

# The Vespers of Forgiveness at the Cathedral of Sydney



In a particularly reverent atmosphere, in the presence of a multitude of clergy and a multitude of devout believers, the first Lenten Vespers of Holy and Great Lent took place on the afternoon of Cheesefare Sunday, 17 March 2024, at the Cathedral of the Annunciation of Our Lady, in Sydney. The traditionally named “Vespers of Forgiveness” were officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, while Their Graces, Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia and Bishop Bartholomew of Charioupolis were also present in prayer.

At the end of the Vespers, the Archbishop spoke fittingly of the milestone of our entry into the blessed season of Great Lent. His Eminence first focused on the Idiomelos Hymn: “Your grace has shone forth, O Lord; the illumination of our souls has shone forth”, which was chanted during Vespers, and urged everyone to carry out “works of light”, because that is where Christ and the grace of the All-Holy Spirit are found.



Then, enumerating the conditions for our spiritual preparation in light of the celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord, His Eminence referred to prayer, fasting and almsgiving, as well as avoiding judging and disturbing the inner peace of our fellow human beings. "Set this goal for Holy and Great Lent," he noted, "to avoid judging your neighbour." "Because when you judge your neighbour and hurt them with what you say, then you break the peace of your brother and or sister", he pointed out among other things.

Concluding, Archbishop Makarios wished everyone a good spiritual struggle and, according to the custom of our Church, exchanged the kiss of love and asking of forgiveness with the Bishops, clergy and the faithful who were present.



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