16/07/2024

Archbishop Makarios of Australia: “Only if we are united can we shine bright as individuals and as a community”



On the Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, 14 July 2024, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia liturgised at the Church of Saints Constantine and Helene in the suburb of Northbridge in Perth. With great emotion, His Eminence crossed over the threshold of the first Greek Orthodox Church in the State of Western Australia, exactly one hundred years after its foundation. The Council and the members of the Parish-Community welcomed His Eminence with the same felt emotion, while the Parish Priest Fr. Terry Gerovasilis, in commemoration of this important day, offered a symbolic gift to both the Archbishop of Australia and Their Graces, Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea and Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta who accompanied him.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Makarios, after thanking Fr. Terry, as well as the President of the Greek Community of Western Australia Mr. Paul Afkos, shared with the congregation some of his thoughts regarding the important anniversary that the Parish-Community of Saints Constantine and Helene is celebrating this year. His Eminence recalled, among other things, that the laying

of the foundation stone, by the first Metropolitan of Australia, Metropolitan Christophoros was the first ecclesiastical act of the hierarch who had just arrived on the fifth continent, just a few months after the publication of the founding tome of the local Church by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Therefore, the historical course of the Parish-Community is inextricably identified with the overall course of the Holy Archdiocese, which is also celebrating its centenary this year.

Concluding, His Eminence addressed praise and thanks to the Archiepiscopal Vicar of Perth, His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea, for his dedicated and fruitful ministry in Western Australia, as well as to His Grace Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta for the inspiring homily he delivered and to the Choir of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society of Sydney, for the faithful rendering of the hymns of the Divine Liturgy.



The official celebratory luncheon, which was held at midday on Sunday at a hotel function room in the city centre of Perth, provided an opportunity to delve into the historical event of the foundation of Church of Saints Constantine and Helene. During his greeting, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios referred extensively to the pioneers of the establishment and subsequent progress of the Greek Orthodox Parish-Community, recognising the catalytic contribution of the Castellorizian Association and the Greek Community of Western Australia. Offering heartfelt thanks to these two organisations, for their eternal devotion to the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, he pointed out that “we honour the memory of all our pioneer forefathers and mothers who had deep faith in God. May God rest their

souls and appoint them in the tents of the righteous.”

In his message to the current members of the Parish and, more generally, to the Greek Orthodox flock of Western Australia, the Archbishop made a paternal request, that they maintain unity and a spirit of love among themselves, remaining close to Christ and His Church. “Only if we are united”, he underlined, “can we move forward and bring about a positive impact on those around us, giving witness to Christ. Only if we are united can we shine bright as individuals and as a collective community.”



The celebratory event for the anniversary of the foundation of the Church of Saints Constantine and Helene in Perth was honoured with the presence of, among others, His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM, the Governor of Western Australia, The State Minister for Education, Multiculturalism and responsible for Aboriginal and Indigenous Affairs, Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, who represented the Premier of Western Australia, the Leader of the Liberal Party in Western Australia, Ms. Elizabeth Mettam MLA, and the Consul of Greece in Perth, Ms. Georgia Karasiotou.


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