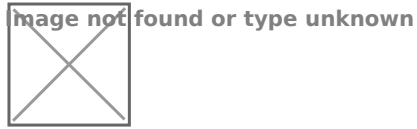


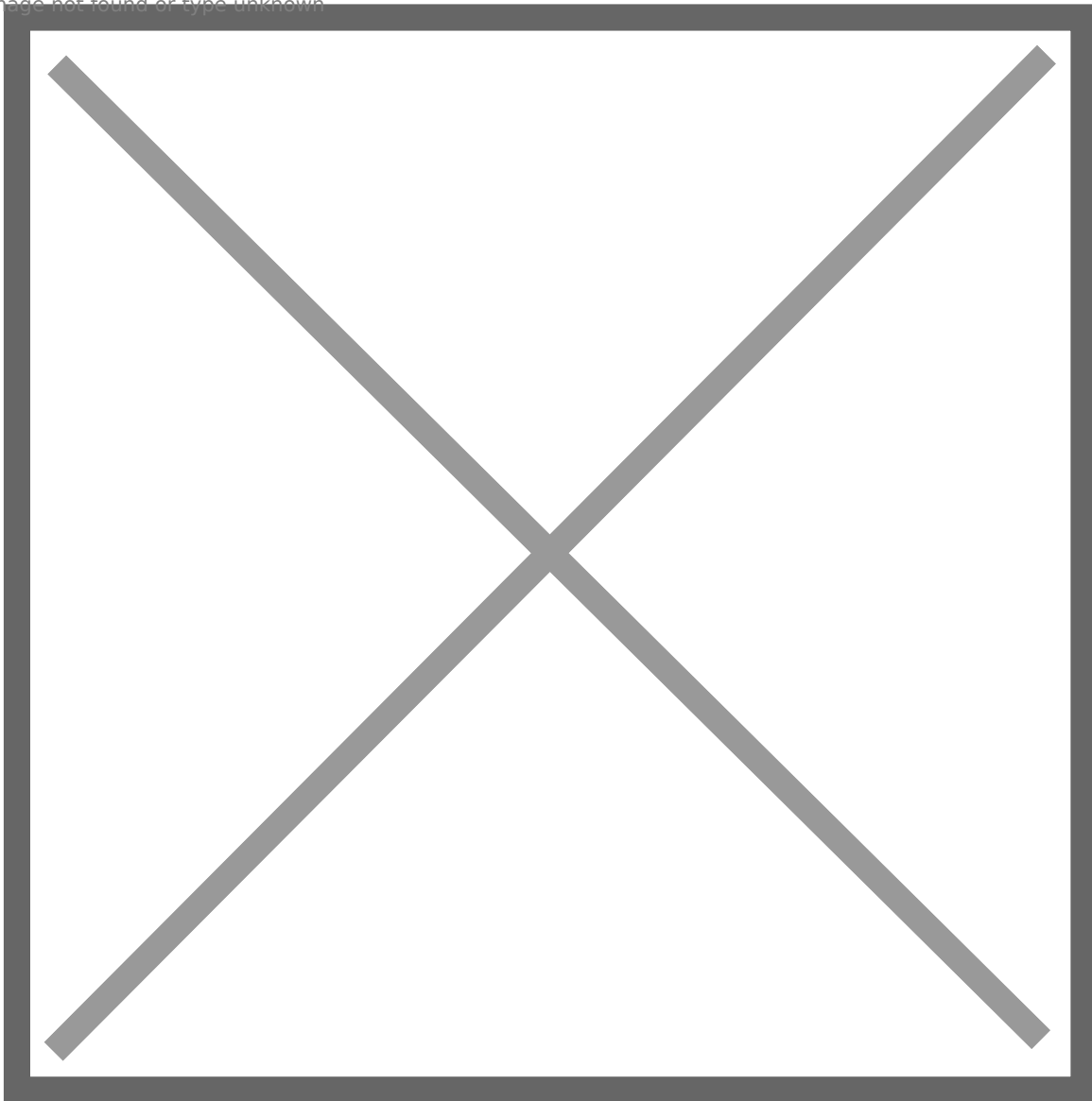
11/12/2024

## **Parochial Schoolchildren Light Archdiocese Christmas Tree alongside Archbishop Elpidophoros**



Greek Orthodox parochial school students gathered to help welcome the Christmas season to the Archdiocese Headquarters in New York, New York.

