



“For the Edification of the Church”

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■ An experience of blessed co-ministry

Meeting of the Volunteers and Assistants of the St. Philaret the Merciful Guild Fili, Attica, September 4, 2019 (Old Style)



On Tuesday, September 4, 2019 (Old Style, Commemoration of the Holy Prophet Moses the God-Seer), with the blessing, participation, and paternal guidance of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili, a meeting of the volunteers and assistants of the St. Philaret the Merciful Guild was held at the offices of the Holy Metropolis, in the Municipal Unit of Fili (outside of Athens).

His Eminence was joined by the Very Reverend Archimandrite Theodosios, Abbot of the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina in Fili, and Chancellor of our Holy Metropolis.

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After a prayerful opening, our Much-Revered Shepherd gave thanks to the volunteers for their self-sacrificing contribution to the charitable work of our Church, encouraged them to be animated by the spirit of cooperation, and spoke about the risk of our being inwardly and imperceptibly ensnared, in the performance of our ministry, by five dispositions, by which the spiritual foundation of Ministry—namely, to serve our Lord Himself in the person of our brothers and sisters—is brought to nought:

- a domineering attitude;

• **p**harisaism / self-righteousness (e.g. “we are the ones who help”);

• **a**nnoyance with people displaying deviant behavior, whereas we are called to accept others, whoever they may be and as they are.

• **f**actionalism, which brings about discord, and comparisons (“we can handle things better than others”), both of which hinder our cooperation with other organizations akin to ours; and

• **p**rejudices against certain groups of people.

Among other things, His Eminence stressed that, by the Grace of God, working in service to others combined with inner watchfulness bring about our spiritual maturation.

The Very Reverend Archimandrite Theodosios reminded those in attendance that the charitable work of the Holy Metropolis is under the patronage of Saint Philaret the Merciful. Thus, everything belongs to the Saint, and we must manage his goods with great reverence, responsibility and consideration.

The distinctive marks that our ministry is pleasing to God will be the inward fruits of our peace in Christ, joy and humble eagerness, which increasingly open up our beings to the Grace of the First Volunteer, our Savior Jesus Christ.

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The Volunteers in attendance confirmed what our Shepherds had stressed by relating their personal experiences in the performance of their ministry.

Various suggestions were also made for the smooth functioning of the Holy Metropolis’ diverse ministries, the rewarding of sponsors, etc.

God willing, the next meeting has been set for the beginning of the new civil year.

The paternal blessings and expressions of gratitude of our Much-Revered Shepherd brought to a close this very edifying meeting, which, at the outset of the new period 2019-2020, revitalized the zeal of those in attendance for their contribution to the charitable work of our Church.

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