

The Archbishop of Australia at the festivities for the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Holy Parish of St Nektarios in Sydney



With much joy and emotion, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia was among the faithful of the Parish of St Nektarios in Sydney, on Sunday morning, 6th September, to celebrate with them a historic milestone for their parish.

It was 6th September 1970 when the church, which until then belonged to the Methodists, was officially handed over to the Greek Orthodox community of Burwood. During the handover ceremony, a Doxology service was held by the late Archbishop Ezekiel, who three years earlier had given his blessing to form a committee so they could find a suitable place for the purchase or construction of a church so the Greek Orthodox people living in the area could attend church.

Exactly fifty years later, in the same place and in an atmosphere of spiritual joy and emotion, a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was conducted, presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios. The President of the Parish-Community and

members of the Board of Directors were among those present, as well as members of the Philoptohos Association, but also two members of the committee that was founded in 1967 – Mr Peter Kariatlis, who was the first treasurer of the Parish-Community, and Mr James Soulos, son of the first president, the late Andrew Soulos.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence addressed the congregation and made the point that the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Parish of St Nektarios is not only a celebration for the local parishioners but it is a celebration for the entire Holy Archdiocese of Australia. He then expressed his gratitude to those who struggled and laboured, offering money and devoting their precious time for the acquisition of the Holy Parish of St Nektarios and for its future progress. He did not fail to mention his predecessor, Archbishop Ezekiel of blessed memory, as well as the late Fr Ezekiel Petritsis who, as he noted, “struggled and laboured and was ‘spent’ for this parish”.

The Archbishop also focused on the fact that the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Burwood parish, coincided with the 100th anniversary of the repose of St Nektarios. “I praise God that our Holy Archdiocese, here in Sydney, has a church dedicated to St Nektarios” he said and emphasised that he is a contemporary saint, who is very dear to the hearts of the people and who has performed and continues to work countless miracles for those who call upon him with faith. Furthermore, he explained that although St Nektarios is not considered to be a martyr of our Church, he lived a life that can be characterised as a martyrdom, as he was tormented by people who constantly slandered him. Concluding the reference to the life of the saint, he urged the faithful to learn from his patience, love, forgiveness and prayerful manner and to follow the same path, granting beauty and fragrant words not only to the Church but also to the broader society.

During the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Makarios raised the Parish Priest, Fr George Liangas, to the rank of Spiritual Confessor. Taking occasion from Fr George’s address, which referred to the Jubilee anniversary, His Eminence reminded the people that during this year, every 50 years, the slaves were freed and their debts forgiven. Therefore, he urged Fr George, in every confession he hears, to free the people from their spiritual debts and the bondage of sin and to lead them to the Kingdom of Heaven. The Archbishop expressed the certainty that he will succeed as Fr George is a spiritually cultivated person.