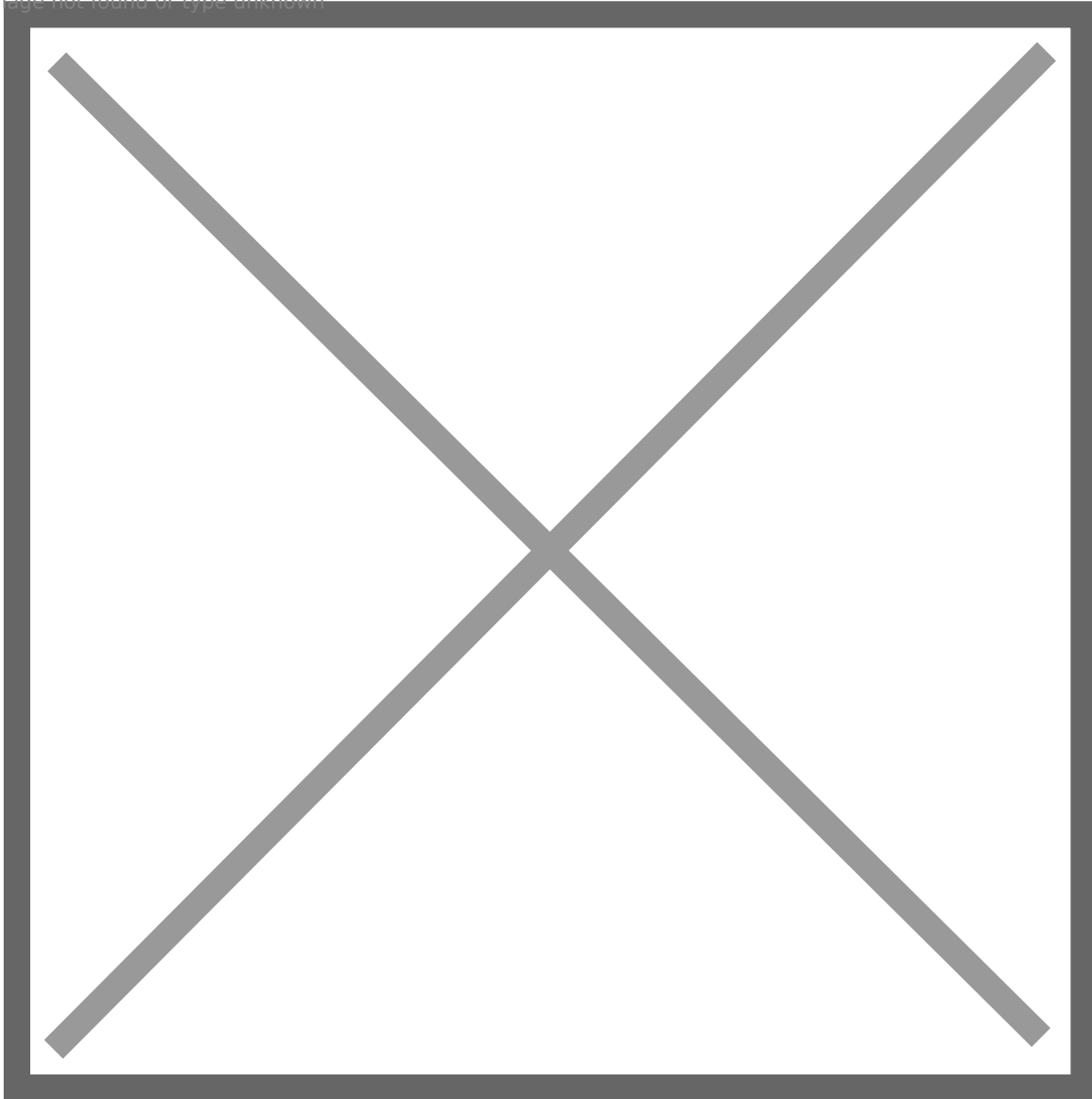
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Arriving from four of the city's boroughs, the children represented five New York

