HOLY METROPOLIS OF MORPHOU



THE HOLY ELDRESS GALACTIA OF CRETE

HER LEGACY AND TEACHINGS

TESTIMONIES OF THOSE WHO KNEW HER

THE HOLY ELDRESS GALACTIA OF CRETE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Undoubtedly, a book about the contemporary Blessed Eldress Galactia of Crete, as people of our time know her, cannot possibly convey nor even sketch her holiness, which for many decades she both concealed and revealed according to circumstances to the well-intentioned people who visited her and had a thirst for God, eyes and ears open. It can, however, introduce us to yet another saint of our time, a woman of God who throughout her earthly life had one desire: to do the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, her "Great Love," as she often said.

Few knew Eldress Galactia until the time came at the end of her repentance for God to reveal her. And when a holy man is revealed by the grace of God, multitudes are drawn to him to be nourished by his spiritual gifts and the sweetness of the grace that he received from the Holy Spirit. This happened in recent years in her small house in the previously unknown but now well-known village of Pompia in the Prefecture of Heraklion.

Image on page 10. The holy Eldress Galactia with her protector, Archangel Michael.

"The dirty things, those that bring sicknesses, the shots, and war. You must speak about abortions, about the unnatural sins that are committed inside and outside of marriage by very many people. Unfortunately, the whole world has become filthy. Speak also about magic, satanism, and blasphemies. Especially about the first three: abortions, unnatural sins, and magic. These are the reasons why Christ will take away His mercy from the world for a time and will apply His justice. Then the world will need you to strengthen them, because people will be very frightened by the things that will take place."

I said to her, "But if I talk about these things that you suggest, people will be scandalized, especially the Christians and the bishops. *Geróntissa*,[3] how can I say these things? I am a monk! They will wonder how I know about these things."

She answered me, "You are a doctor of souls, my child. You have knowledge, courage, and purity. You are a beast.[4] You are not afraid like the others. A doctor does not shrink back or become disgusted when he sees fetid wounds. He puts his hand to the task and mends them. I helped my father of blessed memory with things like this because he was a doctor. I saw what he did. You, too, will put your hand in there and fix the worst wounds that are rotting and stinking. Only take care to wear gloves so as not to get any filth on you."

"What sort of gloves?" I asked.

"Be humble and careful. This will protect you... That is how it will happen, but it must happen. As we have become these days, if two or three of you do not speak up,

3 *Geronta* and *Gerontissa* are the Greek words for "elder" and "eldress" respectively. —English editor

4 *Beast* in a positive sense, that of strength, stature, or courage. —English editor



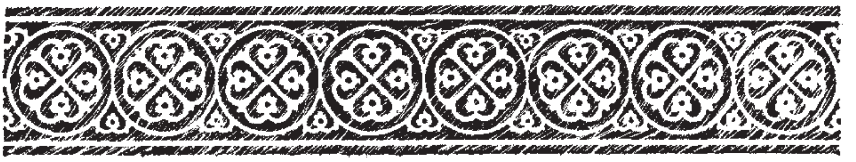
FUNERAL ORATION FOR THE BLESSED ELDRESS GALACTIA THE NUN

Archimandrite Anthony Frankakis, Preacher of the Holy Metropolis of Gortyna and Arcadia

In the early hours of yesterday, a great, holy figure of Crete and of all Orthodoxy cast off her earthly, feeble garment, her corruptible, much-suffering body, the body that was crucified for a lifetime by the pains of this life and the struggles of ceaseless ascetic practice, and fluttered quietly and imperceptibly, just as she had lived, into the embrace of the Lord, to receive from His pierced and all-powerful hands the all-radiant prizes of her spiritual contest.

She is in the embrace of the Lord, Whom she loved with a burning passion from childhood and followed with apostolic self-denial in the bloody footsteps of applied love for the ninety-five years her form shone upon the earth. And perhaps this is the first time this tireless woman has given "sleep to her temples and slumber

Image on page 28. Fr. Anthony Frankakis and Eldress Galactia.



FROM THE HANDWRITTEN DIARY OF ELDRESS GALACTIA

From a young age, Eldress Galactia recorded her spiritual experiences and her longing for the Lord in handwritten notes, in both prose and poetry. Over the years, this created a diary of experiential theology, inspired by the Holy Spirit, which reveals the continuous repentance, prayer, and struggle for purification and enlightenment of a soul who lived in the world quietly and humbly, hymning and glorifying the Triune God while interceding daily for her fellow human beings. We thank Father Anthony for granting us permission to include a portion of the Eldress's handwritten notes in this publication.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

"Oh, you harlot of the Gospel, how I envy you! Not your sin, but your repentance. I am worse than you. So what that I never desired a man in my life? I was a normal girl. But I experienced something shocking when I was eighteen. I said something inappropriate to my late (not to say most blessed) father. I never liked to say he was a doctor. What of it? I thank Thee, Lord, that he was a man, a Christian, and a Greek. Among his four daughters, I, the defiled, was his favorite. And once, a tear ran from his eyes because of something I said. He said





LEGACY AND TEACHINGS OF THE ELDRESS

METROPOLITAN NEOPHYTOS OF MORPHOU AND ELDRESS GALACTIA

His Eminence, Metropolitan Neophytos of Morphou, was in continuous communication with Eldress Galactia from 2016 until her repose in 2021. Their telephone conversations were recorded by the Metropolitan himself, Father Anthony, and the people who cared for her, as were the Eldress's references to him. With the blessing of His Eminence, whom we thank for the trust he showed in us by providing these recordings, we have selected some of their conversations for this book.

