

OFFERING OF LOVE FROM ETERNITY

Dimitrios was one of my most loved childhood friends; we were linked by a friendship which began in the first grade of Primary School in Tinos. Zenon was someone I did not know, however on my first visit to Cyprus I became acquainted with his humble and blessed father, a priest, Fr. Mamas Zenonos, while during my recent second visit to the great island I came to know his saddened sister, Myroula, who spoke to me of the unexpected death of the young Zenon.

Both Dimitri's sister, Tasoula Kouli, as well as Zenon's sister, hastened to offer me a sum of cash for our orphans in memory of their loved ones whom God had taken early into the mellow warmth of His embrace "He pleased God and was beloved of Him ... for his soul pleased the Lord, therefore He hastened to take him away from among the wicked" (Wisdom of Solomon 4:7-15).

Therefore, humbly and humanly I deemed it my duty, when a few days ago I visited the Diocesan orphanage, to speak to our orphaned children about these two heavenly angels, Dimitri and Zenon, to prepare together a simple plate of kolyvo (boiled wheat) for their souls and to sing together the holy memorial service for their repose. The children's reaction was moving, when I spoke to them of the fact that all we who are faithful are members of the one Body, which is called the Church, the Body of Christ, in which, when one member is suffering, we suffer with him and when one is joyful, we rejoice with him.

See, then, how Dimitri and Zenon became the motive for yet another catechetical teaching for the 24 children in the Orthodox faith, becoming a point which exceeded geographical, continental, racial and language boundaries, a reason for our orphans to unite with the saddened families of these two friends of ours.

However, Dimitri and Zenon also became a reason for smiles, joy and spiritual progress, because with the money from their two sisters, the children received in their memory their stationery for the new academic year, and joyfully, without having less than the other children of the "developed" world, they will attend school again this year, to receive yet more knowledge, to progress in life...

So the mystery of death is transformed into the mystery of life within the Church! This is the link and the communion of the souls of our brothers and sisters who have fallen asleep with the living, with the majesty of the immortal human spirit which acquires a dimension which transcends place and time.

Dimitri, Zenon, the missionary Church of Congo-Brazzaville, is grateful to you. And you know, of course, that every time we conduct the Divine Liturgy, here on the African equator, the Church prays for your pure souls and knows that you too with abundant joy surround the altar and rejoice with us!

We thank you! Until we meet again, our beloved friends, in eternity!

The Bishop