

EULOGY FOR FR. PANAGIOTES CARRAS

Your Eminence,

Holy Fathers, Beloved Brethren in Christ,

In a eulogy lasting about ten minutes, how can we summarize an entire life—and indeed the life of a great figure such as the late Fr. Panagiotes—a priest whose work left a lasting legacy, and whose name will be written in golden letters in the history of our Church?

With the grace of God and through your prayers, we will try.

Confession of Faith and Sacrifice

Of all the good and beneficial things in the life of Fr. Panagiotes, we would like to highlight three points, the first of which is his confession of faith, as well as the sacrifice and self-denial he demonstrated on its account.

As is widely known, Fr. Panagiotes Carras was born and raised in Boston. He lost his father at a young age, and the priest of his parish—who later became Archbishop Iakovos of America—took young Panagiotes under his protection. Archbishop Iakovos sent him for theological studies to Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Boston, and subsequently for postgraduate studies to the School of Theology at the University of Thessalonica, from which he ultimately received his Doctorate in Theology. Both in Boston and in Thessalonica, his fellow students called him "Iakovos' favorite." In 1966, he was ordained a priest by him. During his priesthood in Boston, he was assigned to serve as an interpreter for Queen Anne-Marie during the Royal Couple's visit to America. In this capacity, Fr. Panagiotes and his Presbytera accompanied them to splendid receptions and galas, surrounded by royalty, dignitaries, and politicians.

A year later, he was sent here to Toronto to open the newly established Church of St. Demetrios in Thorncliffe Park, to serve as its first presiding priest. Such was the trust they placed in Fr. Panagiotes.

Yet the great figures of this world, the positions, and the applause did not bring him spiritual rest. For even as all these things were taking place, he discerned within himself the non-Orthodox mindset prevailing in the so-called "official Church," and sought a way out. In those days, he had heard about a new Saint in Aegina, Saint. Nektarios. He and a group of parishioners from St. Demetrios prayed fervently to the Saint to help them.

During those days, Fr. Panagiotes, together with his spiritual children, visited the Russian Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, New York, bringing with them a large icon of Saint Nektarios. There, the ever-memorable Archbishop Averky received them with great brotherly love. In fact, he even participated in the procession during the vigil with this icon.

From that moment, he understood what he needed to do. He departed from innovation and submitted to the jurisdiction of the Russian Church Abroad under the Holy Metropolitan Philaret the New Confessor.

This "favorite of Iakovos," who only shortly before had rubbed elbows with kings and dignitaries, left behind his comfort and security—without knowing what tomorrow held. Armed with unwavering faith in God and the support of his spiritual children, he stepped forward into the next chapter of his life.

And God blessed him immediately. As they had no church building in which to celebrate the Divine Services, through God's providence, the Russian Church had a vacant holy temple—Holy Trinity on Richmond Street—because its parishioners had moved to another building on Henry Street. The Russians granted this church to Fr. Panagiotes and his parishioners. And they dedicated this temple in honor of their great protector, Saint Nektarios.

His Great Love for Study, Teaching, and Learning

The second hallmark of his life was his great love for study, teaching, and learning. Here, for nearly six decades, he instructed the faithful through Catechetical Schools, Sunday sermons, and evening lectures throughout

the year. Even a few days before his repose, he asked me if we had prepared the evening lecture schedule for the coming autumn. That was who he was; he loved the teachings of the Holy Fathers so deeply that the ministry of the Word was a source of life for him. His lifelong desire was to convey this knowledge to others, so that we too might benefit from such God-inspired teachings.

His Fatherly Love

And the final point of Fr. Panagiotes' life that we wish to dwell upon is his tender and fatherly love for us. We saved this dimension of his character for last, because we believe it to be the most important. This is what left the deepest and most unshakable impressions on the lives of all of us who had the blessing to live alongside him.

He lived the commandments of Christ, above all the commandment of love for one's neighbor. He did not judge us for our faults, but loved us just as we were. By his example, he gave us strength to overcome our weaknesses so that we might become better Christians. Indeed, we became better human beings because we shared in his life—and for that, we owe him an eternal debt of gratitude.

We firmly believe that, on account of his fatherly love, the All-Good God will crown him, as he now enjoys the fruits of his labors.

