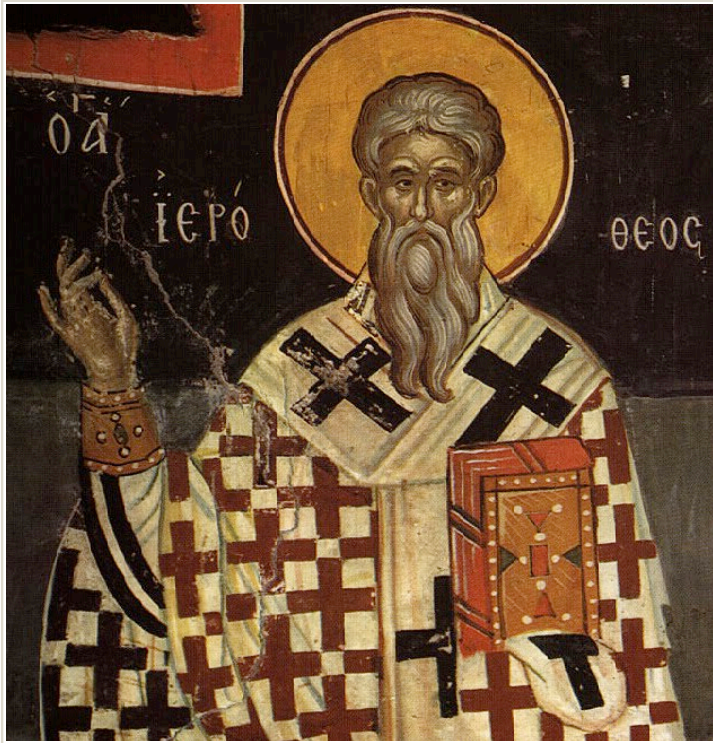


Fr. Saavas Anastasiou: A Short History of the Church of Athens



Fresco of St Hierotheos, the first Bishop of Athens

Portions of his relics are located also at the Holy Monastery of Saint Paul on Mount Athos and the Chapel of Saint Andrew in Athens.

A Short History of the Archdiocese of Athens

by Fr. Savvas Anastasiou

The Church of Athens was founded by the Apostle Paul in 51 AD, according to chapter 15 of the Acts of the Apostles. The first Bishop of Athens was St. Hierotheos, and in continuation, the following Saints were Bishops of Athens: Dionysios the Areopagite (Oct. 3), Poplios, Quadratus (Sep. 21), Leonides (April 15), and Klematios. Initially, Athens was a Diocese subject to the Metropolis of Corinth which was the capital of the Roman Province of Achaia (which contained all of southern Greece).

The Diocese of Athens was raised to a Metropolis at the end of the 8th century. After the liberation of Greece from the Turkish yoke and the arbitrary declaration of Autocephaly by the Church in Greece, the Metropolis of Athens was renamed the

Metropolis of Attica with its capital in Athens, and at that time Neophytos of Talantion undertook this Metropolis. This was reformed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Tomos of 1850 which canonically established the Autocephalous Church of Greece when the Metropolis received its ancient name, and Neophytos of Athens lawfully became the President of the Holy Synod and the only Metropolitan of the Kingdom of Greece. After the Kingdom of Greece's successive annexations of new lands such as the Ionian Islands, and Thessaly etc., and the later participation in the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece of the Bishops of Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace, and the northern Aegean islands, among whom many were Metropolitans, for the sake of uniformity in 1922 all Ruling Bishops of Greece were given the title of Metropolitan and in 1923 the Bishop of Athens bears the title of Archbishop.

After the schism of 1924, the pioneer of which was Archbishop Chrysostomos Papadopoulos (1868-1938) who was synodally anathematized in 1998, the throne of Athens has been widowed. Essentially the pastoral care of the remaining Orthodox (now called Genuine Orthodox Christians) of Athens was undertaken by those Bishops who bore the title of Archbishop of the Genuine Orthodox Christians: Germanos Maurommates of Demetrias (1935-1939), Chrysostomos Kabourides formerly of Florina (1939-1955), Akakios Pappas of Talantion (1960-1963), and in continuation those who bore the title of Archbishop of Athens of the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians: Auxentios Pastras from Gardikion (1963-1985), Chrysostomos Kiouses from Thessaloniki (1986-2010), and the present (since 2010) Archbishop Kallinikos Sarantopoulos from Achaia.

Source: Facebook post by Fr. Savvas Anastasiou