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## **Melbourne: The Feast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos at the Church of The Holy Virgin's Protection, South Yarra**



On Monday, 7th April 2025, His Grace Bishop Kyriakos of Melbourne presided over the Matins and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Protection of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos in South Yarra, marking the Feast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos. This Slavic-speaking parish, which follows the Julian calendar, was filled with faithful from all walks of life, who gathered in prayer to celebrate this momentous feast of the Church.

Assisting His Grace was Mitered Archpriest the Very Rev. Tihon Romonov, the parish's presiding priest. With great reverence, Fr. Tihon served alongside the Bishop, helping lead the congregation in worship. Together, they guided the faithful through the prayers and hymns of this holy day, where the faithful were united in

their devotion to the Mother of God, the Theotokos.

His Grace Bishop Kyriakos delivered the paternal blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia to the congregation, offering words of spiritual encouragement. “On this holy feast, we remember the great moment when the Virgin Mary received the angel’s message and, with humility and faith, said ‘Yes’ to God’s will,” His Grace remarked. “Her acceptance, her obedience, became the gateway for the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are called to follow her example, saying ‘Yes’ to God’s will in our own lives.”

The service was marked by a spirit of warmth and prayerfulness, with a growing number of faithful in attendance. As the church filled with the sounds of prayers and hymns chanted in Church Slavonic and English, it was evident that the parish is thriving—both in numbers and in growing in faith. The faithful, many of whom had arrived early for the Matins service, remained deeply engaged in prayer throughout the Divine Liturgy.

In his sermon, His Grace reflected on the deeper significance of the Annunciation. “This feast is not only a remembrance of a historical event, but it is also a reminder to each of us,” he said. “Just as the Theotokos opened her heart to God’s call, we too are called to be open to His will. We must ask ourselves: How is God calling us to bring His light and love into the world? The Annunciation shows us the power of saying ‘Yes’ to God, and through that obedience, we too become vessels of His grace.”



The warmth and devotion of the service reflected the growing and faithful community of this pan-Orthodox Church of the Protection of Our Most Holy Lady Theotokos. The parish is known for its warm and welcoming atmosphere, where Orthodox Christians from all ethnicities, come together to worship, grow in faith, and experience the joy of the Church.

After the Divine Liturgy, the faithful were invited to share in a time of fellowship, where they continued their prayers and conversations in the spirit of the feast. The joy of the Annunciation was tangible as the faithful, united in prayer, were reminded of the grace and love of God made manifest through the Theotokos.