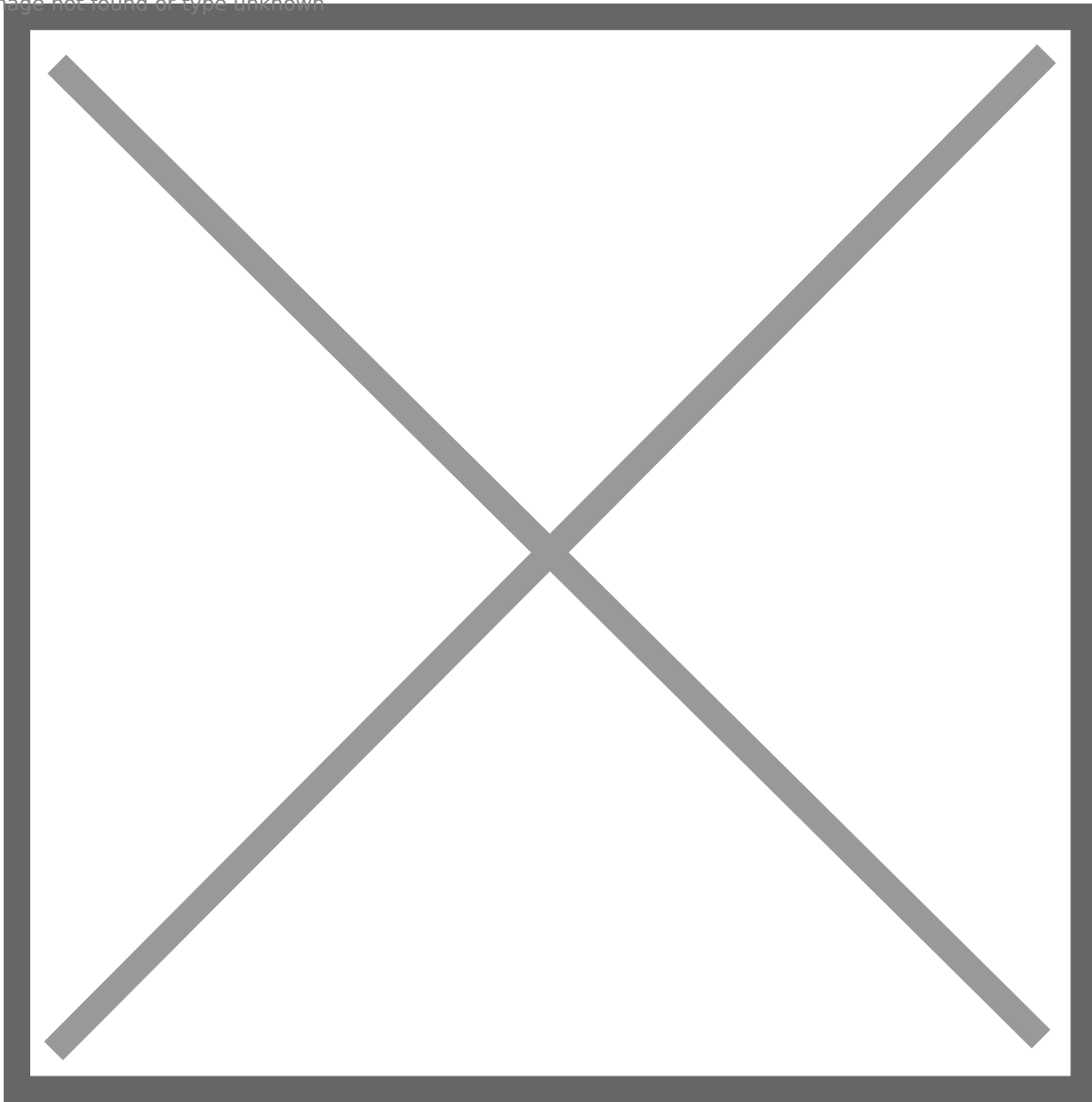
City parochial schools: the Greek American Institute in the Bronx; A. Fantis School in Brooklyn; The Cathedral School in Manhattan; and Saint Demetrios Greek-American School and William Spyropoulos Greek-American Day School in Queens.

