06/03/2026

Pan-Orthodox Vespers in Bristol



On Saturday 28th February 2026, Pan-Orthodox Vespers were celebrated at the Romanian Orthodox Church of St Constantine and St Helen in Bristol, bringing together clergy and faithful from several Orthodox communities of the region in a spirit of prayer, fellowship and shared witness.

The service was hosted by Fr Ioan Claudiu Moldovan, Priest-in-Charge of the Romanian Orthodox Community of St Constantine and St Helen in Bristol. Concelebrating were the V. Rev. Archimandrite Nicholas-Eleftherios Price, Priest-in-Charge of St Nicholas Orthodox Church in Cardiff; the Rev. Protopresbyter Anastasios Salapatas, Priest-in-Charge of the Greek Orthodox Church of SS Peter and Paul the Apostles; the Rev. Oeconomos Richard Penwell, Priest-in-Charge of the Bath Orthodox Parish of St John of Kronstadt; and the Rev. Oeconomos Gerald Theodore Hopkin from the Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God.

Clergy and faithful from the Orthodox communities of Bristol, Bath and the surrounding region gathered together for the service, offering a visible expression of the unity of the Orthodox Church across languages, cultures and traditions.

During the service, Fr Richard Penwell delivered the sermon, reflecting on the meaning of the Sunday of Orthodoxy and the unity of the Church. He spoke about the beauty of Orthodoxy as a living communion that transcends national boundaries, reminding the faithful that Orthodox Christians, though coming from many backgrounds, are united as members of the one Body of Christ. Drawing on the words of the Apostle Paul — “There is neither Jew nor Greek… for you are all one in Christ Jesus” — he emphasised that the Church’s unity is grounded not in ethnicity but in the shared faith, the Eucharist, and the common mission of the Gospel.

Fr Richard also reflected on the meaning of the Vespers service as a moment of transition and spiritual reflection, calling the faithful to repentance, humility and mutual support as fellow pilgrims on the path toward the Kingdom of God. He encouraged the faithful to live as witnesses of Christ’s love in a world often marked by division and conflict.

In his address, he also spoke about the encouraging initiatives of Orthodox youth in the Archdiocese, noting how cooperation among young people from different Orthodox communities offers a powerful example of unity and shared witness for the future of the Church.

Following the service, those present had the opportunity to meet and share fellowship, strengthening the bonds between the Orthodox communities of the region and giving thanks for the blessing of gathering together in prayer on this joyful feast of the Church.











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