13/04/2022

REMARKS- By His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America At the Meeting and Lunch with the Metropolis of Detroit Staff

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Your Eminence and much beloved brother in Christ, Metropolitan Nicholas,

Dear and esteemed staff members of the Holy Metropolis of Detroit,

It is a real joy for me to tour the Metropolis Headquarters today and to break bread with you as a community. Of particular pleasure is the opportunity to honor a special member of this Metropolis of Detroit staff, the deeply beloved Κυρία Ἄννα.

Κυρία Ἄννα has served the Metropolis for five decades – giving her love and support to all who minister to the flock of Christ. She has been your Martha and your Mary. And I must say, that she serves up the most delicious food, which is in fact famous throughout the Archdiocese. She has been a positive, loving presence at the Metropolis through all the years of change, while serving two Ruling Hierarchs, all the clergy, the staff, and the members and guests of the Metropolis. It truly is a remarkable record of dedication and devotion that is worthy of recognition and abiding gratitude.

Κυρία Ἄννα, our thanks to you cannot be exhausted. You have made the ministries of this Metropolis indescribably more beneficial than they would ever have been without you. Πολλὰ τὰ Ἔτη σου!

And as for all of you, who serve the faithful of the Metropolis – you have my abiding gratitude. For the work of the institutional Church can often seem tedious and be unappreciated by those we strive to serve. But this work is vital to providing the opportunities for personal and communal transformation that is the essence of our spiritual labors.

We have not been placed by God’s grace in our positions of responsibility in order to merely maintain an institution. Rather, we are here – sometimes even doing the simplest of tasks – to serve our fellow Christians.

Think of the administrative structure of the Metropolis as the skeleton upon which the Body of Believers depends to hold the vital functions of the Church in place. There are over two hundred bones in the human body, but only one heart and only two lungs. But the heart and lungs and the entire functioning of the body would be impossible without the skeletal frame.

As Saint Paul says:

For just as in our individual bodies we have many limbs – and all the limbs do not have the same function, so also are we, who are many persons, One Body in Christ, and each one member of each other. And our diverse spiritual gifts are owing to the grace that is bestowed on us, whether it is prophecy – in proportion to faith, or administration – by our service, or teaching – by our instruction, or encouragement – by our acts of consoling, sharing – by our generosity, leadership – by the effort we make and the pains we take, mercy – by our cheerfulness.[*]

Isn't it wonderful how the Apostle Paul includes "administration" among the diverse spiritual gifts that God has bestowed in the Church through divine grace?

Therefore, my dear co-workers in Christ, stay strong in the Lord Who grants to us the great mercy and privilege to minister to His Body – His Holy Church – as both Marthas and Marys.

And may we always be found worthy – just like our beloved Κυρία Ἄννα – to serve nobly, ably and, above all, lovingly all the years of our ministry.

Amen.

