29/12/2025

Archbishop Makarios of Australia visits the Holy Diocese of Melbourne



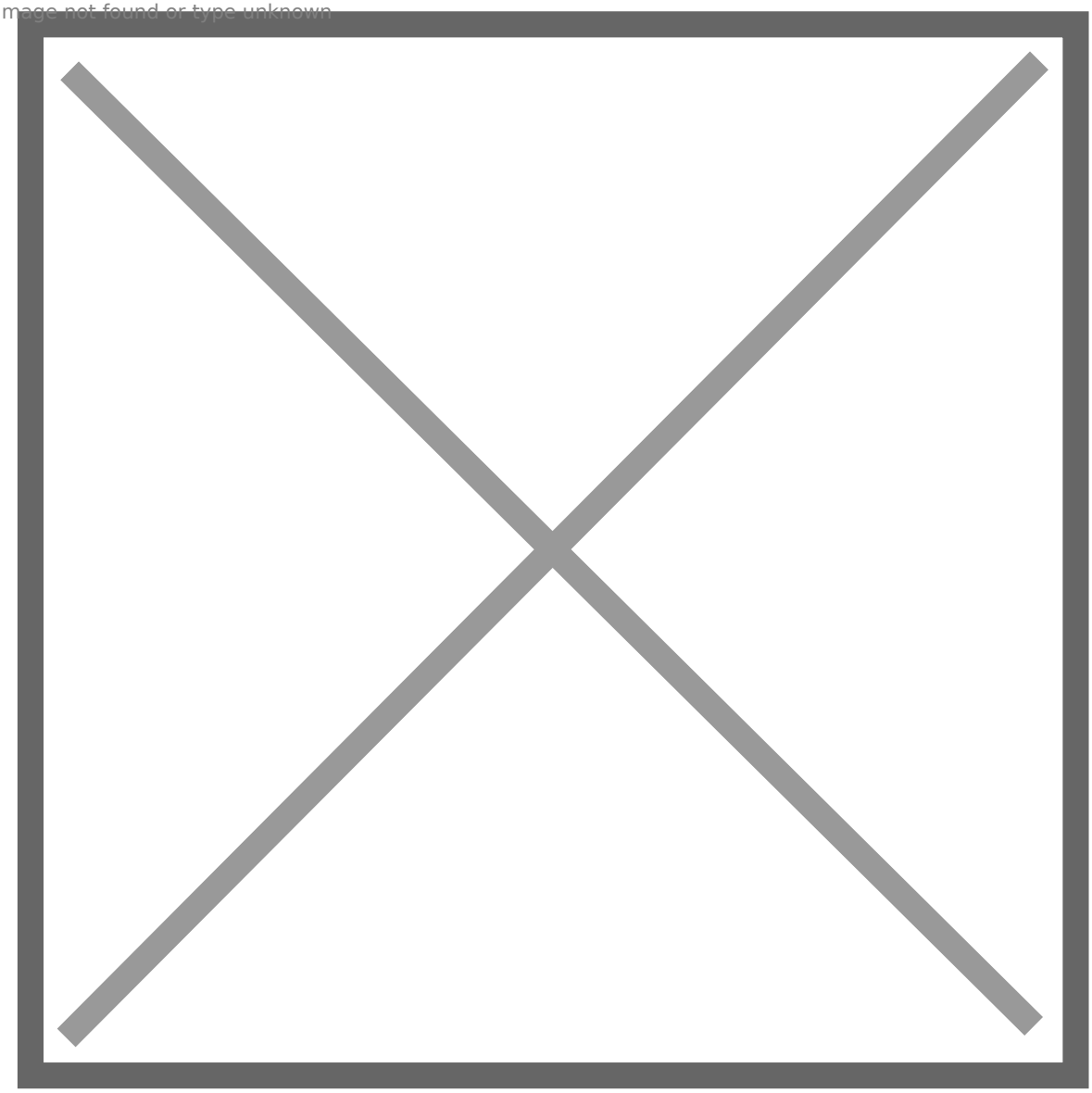
On the Sunday after Christmas, 28 December, at the Parish of Panagia Kamariani in Red Hill, Melbourne, a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated with due ecclesiastical splendour, presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia. Present also in prayer were His Eminence Metropolitan Ezekiel of Dervis and Their Graces, Bishop Kyriakos of Melbourne and Bishop Evmenios of Chora. Among the hundreds of parishioners and pilgrims who filled both the interior of the Holy Church and its courtyard was the Consul General of Greece in Melbourne, Ms Dimitra Georgantzoglou.

The joyful atmosphere of the holy season was further enhanced by the elevation of three clergy as Spiritual Fathers–Confessors by Archbishop Makarios. These were the Parish Priest of Panagia Kamariani, the Archimandrite Irinaios Koikas; his assistant parish priest, Fr Matthaios Papadopoulos; and the Parish Priest of Saint Athanasios, Springvale, Fr Dimitrios Drougas.

