

28/07/2025

Archbishop Makarios of Australia visited the city of the Gold Coast, Queensland



On Sunday, 27 July 2025, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, visited the coastal city of the Gold Coast, Queensland, and celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Church, which is honoured in the name of Saint Anna, the Mother of God. The devout faithful, led by the Parish Priest, Fr. Romanos Stergiou and the President, Mrs. Sandra Voukelatos, welcomed their Chief Shepherd and the accompanying Hierarchs and clergy with feelings of joy, respect and love.

His Eminence presided over the Divine Liturgy, and was joined by Their Graces, Bishop Bartholomew of Brisbane and Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis. Attending the service were, among others, Mr. Tsambicos Athanasas, representative of the Honorary Consul of Greece in Brisbane, Mr. George Mastrocostas, the former Honorary Consul-General and former President of the Parish, Mr. Jim Raptis, and the Archon of the Great Church of Christ and President of the Parish of St. John the Baptist Cairns, Mr. Theo Bacalakis. The Mayor of the City of Gold Coast, Mr. Tom Tate, was present as an honorary guest.

During his inspired sermon, the Archbishop analysed the Gospel passage of the day, describing the miraculous healing of the two blind men by Christ in Capernaum, connecting it with the lives of the patroness of the Parish, Saint Anna, and the Great Martyr Saint Panteleimon, who is honoured on this day. To begin with, he explained that the two blind men were healed thanks to their deep faith and trust in the Lord ("According to your faith be it done to you") and he conveyed that "our faith is not and cannot be simply a mental process, nor an emotional desire. Our faith must be a living trust. It must signal our absolute trust in God and our surrender to His will, regardless of the difficulties we face."



He also referred to the unwavering faith of Saint Panteleimon, who remained steadfast and confessed Christ despite the tortures he suffered. He also emphasised the shining example of the Mother of the Theotokos, Saint Anna, who,

instead of turning away from God because she was unable to have children for years, turned to Him with greater love and faith. He clarified that Saint Anna's love was not transactional: "She did not pray to receive a miracle. On the contrary, she loved God with all her strength and, in her sorrow, she turned to the One she loved and opened her heart, submitting to His will, whatever it was." "The life of Saint Anna," he continued, "is a powerful reminder to us that to believe is not simply to expect a miracle, but to entrust our entire lives to the One who knows better than we do what we need and when to give it to us. Her faith teaches us not only how to pray, but also how to wait – with patience, dignity and hope."

Summarizing and concluding his address, His Eminence addressed the congregation with a paternal exhortation: "In a world that often seems dark, let us not be spiritually blind. Let us remain steadfast in our faith, even if an answer does not seem to come immediately, for this cultivates our soul."

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Makarios honoured Mrs. Eleni Raptis with the Order of the Christ-Loving, in recognition of her many years of sacrificial service to the Parish of St. Anna on the Gold Coast. During the festive meal that followed, in the parish hall, His Eminence made special mention of the invaluable service of the family of Jim and Eleni Raptis to the local Church, and addressed them with words of gratitude and heartfelt paternal wishes. He also praised and thanked the Parish Priest, Fr. Romanos, for his unwavering dedication and tireless ministry over many years on the Gold Coast. Furthermore, he spoke warmly of His Grace Bishop Bartholomew of Brisbane, and of the President of the Parish, Mrs. Sandra Voukelatos, while he welcomed the presence of the Mayor of the City of the Gold Coast, Mr. Tom Tate, thanking him warmly for his steadfast support of the Greek Orthodox community. In closing, he urged everyone to remain united and support the Parish of St. Anna, so that it may continue to be a beacon of Orthodoxy and Hellenism in the city of the Gold Coast.











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