



GERONDISSA GALACTIA OF CRETE

Metropolitan Neophytos of Morfou

Gerondissa Galactia entered my life in 2016 by way of some faithful brethren in Greece who knew her and told me about her in several messages. Someone from this group sent me her address and phone number so that one could call her if he wanted to communicate with her. Before this, I had not heard of her. Their messages became the occasion for an exceptional spiritual relationship to begin between Gerondissa and myself. As this relationship progressed, I developed an even greater desire within me to meet her in person because I understood this *yiayia* was a grace-filled person of God.

In short time the opportunity presented itself for me to meet Gerondissa along with other hierarchs - Athanasios of Lemessol, Nicholas of Amathounta, and Epiphanius of Ledra - when we had traveled to Kolymbari, Crete in June of 2016 to participate in the Pan-Orthodox Council as members of the Holy Synod of the Church of Cyprus. During these troubling days after the conclusion of the Council's deliberations, we were preparing to leave Crete, saddened and concerned about the future of Orthodoxy. The four of us had dissented from the majority of the gathered hierarchs about the contested question of what is the meaning of Church and whether papism belongs to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Before we left, we were informed that we would have one free day (the Monday of the Holy Spirit) to go to whichever holy sites on Crete we desired. Seizing the opportunity, I thought it would be good, amidst the other places we would visit, to go and get the blessing of the holy *yiayia* Galactia, who at that point had not been tonsured a nun, but still went by her baptismal name: Galatia. She was at that time "a sign spoken against" (Lk. 2:34) among clergy and laity. She still is seen this way to a lesser degree even today.

We met her at the holy pilgrimage site of St. Myron, which is located at the outskirts of the Archdiocesan district of Crete. At that point, she was not bedridden and could move around with her cane. She surprised us from the outset when she told us how grieved Christ was because of the outcome of the Synod of Kolymbari. "They had a gathering here. Were you all there?" she asked. "Yes," we answered. "Christ was greatly saddened by the decisions they made there" she told us with pain of heart. She continued by saying something specifically pertinent to each one of us. As she spoke it became obvious that *yiayia* had the gift of clairvoyance (spiritual discernment) and the ability to understand the spiritual state of people near and far. We also understood that she had a strong and living relationship with Christ, Panagia, St. George, many other saints and especially with the Archangel Michael. The experience of being in her presence was so strong that I can only say one thing: before four bishops she spoke "as one having authority." Here I will also note something particularly interesting that Metropolitan Athanasios of Limassol - a person who has known many holy elders - said: "She has the eyes of Porphyrios." Later, a contemporary elder who secretly practices asceticism in Attica described her as the modern "Porphyria of Crete."

We left Crete and from then on I had a nearly daily communication with Gerondissa Galactia. I do not hesitate to share that even after her repose this communication continues. It does not surprise me that we are also daily witnesses of the miracles she performs. Her appearances, assistance, and healings that she offers to people are not limited to Crete but have spread throughout the Hellenic world — even the entire world. The presence of this blessed *yiayia* is so alive that I am confident that, while the official proclamation of the holiness of St. Porphyrios took 22 years from the time of repose, and for St. Paisios 21 years, and for St. Evmenios 23 years, for Gerondissa Galactia it will happen very soon, for we will all be obliged to kneel before the miracle of her holiness.

Personally, I have been greatly benefited and continue to benefit from Gerondissa, that I cannot but express my deepest gratitude to the providence of the Triune God which allowed me to develop such a familiar and friendly spiritual relationship with her — a relationship which renews and deepens my relationship with the Triune God. I have said many times that, in my youth, during my student years, I had the blessing to know our venerable fathers Iakovos, Evmenios, Porphyrios, and Paisios. These holy fathers helped me to recognize the holiness of my grandmother Myrofora, my mother Milia, my aunt Martha, especially the holiness of Elder Athanasios of Stavrovouni of blessed memory, of the old man Panais, and others. For, I saw the light from these holy and venerable people in Greece reflected in the faces of the hidden saints of Cyprus, whom we lived with and continue to experience in our small homeland. However, there is one important detail I must emphasize: I did not meet Gerondissa Galactia in my youth but at the middle age of 50 years. This age was a milestone for me, for St. Iakovos had told me that when I turned 50 years old, I must start speaking. Indeed, it was at this age at which I met Gerondissa Galactia that I turned my attention to the prophetic words of both the contemporary and older saints of the Church. That is, the study of these prophetic words came first and the homilies followed. Something I forgot to say is that before Gerondissa Galactia, I met the person known as the “Gerondissa of Attica” through a third party, about whom, it must be said, many people still doubt, even today.