The entire congregation proclaimed “Axios” (“He is worthy”) for the clergy who assumed the responsibility of spiritual fatherhood, while Archbishop Makarios praised their dedicated service to the Church and their spiritual formation. “They possess many gifts and virtues,” he acknowledged, “they are devoted to their work

and have a full awareness that all of us, clergy and laity alike, are not self-sufficient and autonomous entities, but members of one great family called the Holy Archdiocese of Australia.”

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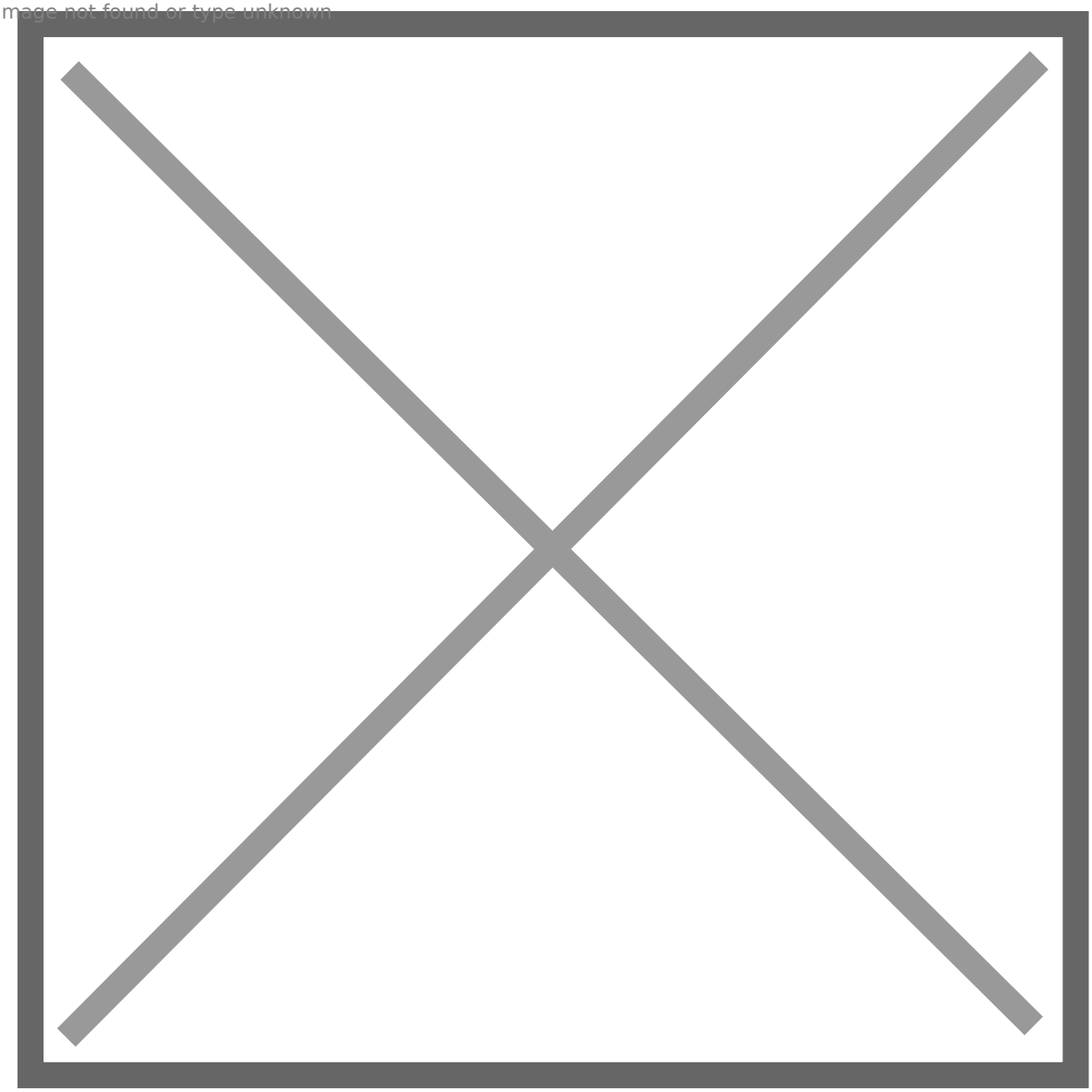
At the same time, His Eminence stressed that the ministry of spiritual fatherhood is not an honorary distinction but a great responsibility for those who undertake it. “They are called,” he noted, “with great patience, to devote many hours to listening to people’s sins and the problems that concern them, not only to listen, but, with the virtue of discernment they possess, to find the appropriate remedies for each spiritual illness, so that every person who comes under their epitrachelion may depart joyful and at peace, and be led toward salvation.”

