



■ The Small Flock in Sardinia has been “orphaned”

The Repose and Funeral Service of Bishop Michael of Nora

† August 31, 2016 (Old Style)



On the afternoon of Thursday, September 9, 2016 (Old Style, commemoration of the Holy Ancestors of God, Sts. Joachim and Anna), the Funeral Service of His Eminence, Bishop Michael of Nora was chanted in the Cathedral for public worship at the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina in Phyle, Greece.

It was the abiding and fervent wish of Bishop Michael, which he also expressed in his will, to be buried at the monastery. For thirty-two years, he was attached with strong ties of love and communion in Christ to His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle of blessed memory († 2013), the Most Reverend Metropolitan Cyprian the Younger, His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone (who speaks Italian), as well as the entire Brotherhood, from the Reverend Abbot, Father Theodosios, down to the last novice.

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The ever-memorable Bishop Michael (Piredda) was born on December 7/20, 1933 in Cagliari, Sardinia. He was the eldest of ten children in a family of Roman Catholics.

From his youth, his love for God led him to seek the monastic life, to which end he went to Italy and became a novice in a Carmelite monastery.

His acquaintanceship with His Eminence, Metropolitan Giovanni of Sardinia († 2013) played a pivotal role in his conversion to Orthodoxy. Bishop Michael, owing to the convictions he held at the time, was initially hostile to the renewer of the Orthodox Tradition on the island of Sardinia at their first meeting. He was, however, prompted to ask himself some serious questions by the witness of Metropolitan Giovanni to the true Faith and accepted to attend a Divine



Liturgy. From this first encounter with the liturgical and mysteriological life of the Orthodox Church, the Grace of God illuminated his well-disposed heart.



He embraced Orthodoxy and was baptized in 1966, then tonsured a Rasoaphore Monk in 1982 by Metropolitan Giovanni. On September 16, 1983 he was ordained a Hierodeacon and on October 1, 1984 a Hieromonk.

On April 24, 1993, Metropolitan Cyprian of blessed memory ordained him as an Assistant Bishop to Metropolitan Giovanni in Sardinia. This was the first consecration of an Orthodox Hierarchy on the island of Sardinia since the Schism of 1054. On September 30, 1995, he was elected Bishop of Nora (the ancient capital of the island).



Bishop Michael engaged in missionary endeavors amidst many and divers difficulties,



living ascetically, in poverty and monastic abstemiousness. For thirty years he was tried by various illnesses, which he bore with exemplary patience and fortitude.

In 1986, the future Hieromonk Father Mariano met Bishop Michael, was later tonsured a monk, and remained a faithful disciple of His Eminence until the latter's repose.



In autumn of 2015, Bishop Michael's health began to deteriorate rapidly. He made this known to Metropolitan Cyprian, who since 2012 had taken the Small Flock of Sardinia under his special protection, visiting the faithful every year.

In January of 2016, during his pastoral visit, our Most Reverend Metropolitan fulfilled the fervent desire of Bishop Michael by tonsuring him to the Great Schema.

A few weeks later, Bishop Michael was forced to remain bed-ridden. His "guardian angel," Father Mariano, served him with self-sacrifice until his end. On the evening of Tuesday, August 31, 2016, the last day of the ecclesiastical year, the soul of His Eminence peacefully flew to the eternal Homeland.



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Bishop Michael's remains were flown to Greece and on Thursday afternoon the Funeral Service for a Great Schema Monk was chanted at the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina.

His Beatitude, Archbishop Kallinkos presided and read, according to custom, the great prayers of forgiveness.

Taking part were Their Eminences, Metropolitans Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle, Gerontios of Piræus and Salamis, Chrysostomos of Attica and Boiotia, Photios of Demetrias, Their Graces, Bishops Klemes of Gardikion and Sofronie of Suceava, many





Priests, two Hierodeacons, and the Fathers of the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina.

Three spiritual children of the ever-memorable Hierarchy came along with Father Mariano from Sardinia to accompany their spiritual Father to the grave.

Also in attendance were the Reverend Mothers Taxiarchia, Eupraxia, and Justina, with members of their Sisterhoods, and many faithful. Bishop Michael, who participated every year in the Feast Days of Sts. Cyprian and Justina and of the Holy Trinity (at the Convent of the Holy Angels), was greatly revered and loved by all.

In his funeral address, Bishop Klemes spoke about the virtuous life and faithfulness of the reposed Hierarchy to our Church and the monastery Brotherhood, of which he was an elect member.

Thereafter, the remains of the departed were carried in procession to the monastery's cemetery, where he was buried next to his cell.



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Finally, everyone gathered in the monastery's reception hall for the customary refreshments. Our Most Reverend Metropolitan spoke about the bonds of love that Bishop Michael especially maintained with our monastic brotherhood and sisterhood, and also about the *seed* that he had sown, which Father Mariano is henceforth called to increase. He promised the latter that he would continue to support the *Small Flock* of Sardinia until, by the Grace of God, it *increases in the Lord*.

Father Mariano then read an oration in which he spoke about his departed spiritual Father and his spiritual charisms, and also about his own intention to continue the work of the Mission in

Sardinia, invoking the protection and assistance of the prayers of his spiritual Father, and also of all those in attendance.

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In conclusion, it is truly noteworthy that nine whole days after his repose, the Hierarch's body did not display any signs of decay; on the contrary, it was **warm and supple**, as if he were alive!

*Eternal be the memory of His Eminence,
Bishop Michael of Nora in Sardinia!*