Reflecting on my personal journey over these past years, the significant milestone was my pilgrimage to the Holy Lands in 2007. The climax of this experience took place on November 29, 2009. On this day, St. Philoumenos the Cypriot was officially included in the catalog of saints of the Orthodox Church by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. My subsequent trip to Syria in November 2010 was also of great importance. There I saw the explosive situation unfolding. I remember remarking, “*Panagia mou*, fire is coming, a wildfire is approaching!”

All of these things came together and helped me to better understand the world which surrounds our small homeland. I felt the need to distance myself from European thought which functions rationalistically with presuppositions of logical thought that are based on political, economic, transnational, individual, and selfish interests. I had to look through another lens at the agony and fear that overwhelmed me: what will become of Cyprus, what will become of Hellenism, Orthodoxy, Christendom, in this new age that is coming. I could not share all of this with many

people, because the majority of them did not, and even to this day do not, share this fear. At that time we all lived within this European perspective that made many and varied promises — promises which are now being tried and brought low on a daily basis. This is happening to such an extent that even “Europeanists” themselves are talking about a second and third-rate European Union and, the more daring, even speak about a broken Europe. So if the present was tragic and the future dark, who would direct us? At the same time, I recognized that people, especially young people, needed catechism — a new movement from within Orthodoxy that they might be prepared. However, I did not dare to tell anyone these things then.

All these things that I saw then in our own affairs in the East have now become global events which are leading towards World War 3, to an Armageddon. All of these signs of the times which we are witnessing point to a very great, multidimensional crisis — a spiritual, ethical, social, political, economic, and ecclesiastical crisis — which we experienced at the Synod of Crete.

To return to the God-bearing Gerondissa Galactia: she came into my life as the Light of Christ “which illumines all” — Light that can illuminate the past, the present, and the future. This God-bearing person came to tell me about the Uncreated Light - that Light which has no cause in a previous existence, because it is the self-existing Light of the Triune Divinity that created the world, the Light that every saint most desires. She came to me at a time when I had reached midlife and I was in the process of becoming one of the catechists of the Orthodox people with the help of modern technology, even though I felt inexperienced and athirst. St. Gregory the Theologian says about this thirst of God, “God thirsts to be thirsted for.” And David again in the Old Testament writes, “My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how often hath my flesh longed after Thee in a land barren and untrodden and unwatered.” That is to say, this is a thirst, a yearning, not just of the soul but also of the body, of the whole man.

One day when I was speaking with Gerondissa Galactia, among other things, I presented her with two questions that were bothering me intensely. The first dealt with the topic of how I should catechize the faithful, something that St. Iakovos foresaw for me when I was still a student. I began my question:

One time Elder Iakovos told me that after I turned 50 years old I would begin to speak publicly and that my voice would be heard from Canada to Australia. When I asked how exactly this would happen, another contemporary saint, St. Porphyrios explained, “Eh... technology will help. Then there will be the appropriate technology.” So I saw this as a service that I was to perform. What should I tell people now that I’ve passed the age of 50?

She answered with a word that shocked me, it scandalized me, and I never expected to hear something like this from an elderly lady. At that point she was not yet a nun but just an old Cretan woman: “My child, you should talk about the dirty things! About the things that others are afraid to say or refuse to speak about! These things will set the world aflame! They’ve gotten into everything and everywhere! Among both the married and the unmarried! These are the great sins of this age! The shameful! The unnatural!”

“What?” I asked.

“You should talk about the dirty things, my bishop, the things that others are afraid to say... either out of shame or because they are being coerced.”

“What do you mean?” I said. “What dirty things?”