Addressing paternal admonitions to the new Spiritual Fathers, the Archbishop drew attention to the need to free people from guilt through the holy Mystery of Confession. “Although we seemingly live in an age of absolute freedom,” he

observed, “people today carry many psychological burdens because they are weighed down by guilt.” “You, as Spiritual Fathers,” he emphasised, “must listen to people and teach them the art of speaking. You must have the wisdom, discernment, and illumination from God to help a person unfold, open their heart, and tell you what troubles them. And once they do, you must advise them appropriately, helping them to leave with a light heart, free from guilt, complexes, and psychological burdens. Though this may appear easy, it is in fact very difficult.”

Finally, His Eminence urged the three clergy to proceed with great love, understanding, and the utmost possible leniency, expressing at the same time his confidence in the spiritual fruits that their new ministry will bear. Concluding his address, he congratulated the Fr Irinaios for the noteworthy work he carries out as Parish Priest of Panagia Kamariani.

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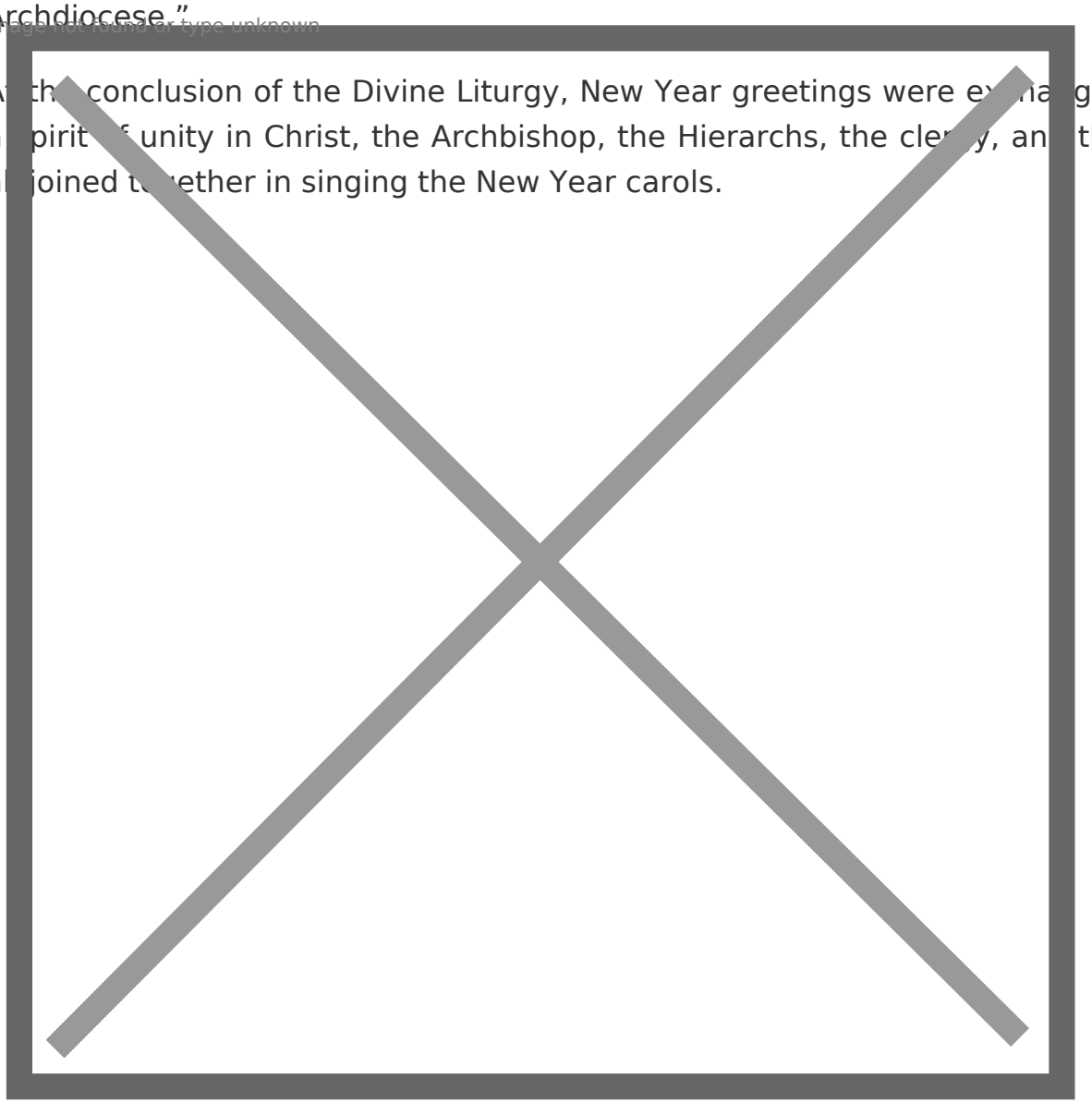


