

An Agrypnia in Honor of St. Philothei of Athens

February 19, 2013 (Old Style)

Through the blessing of our Lord, a lengthy *Agrypnia*—which began at 7 p.m. on the evening of the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, and lasted until the early morning hours of Monday (February 18-19, 2013 [Old Style])—was held at the Convent of St. Paraskeve, Acharnai, Attica, in honor of the Holy Nun-Martyr Philothei of Athens.

His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi was the principal celebrant at this compunction-evoking *Agrypnia*, assisted by the Reverend Fathers Constantine Terzakes and Constantine Soteriades, with Monk Antonios Hagiokyprianites and Demetrios Giatrakos serving as Subdeacons.

The convent's *Katholikon* (main Church) was filled to capacity with pious worshipers, the majority of whom partook of the Immaculate Mysteries. A large group of nuns from the Convent of the Holy Angels, Aphidnai, Attica, under the Reverend Mother Taxiarchia, was also in attendance and assisted with the chanting.

After the *Agrypnia*, with the help of members of the St. Philaret the Merciful Orthodox Women's Guild, light refreshments were served in the convent's spacious new Trapeza.

* * *



In his homily, Bishop Cyprian spoke with special emphasis about the Life of St. Philothei, calling particular attention to her message, which is truly timely, given that, during that dark period (the fifteenth century) in the history of our [Greek] nation, the Saint offered



self-sacrificial support to the poor, and especially to women, in order to protect them from their barbaric oppressors. So it was that the Saint paid for her work of love with her own blood, proving to be a Martyr of compassion, philanthropy, and charity. She was the precursor of

Orthodox ecclesiastical “feminism,” and by her heroism, self-denial, and voluntary poverty she opens to us in our own day—at this critical turning point (both spiritual and economic) of our nation—the way towards an “exodus” from meanness, grumbling, fatalism, inertia, and self-love.

More intense activity and more fervent volunteerism are needed, but also increased prayer, since the following six months will be of decisive importance, from every viewpoint, for our homeland, which has been reduced to almost total destitution.

To this end, His Grace made an “earnest request,” and announced his resolution to celebrate an “*Agrypnia* of Repentance” every week at the Convent of St. Paraskeve throughout Great Lent. Such *Agrypnias* will most likely be continued after Pascha as well.

Thus, every Friday, beginning on the Friday of Cheesefare Week (March 2/15), we will celebrate these *Agrypnias* of Repentance, with special entreaties and prayers, and with the participation of Bishop Cyprian. The vigils will last from 9:30 p.m. to around 1:30 a.m.

The one exception will be on the Friday of the Akathist Hymn (April 6-7 [Old Style]), since that Saturday there will be a visit to the prisons of Amphissa.

The special Patron of these *Agrypnias* will be the Nun-Martyr Philothei, whose Canon we will chant and a portion of whose Relics we will venerate.

May the God of mercy, compassion, and love for mankind look with a gracious eye upon our adversity and calm the tempest beleaguering our homeland on account of the sins of the clergy and people, and of the ecclesiastical and political rulers. Amen!

February 23, 2013 (Old Style)
Mother Seraphima,
Convent of the Holy Angels