“The dirty things, those that bring sicknesses, the shots, and war. You must speak about abortions, about the unnatural sins that take place inside and outside of marriage by very many people. Unfortunately, the whole world has become filthy. Speak also about magic, satanism, and blasphemies. But especially you should talk 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 say to her, “But if I talk about these things that you suggest, people will be scandalized: especially the Christians and the bishops. Gerondissa, how can I say these things? I’m 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’re a powerhouse. You are not afraid like the others. A doctor doesn’t 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 that you do not get any filth on you.”

“What sort of gloves?” I asked.

“You should be humble and careful. This will protect you. That’s how it will happen, but it must happen. With the state that we’ve reached these days, if two or three of you don’t speak up, the evil that will come upon humanity will be immense. Christ has shown me this. There is something like slime, a film, caked over and around all of humanity. As soon as the Archangel Michael received a command from the Lord to pierce this film, all of humanity was filled with a filth and stench that reached up to high heaven. The Lord told me, ‘Do you see, Galatia, what is happening, while you and my Mother are begging me to save them?’ These three things... Today’s people have become [nothing more than] flesh. Who will tell them? Why do we have bishops? People do not listen to me because there is no voice for them to hear. You, my child, along with some others, must do this work. This is what Christ wants from you.”

Then I asked her, “How will talking about dirty things help?” She gave me this dread reply: “It will help the clergy and the laity come to repentance so that the evil that is coming will be to a lesser extent, more restrained.” I was stunned but also felt joy because I was sure that these

words were coming from a great and holy woman. These were not words cast about carelessly and frivolously but rather words of grace that had been given to her by the Holy Spirit.

I thank the holy Gerondissa Galactia who helped me greatly with what she said to me, and I pray that she intercedes for us. I feel obligated to put down and record for the first time the following, for the benefit of us all. When I began to speak about “the dirty things,” for a year and a half I daily received intense attacks, taunts, mocking, insults, slander, and much more from the mass media. Parties had positioned themselves against me, and even bishops - some in public and others underground - and they were talking negatively about me: “Why would he speak about the unnatural [sins] and say that these sins have something to do with heredity?” Gerondissa Galactia saw my anguish and sadness and mobilized all the saints, especially Saint Porphyrios. She said to him, “They’re bothering Morphou. They don’t understand what he’s saying and he is one of the few that dared to speak. He has given Satan a great stab in the heart. His voice has been heard as far away as America. Not the bishop’s voice - Satan’s voice. Satan’s moaning has been heard as far away as America. Run,” she says, “and comfort [the Metropolitan’s] heart. He is all alone in Cyprus, locked up in his cell. I can see him but I cannot reach him. You must go yourself, Elder Porphyrios.” I cannot hide from you that from the day that she sent me Saint Porphyrios I have felt within me a continuous peace and joy, just as it says in the Lord’s beatitude: “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven” (Mt. 5:11-12).

The second important question that I put forward to Gerondissa was about the illumination that all the saints yearned for. I said to her, “Some tell me that the light is energy, and others that it is uncreated. I know these things from the books I read like the Philokalia...” Before I could finish the question, it made an impression on me how quickly she answered, which only confirms that this is the result not of reading but of experience. She herself had experienced this light from the first years of her life, when she was still a young girl in her father’s house. She says to me, “The Father is Light, the Logos is Light, the Holy Spirit is Light. THIS TRIUNE LIGHT IS FULL OF INFORMATION.” As soon as I heard this, I remember that I responded, “Gerondissa, thank you,” and I hung up the phone. These words were so powerful for me, so bright... I found what I was looking for. I could not say anything else at that moment! I had read that every being consists of matter, energy, and information. I knew that quantum physicists and a few contemporary philosophers of Western Europe had said this, but no one defines it! Neither the theologians nor the physicists! They say this and that and so many other things, but no one ever dared to connect with such simplicity and clarity the uncreated light with information. Do you notice how one created seed has so much information in it that, when you plant it, it will produce beans? Will then the Light not have information? It was as if Gerondissa’s answer had shined for me a light over immense plains and mountains which until then I saw as dark, forested, and unapproachable. When I called her back, what do you think she said to me? “The Father is Light, the Logos is Light, the Holy Spirit is Light.” She was chanting the Exapostilarion of Pentecost to me!