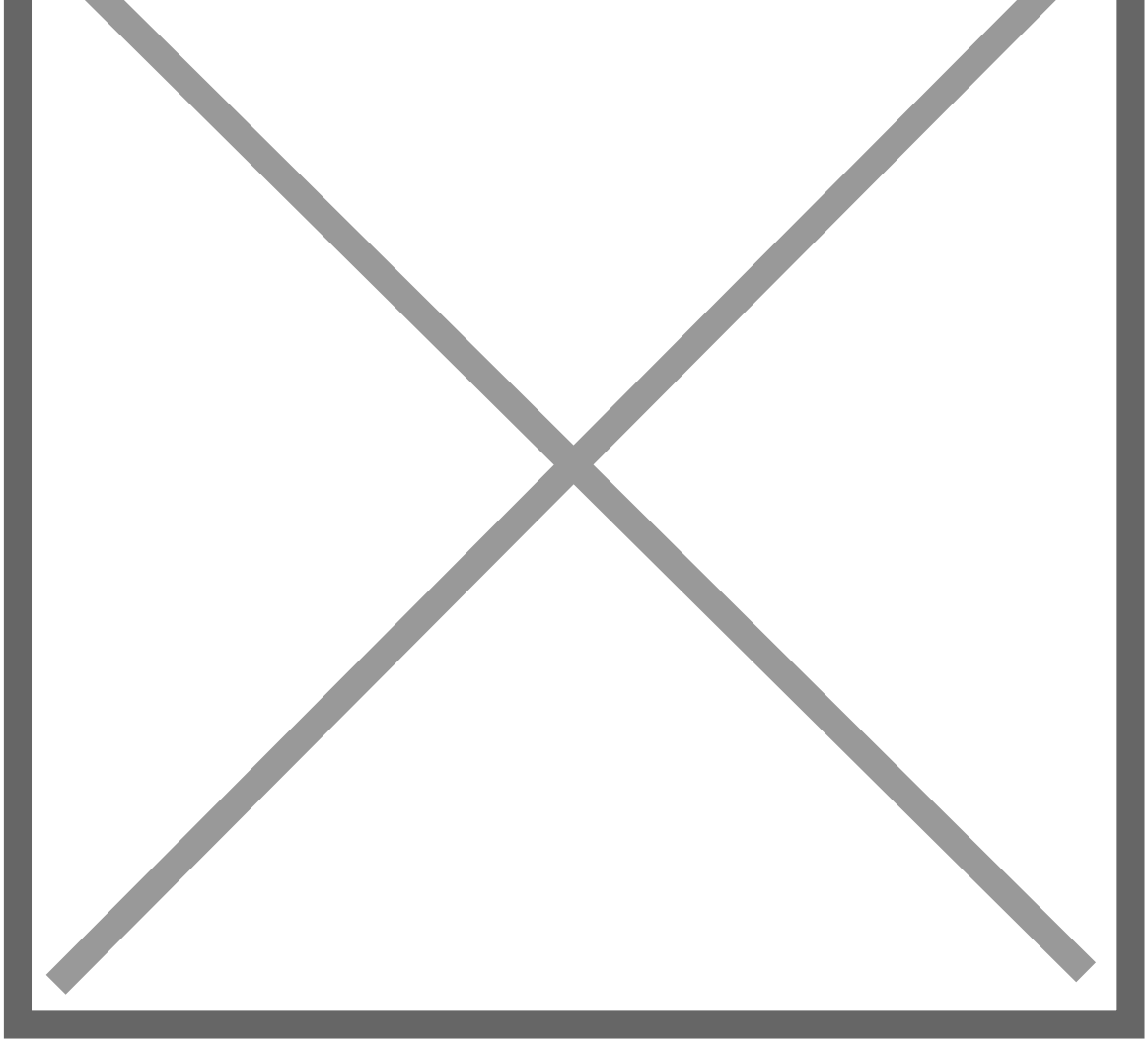
For his part, Fr Irinaios extended a warm welcome to the Archbishop, thanking him

