three monasteries. He was the founder of St. Nicholas Ranch, the Greek Orthodox Conference and Retreat Center located in the Sierra Nevada foothills. He was also the driving force behind the construction of the Monastery of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Spring on the premises of St. Nicholas Ranch.

Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco developed the annual Metropolis Folk Dance Festival into the largest exhibition of authentic Greek folk dance, costume, and music in the world. Together with the Metropolis Philoptochos, he created the Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment Fund, a multi-million dollar scholarship account providing funding for seminarians and students from the Metropolis to attend Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts. He served as a member of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese of America. He proved a source of inspiration for countless thousands, not only Greek Orthodox faithful, but also religious and civic figures who recognized in him a great leader and a true man of faith.