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## **Bishop Kyriakos of Melbourne celebrates the Feast of Pentecost in Tasmania**



With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, His Grace Bishop Kyriakos of Melbourne led a spiritually enriching pilgrimage to Tasmania from June 6-9, 2025, for the celebration of the great feast of Holy Pentecost. Accompanied by Fr Andrew Joannou of Holy Trinity Parish in Hobart and Fr Dimitrios Katsis of the Church of St George in South Hobart, His Grace presided over three full days of liturgical worship, community engagement, and pastoral outreach, bringing joy and spiritual renewal to the Orthodox faithful of Tasmania.

On the evening of 6 June 2025, around 40 Orthodox young adults from Melbourne boarded the Spirit of Tasmania in Geelong, beginning a weekend that would unite two states in prayer and fellowship. With smooth sailing across the Bass Strait, the night was filled with lively activities, music, games, and Orthodox camaraderie. This was more than a journey by sea — it was a spiritual pilgrimage to encounter the living Church in another corner of Australia. Upon arrival in Devonport early Saturday morning, the group travelled south to Hobart, stopping briefly at Ashgrove Dairy Farm and Salamanca Market. That evening, the spiritual heart of the weekend began to unfold with Great Vespers at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Hobart.

This festal Vespers service, presided over by His Grace Bishop Kyriakos, was served with deep solemnity and beauty. Clergy, chanters, and faithful gathered in reverence as the hymnology of Pentecost began to fill the church. Hymns were chanted, invoking the Holy Spirit and commemorating the souls of the departed on this Saturday of the Souls.

In his homily, His Grace reflected: “The eve of Pentecost reminds us that the Holy Spirit is not a distant promise, but a gift that is near. Tonight, as we prepare to receive the Comforter, let our hearts be awakened to His presence.” Following the service, the parish Philoptochos warmly hosted the visiting youth and faithful with a generous supper.

The central liturgical celebration took place on Sunday, 8 June, with the Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Pentecost at Holy Trinity Church. Bishop Kyriakos, together with Fr Andrew and Fr Dimitri, celebrated the full festal Liturgy with grandeur and deep devotion.

The service began with the solemn Matins of Pentecost and the entrance of the Bishop as the church resounded with festal hymns. The Gospel reading from John 7:37-52 and 8:12 proclaimed Christ’s invitation: “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.”

In his sermon, His Grace proclaimed: “Pentecost is the reversal of Babel. Where once language divided, now the Spirit unites. The Holy Spirit is fire — not to destroy, but to sanctify. Receive Him. Welcome Him. Allow Him to renew your life, your families, your purpose.”

Following the Divine Liturgy, the Vespers of Kneeling (Vespers of the Holy Spirit) was celebrated — a unique and moving feature of the feast. During this service, the faithful knelt for the first time since Pascha, as long penitential prayers were

offered, invoking the Holy Spirit's mercy and guidance.



The day continued with a festive meal in the parish hall, followed by a talk and discussion led by His Grace and clergy on the theme of relationships and Christian love, drawing deeply from St Paul's teachings and the Church's understanding of marriage as a path to holiness. The liturgical culmination of the pilgrimage occurred on Monday, June 9, with the Divine Liturgy for the Monday of the Holy Spirit at St George Greek Orthodox Church in South Hobart. His Grace Bishop Kyriakos presided in a full hierarchal Liturgy, concelebrated with Fr Andrew and Fr Dimitri. The faithful of St George, along with visiting youth, gathered in prayerful anticipation of the continued outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

During the service, special petitions and hymns glorified the third Person of the Holy Trinity. The faithful were reminded of the Spirit's constant presence in the Church and the need to remain receptive and vigilant.

In his homily, His Grace shared: "Today we honour the Holy Spirit in a dedicated feast, but let us not forget that the Spirit moves daily in the life of the Church — in the Sacraments, in prayer, in every act of love and truth. Let us remain open to His whisper."

After the Liturgy, a relaxed fellowship continued with lunch at the Hobart Wharf

and a scenic excursion to the historic town of Richmond — a final cultural and spiritual bonding for the pilgrims.



Throughout the weekend, His Grace Bishop Kyriakos extended the paternal blessing and pastoral love of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia to all he encountered. His presence was marked by humility, joy, and fatherly guidance. The Orthodox communities of Tasmania were strengthened, and the youth who travelled were transformed — spiritually renewed and bonded in Christ.

As the pilgrims prepared to return home, His Grace left them with a final exhortation:

“Carry this Pentecost with you — not as a memory, but as a mission. Let the fire of the Spirit move you to love more deeply, pray more often, and live as witnesses of Christ’s resurrection.”