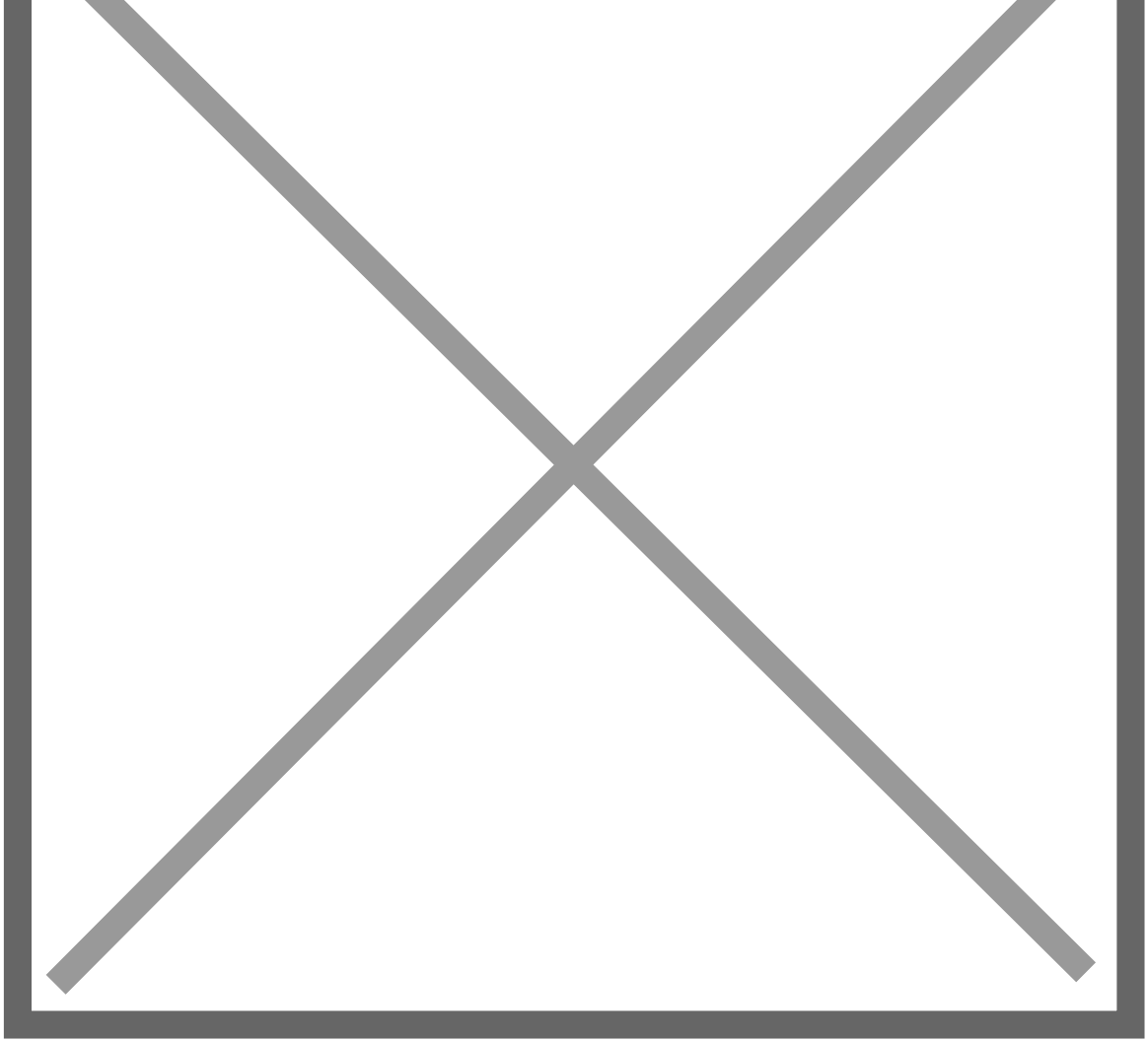
for his pastoral visit to the Parish of Panagia Kamariani, for his fatherly love, and for his constant support of the parish. “All these people you see here today,” he remarked, “have come not only because they love the venerable person of the Panagia, but also to honour your own person, the person of our Shepherd. We love you, respect you, and stand by you in every joy and every challenge of our Archdiocese.”