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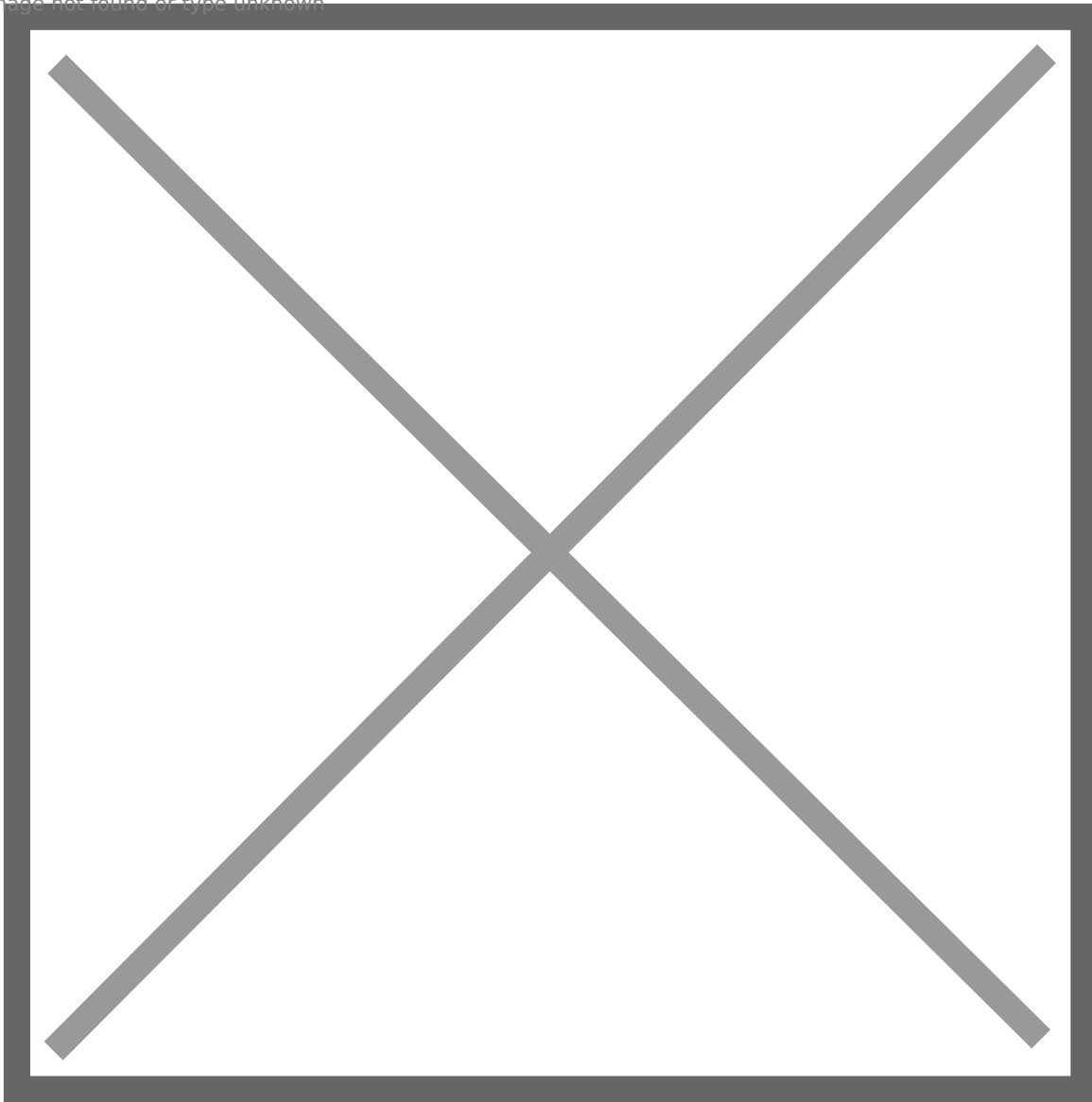
His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America and Archdiocese staff welcomed the children, expressing that they look forward to their Christmastime visit each year. After the schoolchildren sang their first hymn, “Ἡ Γέννησή σου,” GOARCH Department of Greek Education Director Dr. Anastasios Koularmanis and Direct Archdiocesan District Chancellor Fr. Elias Villis each delivered opening greetings to them.

