

04/12/2024

The Annual Conference of Scripture Teachers at the Parish of Saint Gerasimos, Sydney



On Monday, 2 December 2024, at the Parish of Saint Gerasimos in Sydney, and on the feast-day of Saint Porphyrios, the 2024 Annual Greek Orthodox Conference of the Scripture Teachers took place. These teachers are dedicated to nurturing our Orthodox faith to almost 5000 students in public schools across New South Wales. It brought together coordinators, scripture teachers and leaders from all over Sydney.

The conference acknowledged the commitment of over 200 Greek Orthodox volunteer scripture teachers, who serve selflessly and with much devotion. These educators juggle personal and professional responsibilities to ensure Greek Orthodox Scripture thrives and continues to have a presence within our Schools across the state. Their efforts reflect a deep love for our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Mr John Donnelly, a prominent advocate for Special Religious Education in public schools, delivered an inspiring keynote. Mr Donnelly is the Chair of the Inter-Church

Commission on Religious Education in Schools and the All-Faiths Group. Mr Donnelly's leadership underscores the importance of collaboration and ensures that Greek Orthodox scripture education plays a vital part in our schools.

The 2024 conference was organised by the Advisory Committee for the Teaching of Religion in State Schools. There was also an interesting presentation given by Father Panteleimon Toumbelekis, Parish Priest of Saint Gerasimos Church. Father Panteleimon addressed the issue of navigating challenging questions. Attendees were equipped with practical tools for the classroom environment.

Dr James Athanasou outlined findings from the latest scripture teacher surveys and also offered general feedback to the teachers who were present. Finally, Mrs. Stella Toumbelekis, shared uplifting success stories, where she showcased the transformative power of scripture education and the impact that it has on our communities.

The conference provided a unique opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our Holy Archdiocese in the field of religious education. The hospitality and philotimo of the parish of Saint Gerasimos was also gratefully acknowledged.

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