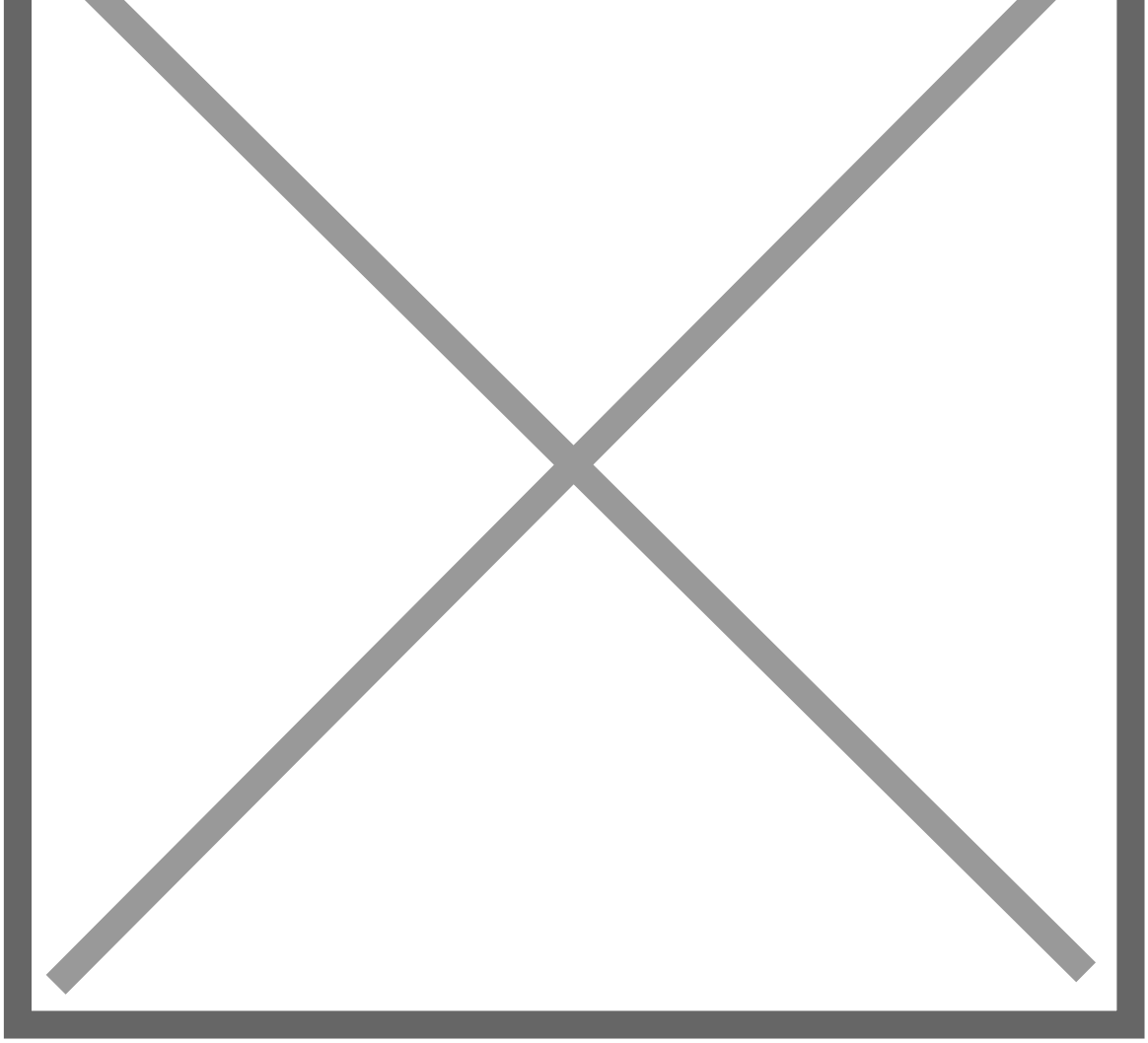
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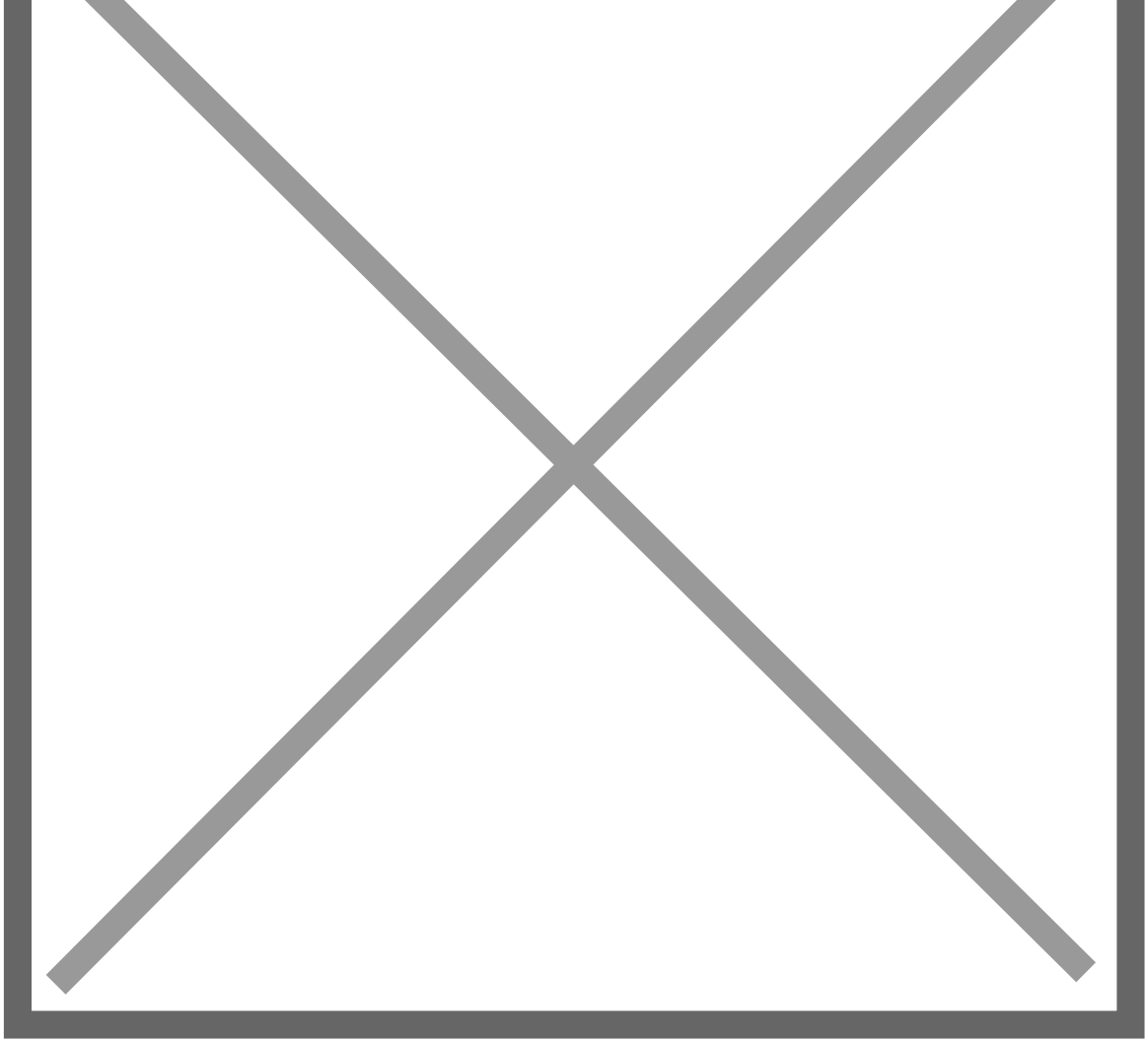
At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, New Year greetings were exchanged, and in a spirit of unity in Christ, the Archbishop, the Hierarchs, the clergy, and the faithful all joined together in singing the New Year carols.











