

The Feast of St. Philaret the Merciful, Patron of the Women's Guild Named For Him

With great compunction and piety, on the Feast Day of St. Philaret the Merciful (celebrated on December 1), the Orthodox Women's Guild named after him, a philanthropic and charitable Church organization in our Holy Synod, celebrated the Feast of its Patron at the Holy Convent of St. Paraskeve in Acharnon, Attica, Greece.

The All-Night Vigil, including Compline, Great Vespers, and Matins, ending with the Divine Liturgy, began at 7:00 p.m.

Presiding was His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle, assisted by the Reverend Father Constantine Soteriades and, from the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, Hierodeacon Joseph and Subdeacon Anthony.

A particular honor and blessing was the presence, at the celebration, of the Very Reverend Mother Taxiarchia, Abbess of the Convent of the Holy Angels in Aphidnia, Attica,

with a delegation of monastic Sisters, who overjoyed the hearts of those in attendance with their angelic chanting for seven continuous hours, as well as that of the Reverend Mother Evpraxia, Abbess of the Holy Convent of the Mother of God of the Myrtle Tree, also in Aphidnia, Attica.

Those present were deeply touched and moved by the participation and great sacrifice of the Superior of the Holy Convent of St. Paraskeve, Mother Justina, who with her beloved sisters labored greatly, in order show their heartfelt hospitality to the celebrating faithful.



The faithful men and women, members of the Guild, friends, volunteers, and helpers, all especially devoted to the Guild's Patron, St. Philaret, having embraced with love the work of the organization, arrived early, and the Convent Chapel of St. Paraskeve was soon overflowing with worshippers.



All present, as one body and one heart, glorified and showed gratitude to our All-Good God, Who bestows His rich gifts on us by way of our humble service to our suffering brothers and sisters, through whom we are united to the Bridegroom Christ.



The members of the Guild felt greatly indebted to His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, who, at the moment of Holy Communion, directed to all present an upbuilding and consoling sermon. He underscored with particular emphasis the seriousness and great responsibility of the Guild's work, noting that all of them are servers of the Most High in the great "Liturgy (Work) of Love."

After the Divine Liturgy, all present were offered a meal by Mother Justina and her sisterhood, which, though sparse, was filled with



the flavor of love. During the meal, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian continued his upbuilding sermon and once more laid emphasis on the concern that we Christians should have for others, for our suffering brothers and sisters, with a fraternal vision focused on them and not on the individual self.



He then passed the podium on to the President of the Guild, who, above all, expressed gratitude to the Lord and to our ever-memorable, much-loved, Metropolitan and Father Cyprian, the founder of the Guild, as the soul of its work. In her closing remarks, she noted that the Guild



was not out to save the world, but—like a small humming bird who struggles to put out a forest fire with a small drop of water, in keeping with his abilities—to do what it can in the dreadful economic state of the Greek nation.

