31/01/2025

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira & Great Britain – Archbishop Nikitas in Leeds



On Sunday, 26th January 2024, His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain presided over Matins and celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Three Hierarchs in Leeds. Concelebrating with His Eminence was the Rev. Oeconomos Michael Petrakis, Priest-in-Charge and Revd Presbyter Ioannis Provatas, with Rev. Archdeacon George Tsourous also serving.

Among those in attendance were also Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Honorary Consuls of Greece, reflecting the significance of the occasion.

The Archbishop's visit to the community in Leeds began on Saturday evening with Vespers, followed by a lecture by Professor Napoleon Katsos, a distinguished linguist from the University of Cambridge. In his homily, titled "Why Study Greek Today?", delivered in both Greek and English, Professor Katsos explored the enduring value of the Greek language and its role in shaping not only Christian theology but also intellectual thought more broadly. His address provided a thought-provoking reflection on the relevance of Greek learning in the modern world.

In his English sermon, His Eminence reflected on the Gospel passage of Zacchaeus, emphasising his journey from spiritual emptiness to renewal through his encounter with Christ. Zacchaeus, once defined by greed and social alienation, demonstrated the power of sincere repentance and a willingness to change. His story serves as a call for all to seek Christ with urgency, to rise above societal labels, and to embrace the transformative grace of God with an open heart.

Preaching on the feast of the Three Hierarchs in Greek—Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom—His Eminence highlighted their unparalleled contribution to the synthesis of Greek wisdom and Christian truth. These great Fathers not only defended the faith but also elevated education, demonstrating that Hellenic learning and Christian theology are not opposing forces but complementary paths to divine wisdom.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas elevated the following men to the Order of Reader: David Metzas, Leonidas Aggelou, Vasilios Papavasiliou, Alexios Kalampokis, Michail Tziolas, and Seraphim O'Shaughnessy. In conferring this blessing, he underscored the sacred duty of Readers in the Church, calling them to serve with humility, reverence, and dedication to the liturgical life of the community.

His Eminence also took the opportunity to honour Dr. Panayiotis Giannoudis MBE, who was recently appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) by His Majesty the King in recognition of his outstanding contributions to trauma recovery and support. On behalf of the community, the Archbishop presented him with an icon of the Three Hierarchs, as a token of appreciation and a blessing for his continued service to those in need. Following the service, students of the Parish's Greek Language School recited excerpts from the writings of the Three Hierarchs as well as poems, honouring their feast through the very letters they laboured to preserve and cultivate.

The celebration concluded with a festal meal in the Community Hall, where all those present enjoyed fellowship and joy in a spirit of unity and gratitude.

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