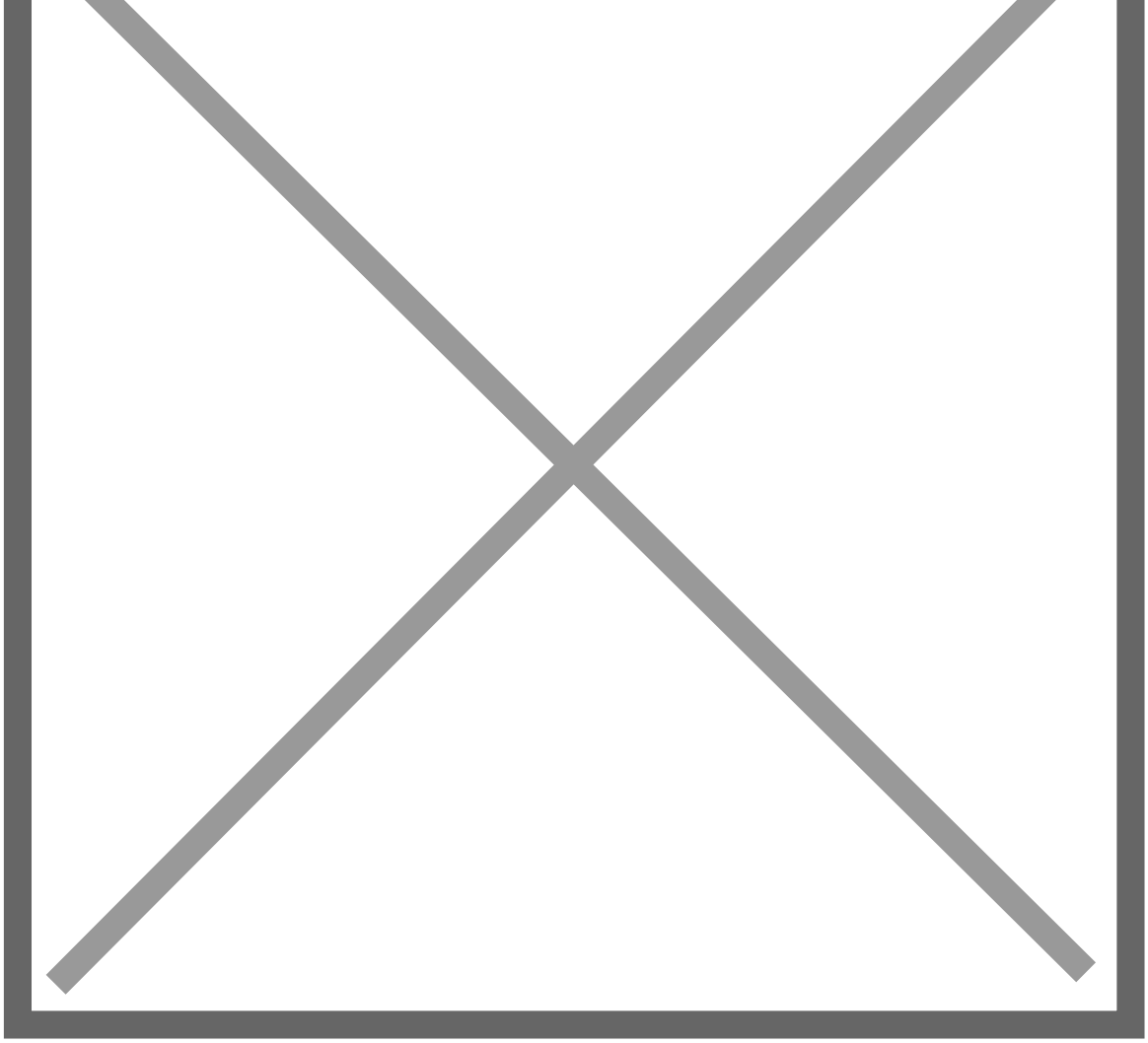
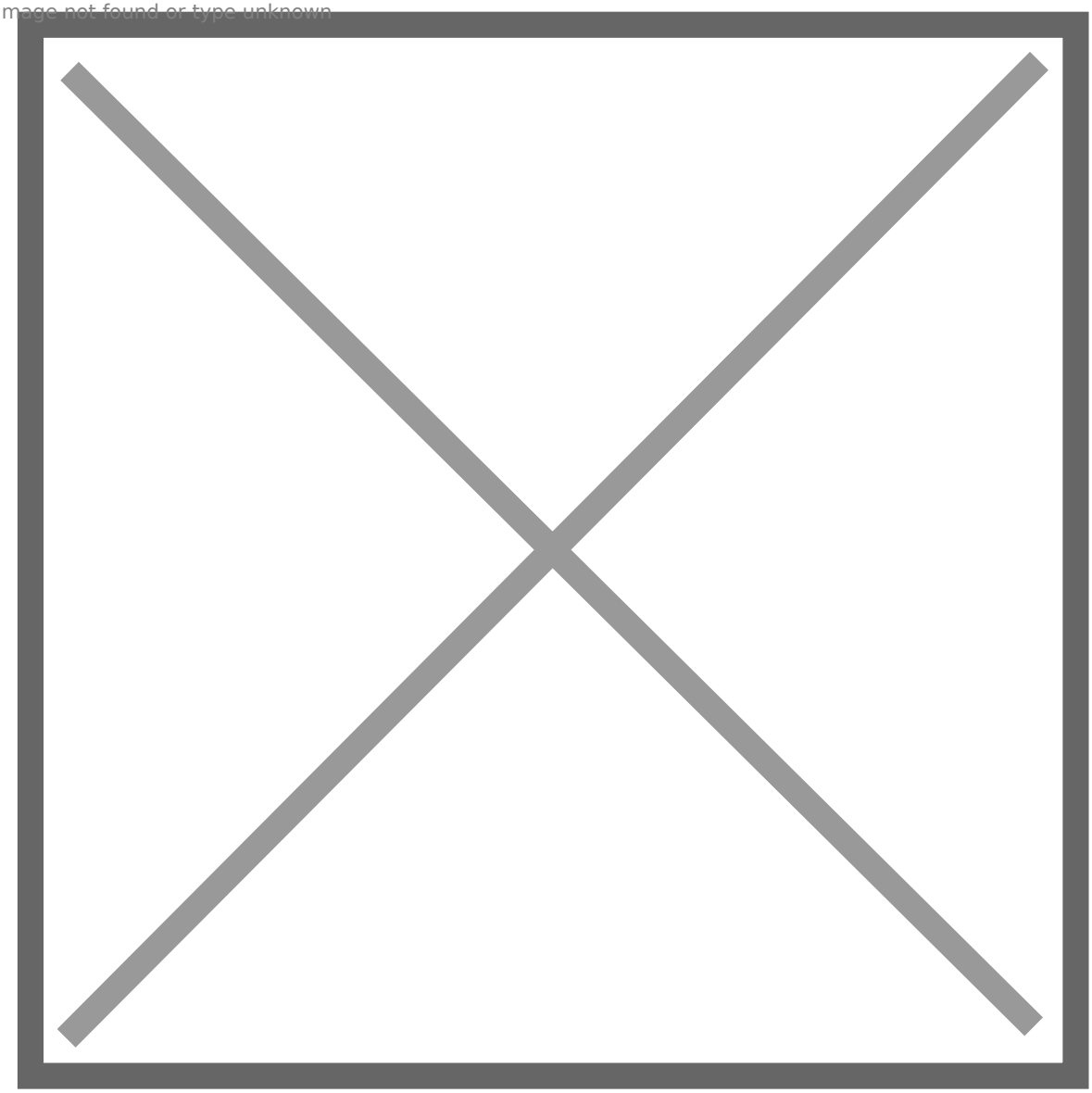


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