

## **Archbishop Nikitas visits the Church of the Annunciation in Middlesbrough**



On Sunday, 10th March 2024, His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Annunciation of the Theotokos in Middlesbrough. Also serving were the Revd Prof. Nikita Banev, Priest-in-charge of the community, and the Revd Archdeacon Dr George Tsourous.

In his sermon, His Eminence invited the congregation to extend their focus beyond the stricter fasting practices observed during Holy and Great Lent, and to embrace Lent as a comprehensive journey of faith, and to look with anticipation to Christ's glorious Resurrection.

Elaborating on the Gospel reading of the Last Judgement, His Eminence underscored that the truth of the Gospel is realised in acts of selfless compassion toward our fellow human beings: offering comfort to the afflicted, tending to the sick, and generally striving to embody Christ's sacrificial love in our daily lives. The Church offers us this particular Gospel reading as we stand on the threshold of Holy

and Great Lent in order to call us to deeper introspection and accountability for our actions.

His Eminence encouraged almsgiving during Lent and emphasised that true wealth is found in our relationships—with God and with those around us. “Lent calls us to scrutinize our lives and to radiate the joy of the Resurrection and the love of Christ, for He is the cornerstone of our being.” His Eminence concluded by reflecting on the special unity of Church communities, brought together in Jesus Christ through the Holy Sacraments.

His Eminence also congratulated the community in Middlesbrough for the recent revitalization that they have experienced under the leadership of Fr Nikita Banev after the parish had been closed for several years.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence tonsured Professor Georgios Antonopoulos and Mr Symeon Banev as Readers. Following the Liturgy, the



honour,  
and receive























[thyateira.org.uk](http://thyateira.org.uk)