These words from Gerondissa's sanctified mouth, that the Triune Light is full of information, opened for me great roads, corridors, plazas, and meadows, because now I understood the relationship between light and knowledge. [I realized] that the vision of God is the knowledge of God. The Triune, uncreated light seen by the people of God is a LIGHT FULL OF INFORMATION. We have an icon in the monastery of St. John Lampadistis which is called "Jesus Christ, the Informing Lord". According to Saint Symeon the New Theologian, light is knowledge, but knowledge is not light, as godless and deluded Europe thinks, which puts logic and morality above faith. Knowledge goes together with morality. Dogma goes together with morality. God's essence is beyond participation, while His energies can be participated in. The glory, the radiance coming from the essence of God, is accessible.

In other words, all of these things that Gerondissa revealed to us she learned and experienced through her immense love for Christ, which was her greatest virtue, the center of her existence. This Love gave her discernment and humility, fortifying her spiritually so that she would not fall into error. It taught her that "GLORY EQUALS KNOWLEDGE, AND KNOWLEDGE EQUALS LIGHT." The man of God does not seek life, not even Paradise itself, but only the glory of God. That is why Saint Iakovos used to say to me, "Neophytos, even if we renounce everything, even God and the saints want glory, and we should give it to them."

Gerondissa told me many and various other things, which there is not enough space to relate, so I will share only a few more with you. She told me about Cyprus: "Cyprus has a future in spite of world powers, because it has great protection. Cyprus has many votes both in heaven and on earth. That is why it will live and be freed. And the time will come when, wonderfully, beautifully, its two pieces will be reunited. Now we are being tested so that God and our saints can see if we are worthy to have our occupied areas liberated and and the Liturgy freely served in the churches there."

She told me about prayer, "Prayer must be Triune. My heavenly Father, forgive me. Holy Spirit, cleanse me. Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." I was glad to hear of this Trinitarian prayer, but I was led to an extreme division of the Three Divine Persons in my mind, which she understood immediately, for I told her, "When I pray to the Holy Spirit, why do I feel more wonderful than when I say *Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me?*" She told me, "My bishop, these Three are inseparable." While she herself prayed to each one of the Divine Persons, yet, so as not to lead the unity of the Triune God to a division and error, she said to me with a sweetness, with a condescension, as if she did not want to offend my high priesthood which was so immature, "My bishop, these Three are inseparable. My dear bishop, the *Lord Jesus Christ* is the way of the heart... to be broken and humbled. Let your eye be on your sinfulness, that is, on the sewer." She said roughly the same thing to a visitor who asked her, "*Yiayia* Galactia, what is noetic prayer?" "It is a flame, my child, a flame ever burning in the heart. It goes round and round whispering the name of Christ. It does not allow any bad thing to fall into the heart because it burns it up. This little lantern shows you how sweet Paradise is and how sinful the person who feels this. It shows you that God is everything and we are nothing! That is why you have joy and sorrow: joy because of Christ's victory and unbearable pain for your sins. You have

hope, however, because you see who Christ is. Whoever experiences this and boasts is nothing. He's a little ball, a plaything at the feet of the evil demons. I tell Fr. Antonios not to talk to you about these things. He should tell you about sins, about repentance, and to quietly say the name of Christ. *Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me.* My child, here people are living in sewers... not even on the surface of the earth." And she said another time, "The sewers of New York are cleaner. Even pigs do not approach their filth. What could the people in the sewer know of these [triune] suns?"

Another day she said, "God is infinite and indescribable light. There you know everything. You do not ask anything. You only receive. He is the light of existence. How can I tell you? He only loves; He accomplishes all that is good." Here Gerondissa Galactia is describing the life that is awaits us, eternal life. This is what she is telling us.

