

Women's Monasticism in our Metropolis "Grows" in Christ

## New Tonsures of Nuns During the Nativity Fast

**B**y the Grace of the Bridegroom of the Church, the protection of the *Theotokos*, who knew not wedlock, and the blessing of our ailing Elder, Metropolitan Cyprian, His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President of the Holy Synod, recently tonsured three new Rasophore Nuns at three of our Metropolis' convents, which he serves as spiritual Father.

On November 21, during the All-Night Vigil for the Feast of the Entry of the *Theotokos* celebrated at the Convent of St. Paraskeve (Acharnai, Attica), Novice Euphrosyne was tonsured with the name "Christonymphe," in honor of the convent's ever-memorable first Abbess. The present Abbess, Reverend Mother Makrina, served as her sponsor.



The newly-tonsured Sister Christonymphe was born on January 16, 1989 to Soterios and Photeine Stouraites, who are residents of Acharnai. After completing her studies at a technical high school, she entered the convent of her repentance on February 18, 2007. Her biological sister, Kale, is a novice at the same convent.

**On December 1,** at the Convent of the Holy Angels (Aphidnai, Attica), during the All-Night Vigil for the Feast Day of St. Philaret the Merciful (the Patron Saint of our Orthodox Women's Guild), Novice Chrysoula was tonsured with the name "Philarete." The convent's Abbess, Reverend Mother Taxiarchia, served as her sponsor.



Sister Philarete was born on February 18, 1964 in Parabola, Aitolocarnania (western Greece) to Konstantinos and Basilike (†) Katsoudas. After graduating from high school, she married and had a son, Angelos. Through the envy of the Devil, however, her marriage failed and was dissolved. The young mother thenceforth dedicated her life to the Church, raising her son in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Following the entry of her son (now Monk Philaretos) into the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, Chrysoula joined the Convent of the Holy Angels as a novice on August 11, 2009. She was an active member of the St. Philaret the Merciful Guild (serving as secretary), for which reason she was given the name Philarete at this her first tonsure, which was celebrated on the commemoration of St. Philaret.



\* \* \*

**On December 14,** during Vespers for the Holy Hieromartyr Eleftherios celebrated at the *Hesychasterion* of the Transfiguration (in Sykamion, Oropos, Attica), Novice Helen was tonsured with the name "Irene Chrysobalantou." Mother Hilaria, the Sisterhood's Superior, served as her sponsor.



The newly-tonsured sister—whom Bishop Cyprian has nicknamed “Chryso-irene”—was born on October 29, 1986 in Embu, Kenya, to Jacob and Rebecca Njagi. She was the only daughter in a family of nine children. After completing high school, she entered the Convent of St. George in Kenya, where she remained for three years (2006-2009). In response to an invitation by our Holy Synod, she was sent to Greece and eagerly joined the Sisterhood of the Convent of the Transfiguration on October 19, 2009.



\* \* \*

**We** offer glory, praise, and thanksgiving to Christ, our Heavenly Bridegroom, Who draws young and Grace-filled souls to the blessed and glorious family of monastics! It is indeed a great miracle in our days for the wilderness to blossom anew in this way, and for the prayers of monastics to uphold the world and to preserve unextinguished the lamp of hope!