

## **Archbishop Makarios of Australia: “Saint Paraskevi became a living image of the love and mercy of Christ”**



His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, is currently undertaking a pastoral visit to the capital city of Queensland, Brisbane, in order to attend the Holy Feast in memory of the glorious Holy Virgin and Martyr Saint Paraskevi and to celebrate the Consecration of the Church of Saint Paraskevi in the suburb of Taigum.

On Friday, 25 July, in the evening, His Eminence presided over the Great Feast Day Vespers, which was attended by Their Graces, Bishop Bartholomew of Brisbane, and Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, the Holy Clergy of the city, and a multitude of devout Christians. Present among the congregation were the Archon of the Great Church of Christ and President of the Parish of St. John the Baptist in Cairns, Mr. Theodore Bacalakis, the President of the Parish of Saint Paraskevi, Mr. Costa Stratikopoulos, and the Director of the Greek Welfare Centre, Mr. Steve Magdas. The hymns of the Service were diligently rendered by youth from the Greek Orthodox Christian Society of Sydney.

During his sermon, Archbishop Makarios initially focused on the life and virtues of the patroness of the celebrating Parish, the Holy Virgin and Martyr Paraskevi, who

“with her unwavering faith and miraculous healings inspired generations of Christians and gave hope and healing to countless souls.” “Saint Paraskevi shines in our Church like a bright star of unwavering faith, asceticism and martyrdom,” His Eminence pointed out and continued: “From her earliest youth, she dedicated herself entirely to the service of God, leading a life of purity, prayer and spiritual chastity. She boldly preached Christ in a time of persecution, undeterred by threats, torture or even the shadow of death. And in the face of great suffering, she became a living image of Christ’s love and mercy, performing miracles of healing, especially for those suffering from diseases of the eyes, and thus she became known as a miracle worker and healer by the grace of the Holy Spirit.”



The Archbishop then referred to the great blessing that the upcoming consecration of their Holy Church signifies for the members of the Parish of St. Paraskevi of Brisbane, on the feast day of the Holy Virgin and Martyr (Saturday, 26 July). After praising the labours and struggles of those who, with love and self-sacrifice, contributed to the establishment and progress of the Parish, he explained that during the consecration ceremony, the church is consecrated and dedicated to the eternal glory of the Lord. “The church building,” he emphasised, “is not simply a place where Orthodox Christians gather. It is not simply a structure of bricks, wood, and stone. When a church is inaugurated, it becomes the dwelling place of God – a sanctified space, set apart for divine worship and the mysteries of our salvation. The consecration transforms the building into a sacred altar of Heaven on earth. During the consecration, we will place within the Holy Altar the sacred relics of the martyrs, thus uniting our worship with the blood and testimony of those who have sacrificed themselves for Christ. We will anoint the Holy Altar and the walls with



holy myrrh, dedicating the space to the service and grace of God. And we will offer prayers that the Holy Spirit may descend upon this building, making it forever a house of prayer, peace, healing and sanctification.” In conclusion, His Eminence expressed his belief that the consecration of the Church of Saint Paraskevi will

of unity,















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