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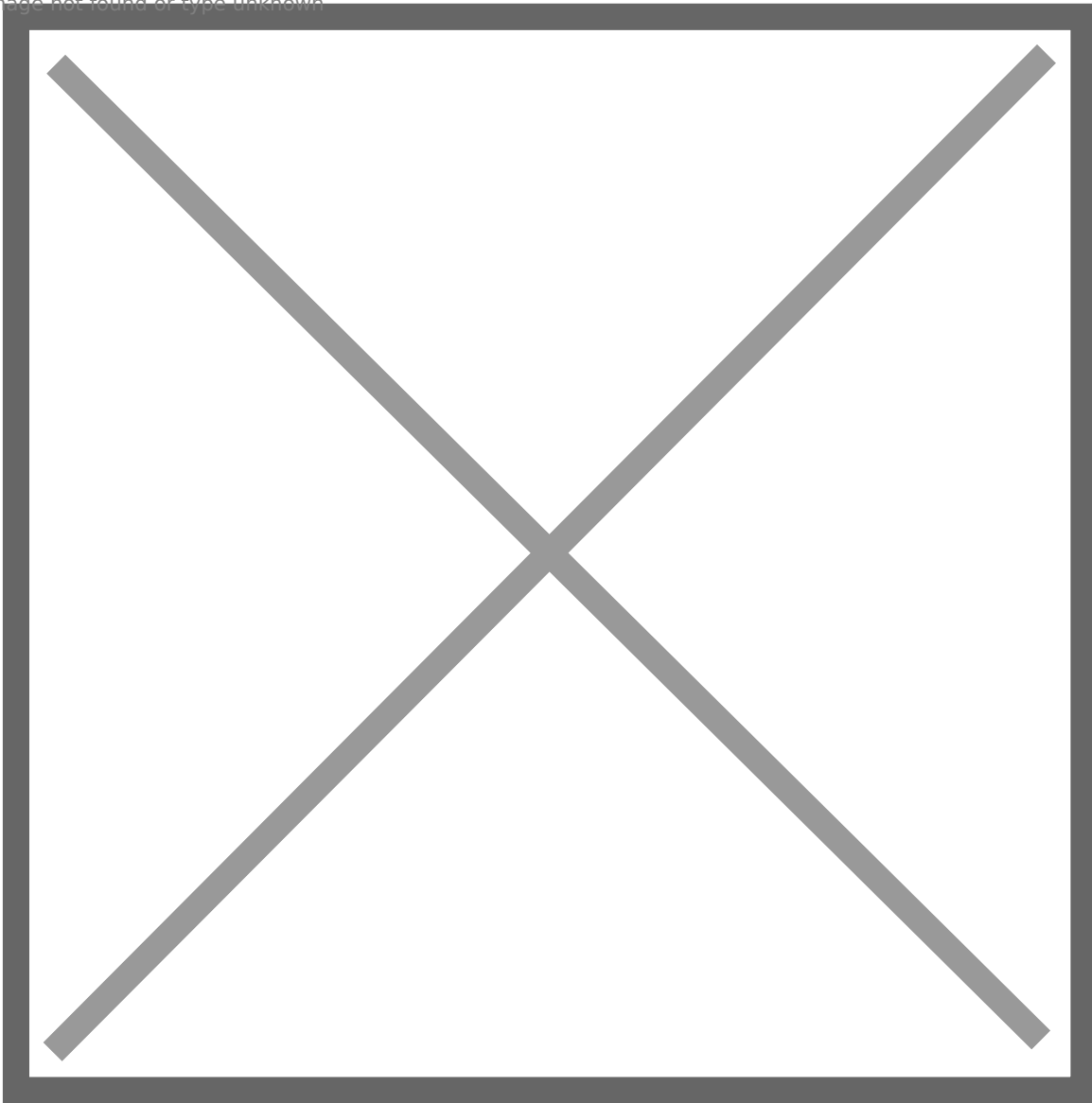
“We love you,” said Fr. Elias, stressing to the students that not only are they “most important to Jesus,” but that the Archdiocese is grateful in “this beautiful, festive season” for their presence as well as for the “work and leadership” of the schools’ teachers and staff.