Father Panagiotes,

From the depths of our hearts, we wish to offer you a sincere and heartfelt "Thank you." And if you find boldness before the throne of God, please offer up prayers and supplications on behalf of us, your beloved children.

May your memory be eternal!

Delivered by Archimandrite Savvas Anastasiou on August 5/18, 2026

ΕΠΙΚΗΔΕΙΟΣ ΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΟΥ π. ΠΑΝΑΓΙΩΤΟΥ ΚΑΡΑΘΑΝΑΣΗ

Σεβασμιώτατε, Ἅγιοι πατέρες, Ἀγαπητοὶ ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφοί,

Σὲ ἓναν ἐπικήδειο λόγο ποὺ διαρκεῖ περίπου δέκα λεπτά, πῶς μπορούμε νὰ συνοψίσουμε μιὰ ὁλόκληρη ζωὴ— καὶ δὴ τὴ ζωὴ ἑνὸς μεγάλου προσώπου, ὅπως τοῦ μακαριστοῦ π. Παναγιώτου—ἐνὸς ἱερέως τοῦ ὁποίου τὸ ἔργο ἄφησε ἐποχὴ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα θὰ γραφθεῖ μὲ χρυσὰ γράμματα στὴν ἱστορία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας.

Μὲ τὴ χάρι τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ μὲ τὶς δικές σας προσευχές, θὰ προσπαθήσουμε.

Ὁμολογία καὶ Θυσία

Ἀπ’ ὅλα τὰ καλὰ καὶ ὠφέλιμα στὴ ζωὴ τοῦ π. Παναγιώτου, θὰ θέλαμε νὰ ἐπισημάνουμε τρία σημεῖα, ἀπὸ τὰ ὁποῖα τὸ πρῶτο εἶναι ἡ ὁμολογία πίστεώς του, καθὼς καὶ ἡ θυσία καὶ ἡ αὐταπάρνηση ποὺ ἐπέδειξε ἐξαιτίας τῆς.

Ὅπως εἶναι εὐρύτερα γνωστό, ὁ π. Παναγιώτης Καραθανάσης γεννήθηκε καὶ μεγάλωσε στὴ Βοστώνη. Ἔχασε τὸν πατέρα του σὲ νεαρὴ ἡλικία, καὶ ὁ ἱερέας τῆς ἐνορίας του, ὁ ἔπειτα Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἀμερικῆς Ἰάκωβος, ἔθεσε ὑπὸ τὴν προστασία του τὸν μικρὸ Παναγιώτη. Ὁ Ἰάκωβος τὸν ἔστειλε γιὰ θεολογικὲς σπουδὲς στὴ Θεολογικὴ Σχολὴ τοῦ Τιμίου Σταυροῦ Βοστώνης, καὶ στὴ συνέχεια γιὰ μεταπτυχιακὲς σπουδὲς στὴ Θεολογικὴ Σχολὴ τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης, ἀπ’ ὅπου τελικὰ ἔλαβε τὸ πτυχίο «Διδάκτωρ Θεολογίας». Καὶ στὴ Βοστώνη καὶ στὴ Θεσσαλονίκη οἱ συμφοιτητὲς του τὸν ὀνόμαζαν «τὸ παιδί τοῦ Ἰακώβου». Τὸ 1966 χειροτονήθηκε ἱερέας ἀπὸ αὐτόν. Κατὰ τὴ διάρκεια τῆς ἱερατείας του στὴ Βοστώνη, τὸν ἔβαλαν νὰ ἀσκήσει χρέη διερμηνέα γιὰ τὴ Βασίλισσα Ἄννα-Μαρία κατὰ τὸ διάστημα τῆς ἐπίσκεψης τοῦ Βασιλικοῦ ζεύγους στὴν Ἀμερική. Μὲ αὐτὴ τὴν ιδιότητα, ὁ π. Παναγιώτης καὶ ἡ Πρεσβυτέρα του τοὺς συνόδευσαν σὲ λαμπρὲς δεξιώσεις καὶ χοροεσπερίδες, ἐκεῖ ὅπου βρίσκονταν βασιλεῖς, ἄρχοντες καὶ πολιτικοί.