"THE WORLD WILL BE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN"
April 1, 2016

METROPOLITAN: Your blessing, *Gerontissa*. I am the weak and sickly Bishop from Cyprus.

ELDRESS: My child, I ask for your blessing. No, you are not weak. You are thunderous. Thunderous. Do you hear? Wherever you pass, the earth creaks.

METROPOLITAN: Will difficulties come, *Gerontissa*?

HOLY TRINITY – TRIUNE LIGHT

HOLY TRINITY
July 9, 2016

Recorded by her caregivers.

ELDRESS: "No one, no one has seen the unoriginate Father. We see only His power, His providence, His glory. The Holy Spirit is continuously above us. It moves with a great sound, yet no one hears it! Christ, on the other hand... If you say to Him right now, 'Come into my embrace,' He will come! He is so close to us. I pray much to the unoriginate Father. He is strict but also all-good. Full of long-suffering and love. The Three are one. The other two Persons hold the Father in reverence. The Son became like us, and with Him we have more boldness and familiarity!"

TRIUNE LIGHT
July 17, 2016

Recorded by her caregivers.

ELDRESS: "When I weep and groan for my sins, my heart deepens. I sigh from the innermost depths of my soul and I am relieved. The prayer runs on and on... and at an unsuspected time—I know not how—with the 'binoculars of the heart,' I see that boundless light that the mind cannot contain and the tongue cannot describe...

No one knows how to speak of and describe the majesty of heaven. Heaven hides many mysteries. The light

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

"IT REQUIRES STRUGGLE FOR THE COUPLE TO GROW AND BE SANCTIFIED"
2015

Once, Papa-Yiannis visited her. The eldress deeply loved him and his entire blessed, numerous family. His son, who chanted like an angel, was with him. Father Anthony and Anthony Moraïtakis were also present.

Papa-Yiannis asked her, "There are so many divorces in our time, *Gerontissa*. Why is this happening? What do you think?"

The Eldress replied: "Egotism, my child. When one person wants to subjugate the other, war breaks out, and war destroys everything. Where is the love, the sacrifice, the patience, the kind words, and the understanding of former times? The in-laws also interfere, my child, especially we the women. And when people marry now, they easily grow bored of each other because they remember their old life. They say, "I used to have as many lovers as I wanted. Now am I to grow old with just this one?" And so the defilements begin... They have no love, my child, and they feel themselves as mere meat. Just as you get bored of meat when you eat it every day and then don't want to see it again, so it is with them. They want other things because they think they will be satisfied, but they froth and rage like madmen, the poor wretches, and the things they do are

THE LILY

April 21, 1994

A little lily, purest white,
Has in my garden sprouted;
Oh how I wish my sinful soul
Could be a bit more like it.

It opened wide its petals soft,
Up at the heavens gazes,
And Him who sent it down to earth
It glorifies and praises.

With its attire purest white
And its surpassing pureness
It fills my little soul with its
Refined and subtle fragrance.

As if to tell me that I too
Should imitate it purely,
So that my soul may go to God
A little, pure-white lily.

Sporanox

21 Ἀπριλίου 1994
δικοί μου στίχοι

Ἕνα κρινάκι ὁλόλευκο φύτρωσε
στὴν αὐλή μου
Πῶς θάθελα νὰ τοῦ μοιάζε
ἡ ἁμαρτωλὴ ψυχή μου
ὡσία +
Τὰ πέταλα του ἀνοίξε
στὸν οὐρανὸ κοιτάζη
Κι' αὐτὸν ποὺ τὸ στέλνε στὴν γῆ
ὑμνεῖ καὶ τὸν δοξάζη.
+
Μὲ τὴν λευκή του φορεσιὰ
καὶ τὴν ἀγνότητα του
γεμίζη τὴν ψυχούλα μου
καὶ τὸ λεπτοάρωμα του
+
Σὰν νὰ μοῦ λέει κι' ἐγὼ
νὰ γίνω σὰν ἐκεῖνο
καὶ ἡ ψυχή μου στὸν Θεὸ
νὰ πάη ἀσπρο κρῖνο
στίχοι
Γαλάτειας Καναικάκη
Πόμπια Ἡράκλειον
Κρήτης

"When I cry and groan for my sins, my heart grows deeper. I sigh from the depths of my soul and find relief. The prayer flows, flows... and, at an unexpected moment—I do not know how—with the 'binoculars of the heart,' I see that boundless Light, which no mind can contain and no tongue can convey. No one can describe the majesty of heaven! Heaven hides many mysteries. The Light is boundless; it has no beginning, middle, or end. It is unformed and uniform. It is full of information."

Even though she viewed herself as a simple, sinful old woman, the holy Eldress Galactia of Crete was hailed in her lifetime as a living saint, known for her humility, noetic prayer of the heart, and her great gifts of clairvoyance, which earned her the eponym "Eldress Prophyria" after Saint Prophyrios of Katounakia.

She, too, was an empirical theologian, taught by lived spiritual experience. She saw the uncreated light and saints in heaven, confessed the Faith against the compromises of our day, and spoke prophetically of coming wars and hardships and the urgent need for repentance, specifically for the three great sins of our age.

This biography features the testimonies of those who knew her, including Metropolitan Neophytos of Morphou, her caretakers, monks, hieromonks, priests, teachers, professors, and people from every walk of life, as well as a large collection of her recorded sayings, excerpts from her diary, and her poems, metrically translated.

Every Orthodox Christian has need of Eldress Galactia's example, wisdom, and prophetic words, to persevere on the secure path of the Holy Fathers and the experiential theology of our saints.

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