I should say that it was not only me who benefited from my relationship with Gerondissa, but many of my spiritual children also benefited: priests, hieromonks, deacons, the nuns of our Metropolis, chanters, and above all our lay people who ran to meet Gerondissa because I had recommended her to them as a contemporary God-bearing person. So, as you realize, there was a surprising and somewhat "scandalous" amount of traffic and movement between Cyprus and Crete because of me. Of course, this burdened her everyday life, because over the years she suffered many strokes. In spite of this, the following miraculous phenomenon took place. Even though her brain cells started to slowly die, making it difficult for her to communicate, the memory of her heart was infinite, full of the light of Christ, so that she was able to give answers to everyone who came to visit her, either spiritually in the mind or in the heart of her visitors, according to the way the visitor who came to her best understood. Her cerebral dysfunction would occasionally stop for a moment: the old Galactia, the healthy one, would return, give an answer with precision and clear speech, and afterwards return to her illness once again! Those present and her caretakers would be shocked by this miraculous event. In fact, this happened often when the Cypriots visited her, as they told me. This happened because she had great compassion on this great, martyric island, about which she said, "Cyprus has very deep roots in Christianity. So deep - deeper than any other place of Romanity."

Coming to the end of the Prologue, I would like to thank my "twin brother", as Galactia referred to him, Fr. Antonios Frangakis, because he was the man who cared for and served Gerondissa as her earthly guardian angel, but also the man who cared to help me every time I called. In the person of Fr. Antonios I saw my gifts and my shortcomings. He says so himself. He is a brother who was late to come into my life, but who came at the right time.

I thank him from the bottom of my heart for giving me the opportunity to preface this book, which contains, above all, her spiritual life in the form of an funeral oration, which befits ancient saints like Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom. This is something that does not surprise me, because the theology and pastoral care of this holy woman, which continues even after her repose, as happens with every saint, is not far from the height, depth, and breadth of these great ancient saints. In the person of Galactia I saw the successor of the

great Fathers and Mothers that we met during our student years: Iakovos, Evmenios, Porphyrios, Paisios, Athanasios of Stavrovouni, Panais of Lysis, Myrophora, Milia, and others.

In addition, I owe thanks to Fr. Antonios because he introduced me to holy people of Crete, who by good fortune also had a spiritual friendship with my confessor, also a Cretan, Saint Evmenios Saridakis. I met the most faithful theologian Fr. Anastasios Koudoumianos through Fr. Antonios and Gerontissa Galactia. I also experienced the later years and the departure of the last Cave-dweller of the Asterousia Mountains of Southern Crete, the monk Fr. Theodore-Neilos. He was the reason I began to understand the value of the Psalter as a healing prayer and as a weapon against the devil. His advice to spread this love for the Psalms, especially to young people, took hold. Throughout the length and breadth of the inhabited earth, I know young people, but also old people, who read the Psalter of David fighting the devil and healing their passions.

In closing, in her earthly life and conduct, Gerondissa Galactia loved Christ and the Triune God with all her soul, with all her strength, with all her mind. In her later years, her love for the Triune God matured to a great extent. Just as a tree ripens and bears fruit, Galactia also bore fruit richly. Five years before her repose in 2021, “her sound went forth into all the earth” and her love for Christ was given to all of us through the fruits that she bore. Now, after her repose, our Lord Jesus Christ, “the One Who both offers and is offered, the One who is never consumed,” is offered, also through our venerable mother Galactia, to all people. And in this way Galactia applies the second commandment to “love your neighbor as yourself”. This is an answer as to how Orthodoxy’s therapeutic treatment works. Not as the “love-ologists” and “post-patristic” theologians would say. First, you clean yourself of the filth, *Yiyia* used to tell us; then with much patience you bear fruit in difficult times, illnesses, trials and slanders; and in your later years, especially after your repose, the great transmission [of these gifts] to the neighbor begins.

The holy Gerondissa Galactia of Crete, and of the whole world, like every saint, is an confounding answer to all of us, since even though we have come to know the value of the Orthodox therapeutic treatment through the lives of the saints, we have become distanced from “the one thing needful” through laziness and technology, that modern sorceress, which constantly creates virtual worlds, false and demonic. “It sways our mind,” as my blessed mother Milia used to say! And then we run here and there inconsolably seeking healing, forgetting that the only physician of bodies and souls is our Lord Jesus Christ and His saints are the signposts.

With many prayers
and love in Christ,
Metropolitan
+Neophytos of Morphou

The Metropolis of Morphou
Evrychou, Friday, June 24, 2022

The Nativity of the Honorable
Forerunner and Baptist John.