Ένα χρόνο αργότερα τὸν ἔστειλαν ἐδῶ στὸ Τορόντο γιὰ νὰ ἀνοίξει τὸν νεοῖδρυτο Ναὸ τοῦ Ἀγίου Δημητρίου στὸ Thorncliffe Park, νὰ εἶναι ὁ πρῶτος προϊστάμενός του. Τόση ἐμπιστοσύνη εἶχαν στὸ πρόσωπο τοῦ π. Παναγιώτου.

Ἀλλὰ τὰ μεγάλα πρόσωπα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, οἱ θέσεις καὶ τὰ χειροκροτήματα δὲν τὸν ἀνάπαυσαν πνευματικά. Διότι, ἐνῶ ὅλα αὐτὰ γίνονταν, διέκρινε μέσα του τὸ μὴ Ὁρθόδοξο φρόνημα ποὺ ἐπικρατοῦσε στὴ λεγόμενη «ἐπίσημη Ἐκκλησία» καὶ προσπάθησε νὰ βρεῖ διέξοδο. Ἐκεῖνες τὶς ἡμέρες εἶχε ἀκούσει γιὰ ἕναν νέο Ἅγιο στὴν Αἴγινα, τὸν Ἅγιο Νεκτάριο. Αὐτὸς καὶ μία ὁμάδα ἐνοριτῶν ἀπὸ τὸν Ἅγιο Δημήτριο προσευχήθηκαν ἐκτενῶς στὸν Ἅγιο νὰ τοὺς βοηθήσει.

Στὶς ἡμέρες αὐτὲς ὁ π. Παναγιώτης, μὲ τὰ πνευματικά του τέκνα, ἐπισκέφθηκαν τὸ Ῥωσικὸ Μοναστήρι τῆς Ἀγίας Τριάδος στὸ Jordanville τῆς Νέας Ὑόρκης καὶ ἔφεραν μαζί τους μία μεγάλη εἰκόνα τοῦ Ἀγίου Νεκταρίου. Ἐκεῖ τοὺς δέχθηκε μὲ πολλὴ ἀδελφικὴ ἀγάπη ὁ ἀείμνηστος Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἀβέρκιος. Ἐλαβε μέρος μάλιστα καὶ στὴ λιτανεία τῆς ἀγρυπνίας μὲ τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτή.

Ἀπὸ ἐκεῖ κατάλαβε τί ἔπρεπε νὰ κάνει. Ἐφυγε πλέον ἀπὸ τὴν καινοτομία καὶ ὑποτάχθηκε στὴ δικαιοδοσία τῆς Ῥωσικῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Διασπορᾶς ὑπὸ τὸν Ἅγιο Μητροπολίτη Φιλάρετο τὸν Νέο Ὁμολογητή.

Αὐτὸ τὸ «παιδὶ τοῦ Ἰακώβου» ποὺ πρὶν ἀπὸ λίγο συναναστρεφόταν μὲ βασιλεῖς καὶ ἄρχοντες, ἔφυγε ἀπὸ τὴν ἄνεση καὶ τὴν ἀσφάλειά του· χωρὶς νὰ γνωρίζει τὸ αὖριο. Ἐχοντας ἀκράδαντη πίστη στὸν Θεὸ καὶ τὴν ὑποστήριξη τῶν πνευματικῶν του τέκνων, προχωροῦσε στὴν ἐπόμενη φάση τῆς ζωῆς του.

Καὶ ὁ Θεὸς τὸν εὐλόγησε ἀμέσως. Καθὼς δὲν εἶχαν Ναὸ στὸν ὁποῖο νὰ λειτουργήσουν, κατὰ τὴν πρόνοια τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ Ῥωσικὴ Ἐκκλησία εἶχε ἕναν ἄδειο ἱερὸ ναό, τῆς Ἀγίας Τριάδος στὴ Richmond Street, διότι οἱ πιστοὶ εἶχαν μετακομίσει σὲ ἄλλο κτίριο στὴ Henry Street. Οἱ Ῥῶσοι ἔδωσαν τὸν Ναὸ αὐτὸ στὸν π. Παναγιώτη καὶ τοὺς ἐνορίτες του. Καὶ αὐτοὶ ἀφιέρωσαν τὸν Ναὸ αὐτὸ εἰς τιμὴν τοῦ μεγάλου προστάτη τους, τοῦ Ἀγίου Νεκταρίου.

