

Laying of the Foundation Stone of a new church in Darwin by Archbishop Makarios of Australia



In an atmosphere of spiritual joy and emotion, the laying of the foundation stone of the new Greek Orthodox Church, which will be honoured in the name of Saint Savvas the New of Kalymnos, took place on Sunday, 18 May, in Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia. The sanctification of the foundation was performed by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, who was joined by His Grace Bishop Silouan of Adelaide, the Parish Priest of the Parish of St. Nicholas Darwin, Archimandrite Fr. Joel Xanthos, the Parish Priest of the newly established Parish, Fr. Christos Tsoraklidis, and the Parish Priest of the Church of Saint Savvas the New of Kalymnos in Banksia, Sydney, Fr. Savas Pizanias.

The ceremony was honoured with the presence of the Ambassador of Greece to Australia, His Excellency Mr. Stavros Venizelos, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Darwin, The Most Rev. Charles Gauci, and a number of representatives of political authorities, led by the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, The Hon. Lia Finocchiaro.

Chief Minister Finocchiaro received the heartfelt thanks of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios for the generous grant, by the Government of the Northern Territory, of the land on which the Church of St. Savvas the New will be erected. "The grant of the land and your generous support," His Eminence emphasised, "reflect your deep dedication to the cultural and spiritual wealth of Australia and constitutes a substantial recognition of the Greek presence within the multicultural fabric of the country."



Then, referring to the decision to establish a Greek Orthodox parish dedicated to the newly revealed Saint of Kalymnos, Saint Savvas the New, the Archbishop spoke of a due tribute to the large and dynamic community of Kalymnians living in Darwin. "When they came to this distant land, the Kalymnians brought with them not only their traditions, language and culture, but also their Orthodox faith," he observed, among other things. "It was this faith and living relationship with Christ," he added, "that gave wings to their struggles and hopes and labours."

Noting that the Orthodox faith is a living and dynamic reality and not simply a

distant and outdated set of beliefs, His Eminence emphasised that Saint Savvas, who fell asleep in the Lord only a few decades ago, “teaches us that holiness can flourish in any era.” “Thus, when so many people today seek meaning in material things,” he continued, “Saint Savvas reminds us that true peace is found in the presence of God and in communion with Him.”



In conclusion, Archbishop Makarios wished that the new Church would become a beacon that would lead more souls to Christ, while he did not fail to warmly congratulate the members of the Parish Council and all the faithful of Darwin, who worked to realise this God-pleasing vision. “Your efforts have established a living spring in this place – a well of Orthodoxy from which future generations will draw living water,” he noted.



