

«It is possible for Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants
to live together.

This has been my search and my preoccupation
throughout my life,

and in Bose I can continue to live this fraternal friendship

as an expression of the fact that

all of us are members of the one body of Christ.

There a profound community is already reached:

it is that which is lived

where there is a sharing of one life.»

«Death belongs to us,

and it is important to prepare for it.

It will be the full epiphany

of what we have lived

and will be above all the fulfillment of our life,

God wants to be always with his beloved creature.»

(Emilianos Timiadis, *Chiamati alla libertà*, Qiqajon 2004, pp. 149-150, 152)

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METROPOLITAN EMILIANOS (TIMIADIS) OF SILYVRIA

Constantinople, 10 March 1916
Eghion, 22 February 2008

«A man who knows how to love. And who truly loves.»

(Patriarch Ignatius IV)

At dawn on Friday, 22 February 2008, the metropolitan of Silyvria of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Emilianos (Timiadis), passed from this world to the Father. After his last stay in Bose - where since October 1995 he had decided to live as a brother of the community, having known br. Enzo since 1968 - he had been for a few days at Eghion in Greece, guest of metropolitan Amvrosios of Kalavryta, his spiritual son. In the last ten years metropolitan Emilianos chose to divide his time between Eghion and Bose.

He had been the permanent representative of patriarch Athenagoras to the World Council of Churches in Geneva for twenty-five years (1959-1984), his observer at Vatican Council II, elected bishop of Meloa in 1960 and metropolitan of Calabria in 1965, then of Silyvria in 1977, and would have completed 92 years on 10 March 2008. He remained ever in thanksgiving and in peace, responding with a nod and a light smile to the gestures of affection and of communion with which he was surrounded up to the last moment. To our community he used to repeat always, until the very end: *«I carry you in my heart, you are a part of my being, I embrace all of you. Thank you!»*.

Already gravely ill with cancer of the liver and of the pancreas, and strongly warned by doctors not to undertake any trips, he nevertheless decided to come to Bose for the Christmas season. He arrived on 20 December 2007, as if for a final parting, and left again on 30 January 2008 for Greece, to prepare himself for the final passage, in his Orthodox land, which now has received his body.

During his last stay in Bose he never ceased to share once again with each one of us his wisdom, his keen intelligence, his knowledge of the art of combat and of discernment, and, above all, of his love for Christ, for the Church, for all human beings.

He prayed and asked for prayers. He fought against his illness and submitted himself with obedience to God's will. He recalled that the Orthodox Church during Lent invokes especially "the God of hosts" and asked for the strength to be able to fulfill to the very end his mission, from which he never considered himself exempt, moved by his daily worry, concern for the unity of all Christians.

Personifying the adage of the great patriarch Athenagoras, with whom he lived in profound intimacy, *«Let us look each other in the eyes,»* he had for all who came to visit him a personal word of exhortation and of consolation. Patriarch Bartholomeos of Constantinople, in his own name and in that of his whole Church, sent him a warm letter of fraternal love and of affectionate closeness in his illness.

George Lemopoulos, assistant secretary general of the World Council of Churches, declared: *«He returns to God in the fullness of life, with all his spiritual children around him.»*

«Efcharisto! Mille, mille, mille merci!». These words, constantly repeated, accompanied his exodus: there followed a wide sign of the cross, slow and solemn, simple and true. *«I am departing: we will see each other again in the Kingdom of God.»*

His funeral took place on the morning of Saturday, 23 February 2008, in the cathedral "Paneroménis" of Eghion: it was a genuine spiritual event, in which our community participated with a fraternal presence. His body was vested in episcopal liturgical vestments, the book of Gospels on his breast... His face was a wonder, with a beauty very human and transfigured, a face of peace, of transparent intelligence, with a trace of a light smile. The face of a *kalògheros* according to the eastern tradition, that is, of an elder become beautiful in virtue of so many faces loved for so long... A face that reconciles with death, which is not only enemy and obstacle, but also summary, seal, consecration of a life. There is desperation or anguish, but the sensation that Emilianos is living, and present to all persons and all things: *«My God, you have called me, how can I go away?»* (O. Elytis).

The prior br. Enzo and the Bose community are filled with praise and with thanksgiving in the face of the death of this Man of God, this brother of our community, which is perceived as an *epiclesis* on the road of unity of all Christians. We ask the Lord to continue to send prophets to his community and our beloved metropolitan Emilianos to intercede unwearingly in Heaven for all of God's children. Thanks for this unspeakable gift!