



The Very Reverend Ernest Blougouras

May 1, 1932 - October 6, 2021

Very Reverend Archimandrite Anastasios Constantine Blougouras was born May 1st, 1932, in Dover, New Hampshire. Father Ernest was the youngest of the seven children of Constantine and Diamando Blougouras. His father was from the town of Menia, in Messinia, Greece and married Diamando Politis who was from Messina village of Methoni. They married in Greece and immigrated to the United States in 1911, settling in Dover where Mr. Blougouras became a construction worker. His parents and siblings are now deceased. Father Ernest still had close ties with his brothers and sisters. The eldest Clara Mpontsikaris lived in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and his sister Pauline Sferes lived in Portland, Maine. The third, Georgia Carlton passed away in 1991. The oldest of his brothers was William who was killed in World War II on a U.S. Navy destroyer in the Pacific. The next brother, Steve, pursued a military career and was U.S. Army Retired, and lived in Cape Canaveral, Florida. Merrill (Menelaus) Blougouras, the sixth child, lived in Dover, New Hampshire. Father Ernest has many nieces and nephews, and they and their children complement the family that Constantine and Diamando started here in America.

Father Ernest is survived by his Nephew Daniel Blougouras and wife Vicki Blougouras, and their son, great nephew Zachary Blougouras (Merritt Island, Florida). Nephew Charles Carlton and wife Kathleen Carlton, great nephew Damian & wife Lauren Carlton from (Spring Hill, FL) great nephew Christopher Carlton (Castro Valley, CA). Nephew Foss Carlton and his wife Ann (Portsmouth, NH).

Father Ernest graduated from the Dover High School in 1950. He played the French horn in the high school band, was on the student council, the cross-country running team and was a member of the debating team and the National Honor Society. He was active in the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Dover. He received his calling to be a priest while still in high school and was encouraged in this by two priests who served the Dover parish, Fr. Nicholas Hatzivasiliou and Fr. Paraskevas Theophrastou.

Determined to devote his life to the service of the Holy Orthodox Church, Ernest

Blougouras entered the Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts in the autumn of 1950 and graduated with the class of 1956. After attaining the Bachelor of Theology degree he went to Greece. He had received a scholarship to the University of Athens and three years later was awarded a Master of Sacred Theology degree from that university. While in Athens he lived at the Theological Center of the Church of Greece but also traveled throughout the lands and cities where orthodox Christianity was nurtured. Mt. Athos, Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Mt. Sinai, Beirut, and Cairo were all visited. He went to Constantinople and received the blessing of His Holiness Athenagoras, then the Ecumenical Patriarch.

Returning to the U.S. in 1959, he was ordained on November 19, 1959 to the diaconate, and the Holy Priesthood on November 29, 1959 by Bishop Athenagoras of Boston (later Archbishop of London). The ordination was at the church of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary in Somerville, Massachusetts where the parish priest was Fr. Iakovos Garmatis, now bishop of Chicago and formerly Bishop of Detroit. Father Ernest has since received the honored title of "oikonomos" from Bishop Germanos of Detroit in 1968 and became elevated to the rank of Archimandrite in 1980.

Two days after his ordination, Father Ernest was on duty at his first parish, the newly established church of St. Demetrios in Newton Lower Falls, Massachusetts. He was the first regular priest there. After two years he was transferred to Holy Trinity Church in Grand Island, Nebraska for two years. This was a considerable change, from a compact parish in the populous east to a far-flung prairie community. In the fall of 1963, he became pastor of the Assumption parish in Flint, Michigan in time to help complete its building project. During his time there he was also Vice President of Legal Aid Society in 1964 and a member of the Flint Council of Churches.

On September 15, 1967, he went to the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Detroit at a precarious time in its history. The old church buildings on Macomb Street had been taken by the city, the new cathedral was a hole in the ground where a basement was being dug and the parish was financially insolvent. It was a bleak beginning, but there was hope and there was courage. There was prayer, diligence, and hard work. Above all there was the Grace of God, so that the community survived, and the cathedral was finally completed. A kind of unwritten understanding grew between Father Ernest and the parish; he would help the community through the lean years, and he would stay to enjoy the better times.

God had other plans for Father Ernest though, and on August 17th, 1988, he went to the Cathedral of St. John the Theologian in Tenafly, New Jersey. His talents of building churches and helping communities through their precarious times would not go to waste.

He put his skills as a parish priest to work one more time in seeing this parish through the endeavor to erect its cultural center. So after plenty of hard work, diligence, prayer and despite a downturn in the economy he helped realize a dream of the community. To have a place for children to grow together, a place where we could have Christian fellowship with one another, and a place where we could sustain and nurture our rich culture and faith. There is still more work to be done but God gave us a spiritual leader with an admirable track record to lead us, guide us, and above all to pray for us.

Finally, Father Ernest came to Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church in Naples, Florida where he continued to participate and serve in many capacities while semi-retired. He also served and substituted in various other parishes across Florida whenever he was needed. He would usually set time aside to travel each year to visit friends in many states. And he would return to Greece each year to refresh, renew and visit life-long friends from his early days and studies.

Father Ernest earned much respect wherever he has gone, and his honors have reflected favorably on his parishes and on the Greek Orthodox Church in general. From 1960 to 1961 he was the Orthodox Chaplain for the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at Suffolk University, Boston, Massachusetts, and from 1970 to 1980 for the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Between 1970 and 1974 he was a member of the Presbyters Council of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese serving as its Archdiocesan President and was elected again to that post in 1982. He was the president of the Detroit Diocese clergy association as well as the national president of the Holy Cross Alumni Association. He was president of the Eastern Orthodox Council of Churches for the Detroit area from 1976 through 1978. After serving on the board of the Christian Communication Council of Metropolitan Detroit from 1968 on, he was elected President of that organization in 1978. This organization was comprised of almost 2000 Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox Churches in the metropolitan Detroit and Windsor, Canada area. Father Ernest was the first Eastern Orthodox President in its 65-year history.

Father Ernest was greatly interested and active in matters of interfaith dialogue. He superbly represented the position of the Eastern Orthodox faith in many such commissions, committees, etc., both local and national. He was a member of the Tenafly Clergy Association, the Dialogue Commission for the New Jersey Diocese, the Orthodox Theological Society of America, the North American Conference of Ecumenists, and he coordinated the Roman Catholic/Orthodox Commission meeting in 1992. He enjoyed travel and has returned to the Holy lands since his days as a student. His avocation was collecting old and rare books, but his greatest desire was to excel in the service of Our

Lord and His people.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, October 10, 2021 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM at St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church, 7100 Airport-Pulling Road, Naples, FL 34109.

His funeral service will be celebrated at St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church on Monday at 11:00 AM, with Divine Liturgy beginning at 9:30AM.

Immediately following the funeral, he will be laid to rest at Panagia Vlahernon Greek Orthodox Monastery Cemetery in Williston, FL.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home.

Cemetery

Panagia Vlahernon Greek Orthodox Monastery Cemetery

12600 W Highway 318

Williston, FL, 32696

Events

OCT 10 Visitation 05:00PM - 07:00PM

St. Katherine Greek Orthodox
Church

7100 Airport Pulling Road North,
Naples, FL, US

OCT 11 Funeral Service 11:00AM

St. Katherine Greek Orthodox
Church

7100 Airport Pulling Road North,
Naples, FL, US

Comments



“ My great uncle, a great man; to know him is to love him. We shared a dry sense of humor that would have you doubled over in laughter.
His life has been preparing for this journey and a special place in heaven awaits him.
May his memory be eternal

Nick Blougouras - October 09 at 03:54 PM