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Archbishop Sotirios of Canada visited British Columbia for the feast days of the Three Hierarchs and the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple



For many years now, His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios of Canada visits the pious faithful of British Columbia for the feasts of the Three Hierarchs and the

Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple. This year, the Archbishop visited from January 25 to February 5, 2024.

On Saturday, 27 January 2024, in a spirit of humility and thankfulness to God, the Archbishop celebrated the Divine Liturgy at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Vancouver for the feast of the Translation of the Relics of St. John Chrysostom. On this day fifty years ago, Archbishop Sotirios was ordained to the Episcopacy. It was a prayerful Liturgy, with the Archbishop liturgising by himself and offering thanks to God.

On Sunday, 28 January 2024, the Archbishop celebrated Matins and the Divine Liturgy by himself at St. George Greek Orthodox Church as Fr. Nikolaos Sideras was ill. Many pious faithful came to receive Holy Communion.

On Monday, 29 January 2024, assisted by Fr. T. Prattas, Parish Priest, Fr. D. Tryfonopoulos, and Fr. G. Despodov, Archbishop Sotirios presided at Great Vespers for the feast of the Three Hierarchs at Sts. Nicholas and Dimitrios Greek Orthodox Church. Following Great Vespers, a celebration of Greek Orthodox education was held in the community hall. Both Great Vespers and the celebration were attended by the faithful, including Mr. D. Skoutas, Consul General of Greece in Vancouver, and Mrs. K. Arsoniadis, Honourary Consul General of Cyprus in Vancouver.

On Tuesday, 30 January 2024, Mr. D. Skoutas, Consul General of Greece in Vancouver, along with his wonderful family, invited Archbishop Sotirios and the three priests for dinner. Only Fr. Timoleon Prattas accompanied the Archbishop.

On Wednesday, 31 January 2024, the Archbishop had a dinner and roundtable discussion with the Executives of the three Communities of Vancouver, held at the Greek Community of Vancouver. Many topics were discussed, with the goal being to bring vibrancy to the Communities.

On Thursday, 1 February 2024, the Archbishop, along with Fathers of Metro Vancouver, travelled to Victoria for the feast of Ypapanti (the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple). Archon Prostatas Grammaton M. Ikonomou and T. Petropoulos, President of the Community, hosted the Archbishop and the Reverend Fathers for lunch. A dinner was offered by the entire Council before Great Vespers in which the four Priests, Fr. G. Despodov, Fr. T. Prattas, Fr. N. Sideras, Fr. D. Vickery, as well as Archbishop Sotirios and the Consul General Mr. D. Skoutas, participated.

On Friday, 2 February 2024, assisted by Fr. D. Vickery, Parish Priest, Fr. G. Despodov, Fr. T. Prattas and Fr. N. Sideras, Archbishop Sotirios celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the feast of Ypapanti. A bus filled with pious faithful from the

Lower Mainland came to Ypapanti Church to join parishioners in honouring this great feast. Many faithful received Holy Communion. As is tradition, the community offered a lunch to all those who attended, including Consul General Skoutas.

On Sunday, 4 February 2024, assisted by Fr. G. Despodov, Archbishop Sotirios celebrated the Divine Liturgy at Sts. Constantine and Helen G.O. Church in Surrey. It is a wonderful community with many dedicated volunteers. Following the Liturgy, a luncheon was served for all.

On Monday, 5 February 2024, together with the Reverend Fathers of Metro Vancouver, Archbishop Sotirios had a morning Clergy Synaxis at the Vancouver airport. They discussed various topics, especially about youth ministry.

Before departing for Toronto, the Archbishop remarked:

“I am so grateful to God that I was able to be together once again with the pious faithful of British Columbia during this time. Many thanks to Archon Dionyssios and Mrs. Anna Stassinopoulos for their hospitality during my visit. May God bless them, along with all of those who help our Communities. As it is the beginning of the year, I hope our communities in BC, and across Canada, engage the youth and bring new vibrancy to our churches. “The labourers are few”, the Lord says, “but the harvest is plentiful” (Matthew 9:37). I pray the labourers are filled with God’s grace, so the harvest may be plentiful for the glory of God.”

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