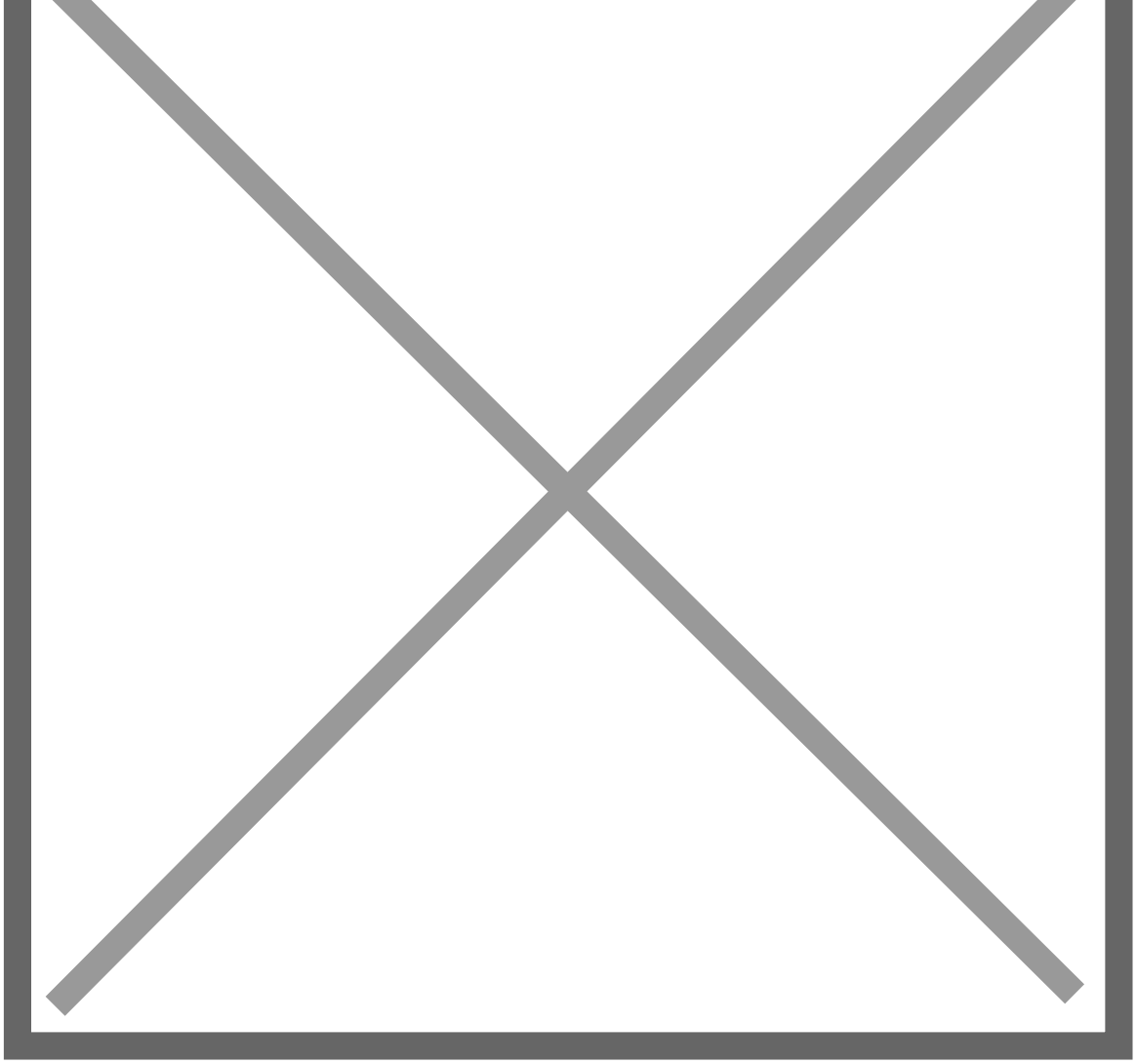
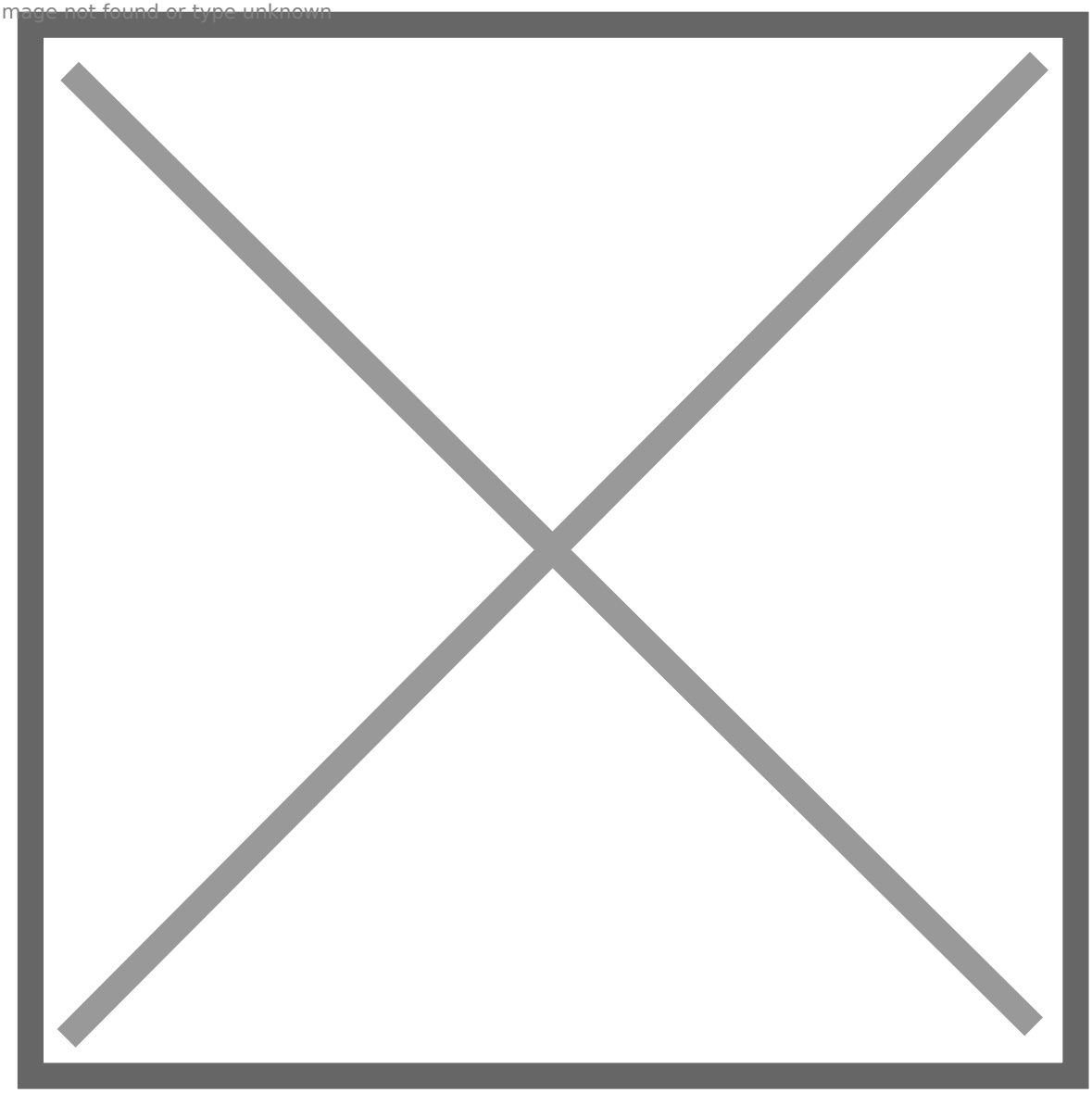


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