



## “For the Edification of the Church”

- Annals • Pastoral Activities • Presentations •
- Gatherings • Homilies • Sermons • Feasts •
- Pilgrimages • Social Ministry • Publications •

“When saw we Thee...in prison and came unto Thee?” (St. Matthew 25:39)

## Visit to the Juvenile Special Detention Center of Volos and Hierarchical Concelebration at the Church of the St. John the Forerunner December 10, 2023 (Old Style)



**O**n Tuesday, December 10, 2023 (Old Style), with the blessing, participation, and guidance, of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle, the St. Philaret the Merciful Guild made its twentieth visit to the Juvenile Special De-

tention Center of Volos.

The Guild’s volunteers collected and packaged personal care items, which had been donated to the Guild by private individuals and stores, or were bought by the Guild, for distribution to our incarcerated brothers.

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**At the Juvenile Special Detention Center of Volos**, the prison director had yet again forewarned the visitors that, owing to recent cases of Covid, they would not be able to meet with the inmates personally in the courtyard, as they had done in the past.

The prison director, our beloved brother in Christ, Mr. Basilios Apostolakes, welcomed the small group of pilgrims in the control room and warmly thanked them for the support they have

offered since 2010. He described for them how he works to promote good cooperation among the detention center's staff, since he wishes their difficult work to take place in as pleasant and friendly atmosphere as possible, and the supervision of the inmates to be undertaken as a form of Ministry.

The visitors then had a brief but heartfelt meeting with a small group of working inmates, to whom they gave small gifts and exchanged Christmas greetings.

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**Leaving** the detention center, the group then visited, with the blessing of the local Hierarch, His Eminence, Metropolitan Photios of Demetrias, the Convent of the Life-giving Spring in Rizomylo Belestinou, where they were given hospitality by Mother Akakia.



The following day, the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers, Metropolitan Cyprian concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Photios. In his homily, Metropolitan Cyprian spoke about how to prepare for the Feast of the Nativity with contrition and repentance, beseeching the Lord that we may be regenerated and experience the mystery of Union with Him

The small group of pilgrims returned to their homes with feelings of gratitude to our Lord for the edification derived from this two-day excursion.

