

26/06/2025

## A Joyful Celebration of the Nativity of St John the Baptist at the Monastery of St John in Perth



With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Perth officiated at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Tuesday, 24 June 2025, for the Feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist. The service was held at the Holy Monastery of St John, located in the hills of Forrestfield in the Diocese of Perth.

In his sermon, His Grace Bishop Elpidios reflected on the spiritual significance of the day, drawing a powerful parallel between the wilderness of ancient Judea and the quiet landscape of Western Australia:

“As we celebrate this great feast today, we are reminded that the wilderness is not only in ancient Judea. It is also here—in Forrestfield, in the hills and quiet corners of Western Australia—where the Monastery of St. John the Baptist stands as a sign and a witness to the presence of God. This monastery is, in many ways, like the Forerunner himself: hidden from the world, yet burning with the light of the Spirit. It

is a place of repentance, a place of prayer, a place of silence, a place where hearts are made ready for Christ. For those who visit, for those who support it, and for those who carry its spirit into their homes, the monastery becomes a modern voice crying out to us: 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him.'"



This year's celebration was made even more special with the arrival of a precious and large relic of St John the Baptist, sent from Mount Athos just a day prior to the feast. Although unable to be present, Hieromonk Antipas, Elder of the Iviron Cell of St Anna in Karyes, was warmly thanked by His Grace—on behalf of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia and the Abbot of the Holy Monastery, the Very Reverend Archimandrite Makarios Souris—for his efforts in organising the delivery of this sacred treasure.

Among the distinguished guests in attendance was the Consul of Greece in Perth, Ms Eleni Georgopoulou, who was warmly welcomed by His Grace.

Bishop Elpidios also extended his sincere thanks to the Abbot, Archimandrite Makarios Souris, for his generous hospitality and ongoing dedication to the monastic brotherhood and faithful of the Diocese.





In a touching moment following the Liturgy, His Grace presented a small gift and offered warm wishes to Father John Athanasiou, parish priest of St Nektarios, on the occasion of his name day.

The celebration concluded with an outdoor procession through the monastery grounds, during which the faithful reverently followed the icon and relic of St John the Baptist. A light morning tea was then offered in the monastery's refectory, bringing the spiritual festivities to a joyful and communal close.































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