

## New Monastic Tonsures at the Convent of the Holy Angels

### The Monastic as a Guiding Light

**O**n February 27, 2010 (Old Style), the Fourth Saturday of the Great Fast, and on March 9, 2010, the commemoration of the Holy Forty Martyrs, Rasophore Nuns Philothei and Lydia, respectively,



were vouchsafed to receive the Great and Angelic Schema. Sister Philothei (in the world Helen Saresabbidou, 39 years old) is a high school graduate and hails from Agrinion, the hometown of our Most Reverend Elder, Metropolitan Cyprian. Sister Lydia (in the world Xenia Nedelsky, 31 years old), is the daughter of Father Michael Nedelsky, a Priest in our American Exarchate. She completed her undergraduate studies and worked

as a classical musician before coming to Greece, in September of 2000, to teach English in Agrinion.



The two sisters attended Church together at the *Hesychasterion* of All Saints, in Agrinion, under the spiritual guidance of Archimandrite Athanasios Hagiokyprianites. Sister Lydia entered the Convent of the Holy Angels in September of 2001, followed shortly thereafter by Sister Philothei in March of 2002, with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, who tonsured them Rasophore Nuns in 2004. They were named in honor of St. Philothei of Athens and St. Lydia of Philippi.



The convent's spiritual Father, His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President of the Holy Synod, performed the Mystery of the Great and Angelic Schema, with the Reverend Mother Taxiarchia, their spiritual Mother, serving as their sponsor. At her tonsure, Sister Lydia was renamed in honor of St. Lydia the New Russian Martyr (commemorated on July 20).

In his homily, Bishop Cyprian spoke about the mission of monasticism throughout the ages within the Body of the Church. A monastic is called upon to become a guiding light; practicing

the virtues of obedience, nonacquisitiveness, and chastity, he or she lives “crucified with Christ,” thereby acquiring—and inspiring in our lay brethren—the genuine Ethos of the Church: that is, humble obedience to the Will of God in all things, freedom from attachment to material goods, and chastity (in both the narrow and broad sense of the word) and the purification of our beings.

May the Immaculate *Theotokos* and the Holy Angelic Patrons of our Convent shelter and guide our newly-tonsured Sisters in their monastic struggles for the sake of the Heavenly Nuptial Chamber, through the prayers of our much-revered Elder, Metropolitan Cyprian, and of the ever-memorable Mother Kypriane (†2000), the first Abbess of our convent.

Nun S.