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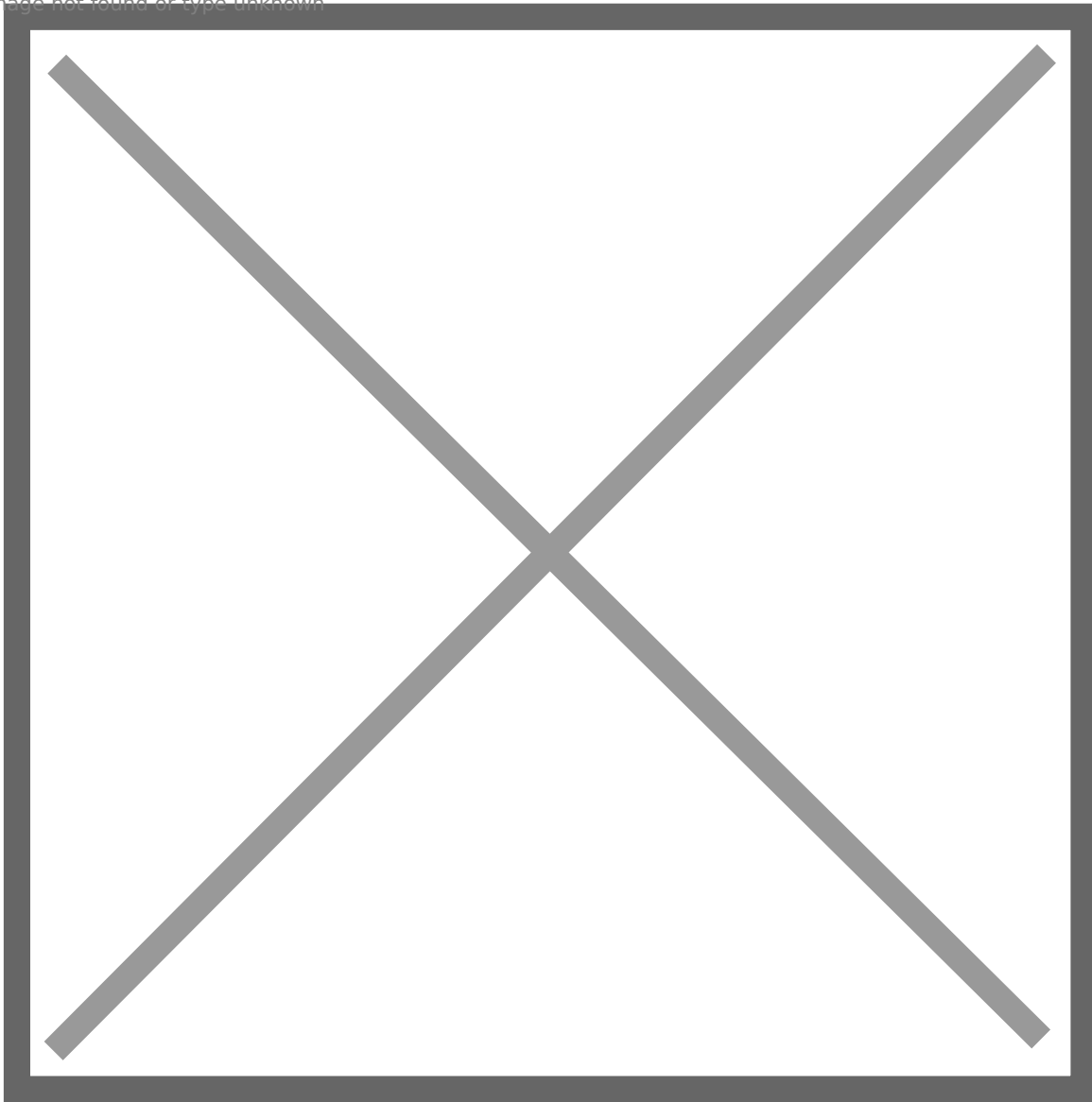
“This is your home; this is where your heart is,” His Eminence told the children. He insisted that their smiles, joy, voices, and presence enliven the Archdiocese: “Without you around us, not one of us can celebrate Christmas – can you imagine Christmas without angels?” Reassuring the students that they will always be in his prayers and Jesus “will always be by [their] side,” His Eminence concluded by wishing the children a Merry Christmas.

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With His Eminence leading the countdown, the schoolchildren excitedly celebrated the official lighting of the Archdiocese Christmas tree before breaking into three more Christmas carols - "Rocking around the Christmas Tree," "Αρχιμηνιά κι αρχιχρονιά," and "Κάλαντα Χριστουγέννων."

