

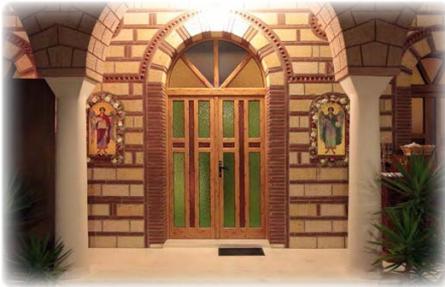


## “For the Edification of the Church”

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“Come, let us acquire the Angels as our Protectors and Friends in Times of Need”

## An Agrypnia of Thanksgiving on the Occasion of the Synaxis of the Heavenly Powers at the Convent of the Holy Angels, Aphidnai, Greece



On Saturday, November 8, 2015 (Old Style), the Convent of the Holy Angels, near Athens, Greece, celebrated the *Synaxis* of its Heavenly and Bodiless Patrons.

His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle, the spiritual Father of the Sisterhood, presided throughout the festal All-Night Vigil.

He was assisted by the convent’s serving Priest, Father Angelos Mourlas (whose Nameday it was), Father Soterios Gioules, Hierodeacons Father Joseph and Father Gabriel and Subdeacon Monk Antonios, from the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, and Subdeacons Demetrios Giatrakos and Apostolos Phykiyas.

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The All-Night Vigil, which began at 7 p.m., was enriched not only by the chanting of a *Polyeleos*, *Enkomia*, and *Evl-ogetaria* specially written for the convent (by the Reverend Mother Isidora of the Convent of St. Hierotheos), but also,



for the first time, by special verses of thanksgiving and entreaty, written by Metropolitan Cyprian, to the Protectors and Guides of the convent, as well as to the two Guardian Angels granted to monastics, the first at Baptism and the second upon reception of the Great Schema. (Click [here](#) to hear a selection.)

This spiritual banquet, which included the customary monastic meal, came to a conclusion around 5 a.m.

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**Joining** the Reverend Mother Taxiarhia, the Abbess of the convent, were the Reverend Mothers Eupraxia and Justina, Abbess of the nearby Convent of the *Panagia Myrtilidiotissa* and of the Convent of St. Paraskeve (Acharnai, near Athens), respectively. Also

in attendance were many faithful, who, at the exhortation of our Shepherd, actively participated in certain parts of the service, and the majority of whom communed of the Immaculate Mysteries.

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**Following** Great Vespers and the Blessing of the Loaves, in an atmosphere of deep compunction, Metropolitan Cyprian tonsured Novice Maria (who hails from Romania) a Rasophore Nun with the name Synkletike. He also read a special prayer over Sister Anastasia (from the United States) upon the beginning of her novitiate.



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*During the Communion of the Clergy, our Most Reverend Shepherd spoke about the opportunity afforded to us on this day to express our gratitude to the Holy Angels, who, as our elder Brothers, follow and guide us on our journey towards the Light of the*

*Kingdom, and weep when we fall and choose darkness over Light.*

*He also spoke about the experience of a pious Priest in our own days, to whom it was revealed that, among the groups of Angels that convey to our Lord the various petitions of human beings, the most radiant are those who, along with the entreaties, also convey our fervent tears of repentance, which adorn the heavenly throne of our Lord like precious pearls.*

*If our world today is staggering, if Europe is shaken to the core, it is because we do not feel the need to repent; we are not brought to contrition, compunction, and tears. Repentance fills us with the presence of God; it elicits Divine Grace. We Christians owe it to the world to repent, for thereby our souls are polished through a process of purification and illumination, such that we are united with God and His Kingdom is "expanded." We Christians have been granted the privilege of giving to the world this message of life, hope, and light....*

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**At** the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, under the starlit canopy of the still, spring-like night, a procession was made around the convent's main Church with the Icons of the Holy Angels and of the two monastic Guardian Angels, accompanied by chanting and prayers of entreaty. Finally, His Eminence distributed to the faithful the fifth annual cat-

ecetical pamphlet, dedicated to the Holy Angels, entitled, "The Holy Angels in Our Lives."

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**On** Saturday afternoon, the Sisterhood under the Reverend Mother Taxiarchia gathered, together with their spiritual Father, for an "Angelic Gathering," yet another yearly tradition.



The Sisterhood expressed to His Eminence its gratitude and prayers that he be granted strength in his ministry, which is growing ever weightier. He, in turn, offered his best wishes to Mother Taxiarchia and all of the sisters who were celebrating their Nameday.

They then discussed in detail the characteristics of the true monastic, as set forth by the biographer of Abba Dorotheos in the Prologue to his famed *Discourses*.

This collective in-depth discussion of the text proved to be, by the Grace of God and with the assistance of our spiritual Father, a source of therapeutic self-reproach and hopeful resolution to "make a new beginning, yet again."



*"What shall we render unto the Lord  
for all that He hath rendered unto us?"*





*We include here below the text (from the book [in Greek] Experiences During the Divine Liturgy by Protopresbyter Stephanos K. Anagnostopoulos) to which His Eminence referred during his sermon:*

**A Priest** was once gazing into the heavens with astonishment and awe. When asked by those around him what so rapt his attention so, he replied:

“I behold various groups of Angels that are continuously bringing the petitions of Christians before the Throne of Christ our Savior.

“Most people supplicate for a resolution to their many hardships, such as sicknesses, disabilities, misfortunes, hunger, unemployment, and so on. Others entreat for an end to wars, bloodshed, crime, and whatever other moral evil reigns in the world. Yet others are filled with thanksgiving to the God of love, and others with heavenly glorification for the abundant spiritual goods granted to their souls.

“The most glorious and radiant group of Angels, however, is that which conveys, along with supplications, fervent tears of repentance. These ascend like precious pearls, which adorn the heavenly throne of our Lord. Such are the supplications of those blessed souls that ‘seek first the Kingdom of God’ by purification from their passions, contrition of heart, union with God through Holy Communion, and the remission of their sins.”