Ἡ μεγάλη του ἀγάπη γιὰ τὴ μελέτη, τὴ διδασκαλία καὶ τὴ μάθηση

Τὸ δεύτερο σημεῖο τῆς ζωῆς του εἶναι ἡ μεγάλη του ἀγάπη γιὰ τὴ μελέτη, τὴ διδασκαλία καὶ τὴ μάθηση. Ἐδῶ, γιὰ σχεδὸν ἑξὶ δεκαετίες, δίδασκε τοὺς πιστοὺς διὰ τῶν κατηχητικῶν σχολείων, τῶν κηρυγμάτων τῆς Κυριακῆς, καὶ τῶν βραδινῶν ὁμιλιῶν καθ' ὅλη τὴ διάρκεια τοῦ ἔτους. Ἀκόμα καὶ λίγες μέρες πρὶν κοιμηθεῖ, μὲ ρώτησε ἐὰν ἔχουμε πρόγραμμα βραδινῶν ὁμιλιῶν γιὰ τὸ ἐρχόμενο φθινόπωρο. Αὐτὸς ἦταν· ἀγαποῦσε τόσο βαθιὰ τὶς διδασκαλίες τῶν Ἀγίων Πατέρων, ποὺ ἡ διακονία τοῦ λόγου ἦταν γι' αὐτὸν πηγὴ ζωῆς. Ποθοῦσε ὅλη τὴ ζωὴ του νὰ μεταφέρει αὐτὴ τὴ γνώση στοὺς ἄλλους, ὥστε νὰ ὠφελοῦμαστε κι ἐμεῖς ἀπὸ τέτοιες θεόπνευστες διδασκαλίες.

Ἡ πατερικὴ του ἀγάπη

Καὶ τὸ τελευταῖο σημεῖο τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ π. Παναγιώτου στὸ ὁποῖο θέλουμε νὰ σταθοῦμε εἶναι ἡ στοργικὴ καὶ πατερικὴ του ἀγάπη γιὰ μᾶς. Φυλάξαμε αὐτὴ τὴ διάσταση τοῦ προσώπου του γιὰ τὸ τέλος, διότι πιστεύουμε ὅτι εἶναι ἡ πιὸ σημαντικὴ. Αὐτὴ εἶναι ποὺ ἄφησε τὶς πιὸ βαθιὲς καὶ ἀκλόνητες ἀποτυπώσεις στὶς ζωὲς ὅλων μας ποὺ εἶχαμε τὴν εὐλογία νὰ τὸν ζήσουμε.

Ἔζησε τὶς ἐντολὲς τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ πρὸ παντὸς τὴν ἐντολὴ τῆς ἀγάπης πρὸς τὸν πλησίον. Δὲν μᾶς ἔκρινε γιὰ τὰ σφάλματά μας, ἀλλὰ μᾶς ἀγαποῦσε ὅπως ἡμασταν. Μὲ τὸ παράδειγμά του μᾶς ἔδινε δύναμη νὰ νικήσουμε τὶς ἀδυναμίες μας, ὥστε νὰ γίνουμε καλύτεροι Χριστιανοί. Πράγματι, γίναμε καλύτεροι ἄνθρωποι ἐπειδὴ τὸν ζήσαμε—καὶ γι' αὐτό, τοῦ ὀφείλουμε αἰῶνια εὐγνωμοσύνη.

Πιστεύουμε ἀκράδαντα ὅτι, γιὰ τὴν πατερικὴ του ἀγάπη, ὁ Πανάγαθος Θεὸς θὰ τὸν στεφανώσει, ἀπολαμβάνοντας πλέον τοὺς καρποὺς τῶν κόπων του.

Πάτερ Παναγιώτη,

Θὰ θέλαμε, ἀπὸ τὰ βάθη τῆς καρδίας μας, νὰ σοῦ ἀπευθύνουμε ἓνα μεγάλο καὶ εἰλικρινὲς «Εὐχαριστῶ», καὶ ἂν εὐρίσκῃς παρρησία ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ Θεοῦ, νὰ ἀναπέμῃς εὐχὲς καὶ ἱκεσίες ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῶν ἀγαπητῶν σου τέκνων.

Αἰωνία σου ἡ μνήμη!

Ἐκφωνηθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀρχιμανδρίτου Σάββα Ἀναστασίου τῇ 5^η/18^η
Αὐγούστου 2026