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Before their departure, His Eminence gifted each student a commemorative Christmas ornament, conveying his wish that they will always fondly remember their visits to the Archdiocese Headquarters.

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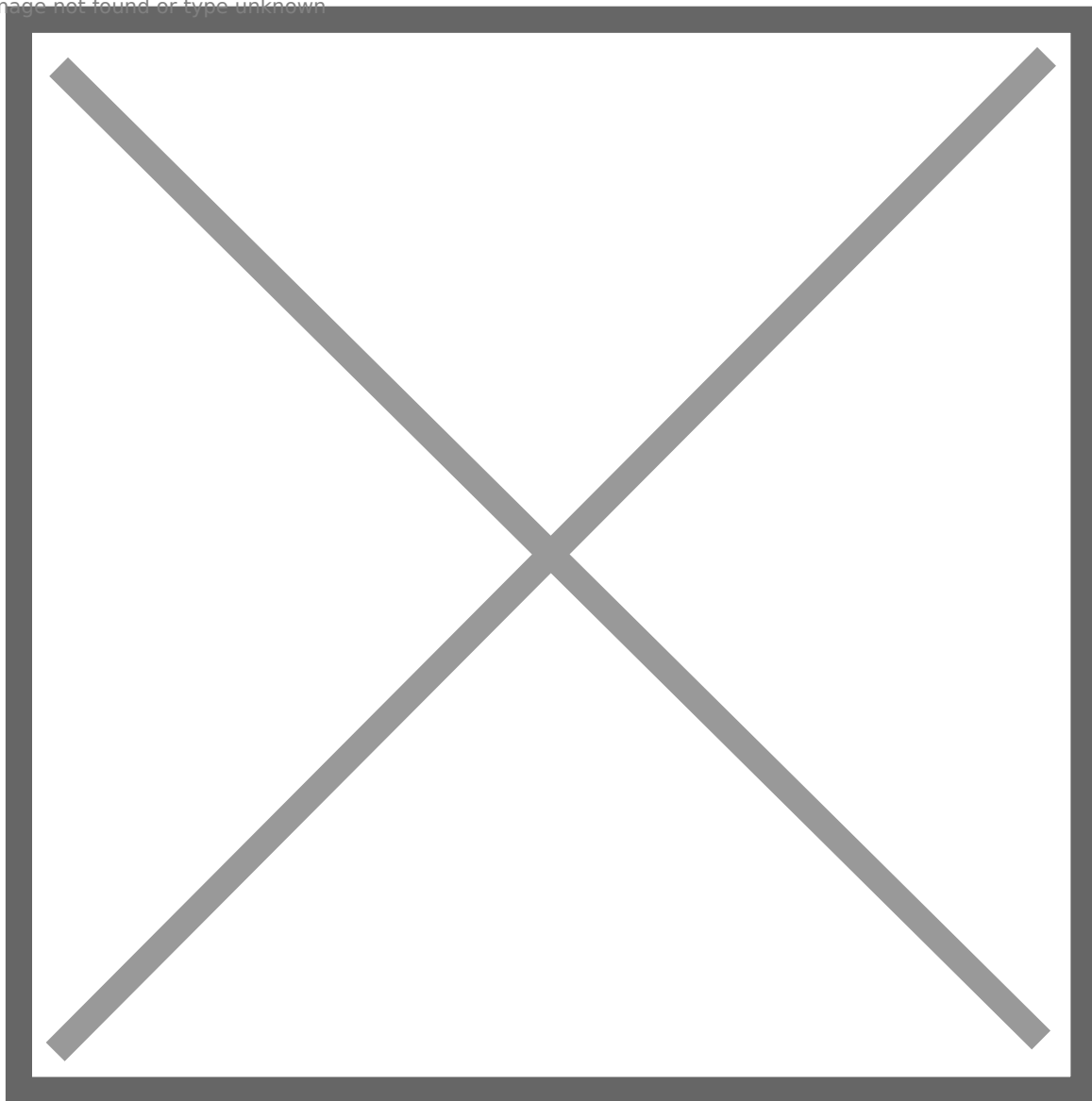


Photo: GOARCH/Brittainy Newman.

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