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Archbishop Makarios of Australia at the Celebrating Parish of Saint Nicholas in Sydney



On Sunday, 7 December, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the celebrating Parish of Saint Nicholas in the “Greek-rooted” suburb of Marrickville in Sydney. Concelebrating with the Archbishop were Their Graces Bishop Elpidios of Perth and Bishop Christophoros of Kerasounta, Chancellor of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia.

At the request of His Eminence, the sermon was delivered in English by His Grace Bishop Elpidios, who presented and analysed dimensions of the life and charismatic personality of Saint Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, the Wonderworker.

Afterwards, Archbishop Makarios, taking as his starting point the active participation of the Parish’s Patron Saint in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (AD 325), spoke about the celebration this year of the 1700th anniversary of the Council’s convocation. He shared with the large congregation the moving experiences he gained from his participation in the recent joint pilgrimage of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and His Holiness Pope Leo XIV to Nicaea in Bithynia. “It was profoundly moving to be there,” he said, “because we beheld the foundations of the church in which the First Ecumenical Council was convened. We closed our eyes and cast our minds back 1700 years, imagining

where the Emperor Constantine and the Holy Fathers might have been seated during that momentous event in the life of the Orthodox Church."



His Eminence then focused on two principal reasons why the First Ecumenical Council is ranked among the greatest and most significant events in the history of the Orthodox Church. The first reason, he explained, is that it established the fundamental principle of Synodality: "The word of a single bishop, monk, or cleric is not the voice of the Church. The voice of the Church is that which is expressed through synodical processes. The First Ecumenical Council opened the way, and the remaining Ecumenical Councils followed. Above all, it paved the way for establishing the conciliar nature of the Church. And today we rejoice, for God has granted us the blessing of having our own local Synod here in Australia, allowing us to make decisions concerning the needs of the people of God and our local Church."

The second reason why the First Ecumenical Council constitutes a "milestone" in Church history is the fact that it produced the Symbol of Faith (specifically, its first seven articles). "The Fathers studied, prayed, and invoked the grace of God, and what we recite today in every Divine Liturgy is a text that emerged—at least its first part—from the First Ecumenical Council," the Archbishop reminded the faithful.



Concluding his address, His Eminence congratulated the Parish Priest of Saint Nicholas, Fr Eirinaios Trialonakis, as well as the Parish President, Mr Elias Dimakis, and all their collaborators, for the excellent organisation of this year's feast. He also expressed his paternal satisfaction with the spirit of renewal that Fr Eirinaios has brought during his short period of ministry at the Marrickville parish. He asked the faithful to embrace their new Parish Priest with all their love, to support his work actively, and to journey forward together in unity and mutual affection, for the glory of Christ and the Church. "For it is now proven, and we know it well from our rich history, that if we are not united, we cannot progress," he emphasised in closing.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, a procession of the holy Icon of Saint Nicholas took place, carried by members of the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney, dressed in traditional Greek costumes.

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