

27/08/2020

## **Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia - Archdiocesan District of Adelaide GWC SA now ministering to Port Pirie and regional South Australia**



Sunday the 23rd of August marked a significant day in the history of the Greek Welfare Centre of South Australia – St Philothei (GWC), with the launch of our Port Pirie/Mid North operations.

As one of the primary philanthropic organs of the Archdiocesan District of Adelaide, the GWC's area of operation encompasses all of South Australia. However, for practical reasons most of the GWC's philanthropic mission in its 41-year history has until now been confined to the Adelaide metropolitan area. Thus, the launch of these new services represents a significant milestone for our Centre and an exciting new avenue by which we will be able to carry out our sacred mission.



Established in 1924, the Church of St George, Port Pirie, is the oldest Orthodox Church in South Australia, and one of the oldest in Australia. The Greek Orthodox Community of Port Pirie has a long and proud history of glorifying God in Orthodox worship, and of serving their local community.

In late 2019, the Federal government offered some funding to extend its entry level home-support program for the elderly ("CHSP") to targeted areas. One such area was Port Pirie and the Mid North. Due to Port Pirie being home to one of the oldest Greek Orthodox populations in Australia, the GWC saw this as a fitting opportunity to make its first serious foray into our regional areas. With the blessing of His Grace Bishop Silouan of Sinope, the Greek Welfare Centre seized upon the opportunity. Equipped with letters of support from the Greek Orthodox Community of Port Pirie (and in particular its president, Emanuel Skorpos), local State member Geoff Brock, local mayor Leon Stephens, and local Federal member Rowan Ramsay, the GWC put forward an application. In December, with much joy we learned that the GWC had been successful in securing funding to provide Social Support in a Group, Personal Care and Carer Respite services to Port Pirie and the Mid North. After delays in receiving the funding, followed by further COVID-19-induced delays, the GWC is finally in a position to start rolling out these services.

Though the CHSP program has been the catalyst for starting services in Port Pirie, the GWC is also hoping to roll out other services in the area, such as NDIS and



other disability services.

The GWC was pleased to mark our launch with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy presided by His Grace Bishop Silouan of Sinope, followed by a community luncheon at the St George Hellenic Centre in Port Pirie. In addition to His Grace, the event was attended by local State Member for Frome Geoff Brock MP, President Emanuel Skorpos and the committee of the Greek Orthodox Church of St. George, Port Pirie, and GWC Chairman Dr Michael Ikonomos and various board and staff members of the GWC. The luncheon had a warm feel to it, with an air of excitement about the possibilities of this newest venture.



The GWC wholeheartedly thanks His Grace for blessing this initiative and for his ongoing prayers and pastoral oversight, the Greek Orthodox Community of St. George, Port Pirie, for their enthusiasm and support, and Mr Brock for his support and encouragement. We pray that this enthusiasm, together with everyone's prayers, will carry us through to achieve the best that we can for the people of Port Pirie and the Mid North for many years to come.

Official photo, taken in front of the St George Hellenic Centre. From left to right: Dr Vladimyros Devrelis (President of the Inter-Communities Council SA and board member of the GWC), Fr Angelos Drapaniotis, Fr Achillios Karamanidis, Fr Jeremy Krieg (CEO, GWC), His Grace Bishop Silouan of Sinope, Mr Emanuel Skorpos (President, Greek Orthodox Community of Port Pirie Inc), Mr Geoff Brock MP (State Member for Frome), Dr Michael Ikonomos (Chairman, GWC)

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