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## Greek communities around Australia gather to celebrate Palm Sunday



On the Sunday before the Feast of Great and Holy Pascha, the Greek Orthodox Church celebrates one of its most joyous feasts of the year – Palm Sunday.

On this day, Greek Orthodox people celebrate the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem by attending church services, receiving crosses made out of palm leaves and dining on fish and skordalia with family and friends.

Across Australia this year, celebrations were brighter than ever before.

### **New South Wales:**

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia held the main Palm Sunday church service at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of The Annunciation of Our Lady in Redfern.

During the service, Archbishop Makarios gave a small sermon to parishioners, calling on them to consider what they “ultimately ask of God.”



“The people of Israel were asking for strength – let us ask for salvation. The people of Israel demanded freedom from the Roman Empire – let us ask for freedom from our passions and weaknesses,” the Archbishop said.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Makarios distributed the palm crosses and then accepted flowers and traditional red eggs from the church’s Greek school students.



Similar scenes were playing out across other parts of Sydney at Greek Orthodox churches such as St Nectarios Parish in Burwood, Sts Raphael, Nicholas and Irene

Parish in Liverpool, and The Resurrection of our Lord, our Lady of Myrtles, St Elessa Parish in Kogarah, among many others.

ell as parishioners from the  
together for a beautiful Palm  
to aid the building works of





**Greek Orthodox Community of The Nativity of Christ, Port Adelaide:**

More than 300 members of Adelaide's Greek community gathered on Sunday, under strict Covid protocols, to celebrate the first day of the Holy Week and honour Anzac Day in the newly renovated Greek Orthodox Church of The Nativity of Christ in Port Adelaide.

The Liturgy, led by His Grace Bishop Silouan of Sinope, was the first one open to the public after the church underwent repairs due to the extensive damage suffered from a fire in December 2019.



“We reopened after seventeen months and everything is new. We love being in our home again. Everyone is happy but it’s been a long road,” Port Adelaide Greek Orthodox Community President, John Douvartzidis, told The Greek Herald.

“I would like to thank our members for their patience and their understanding. Everyone has been supportive and this is the good thing with our community. We are very close,” said Douvartzidis, extending his gratitude to the community’s dedicated volunteers and the various Committees who have been working tirelessly.



Asked for a message to the youth ahead of Easter, the President invited everyone to come and “experience the church”.

“The service is mostly done in English and the Liturgy books are in both languages so everyone can follow and understand. Everyone is welcome,” he said.



The Palm Sunday service concluded with a memorial service for Anzac Day and students of the Port Adelaide Greek School reciting the Australian and Greek national anthems.

The attendees then moved to the adjacent hall where they enjoyed a scrumptious seafood feast prepared by the Community’s volunteers.



**Canberra and Jervis Bay:**

The Archepiscopal Vicar of Canberra, Very Reverend Father Prochoros Anastasiadis, with the Parish Council, invited the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of St John in Jervis



old, palm crosses at the end of the hall for a special luncheon.



Nearby, at St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Canberra, over 100 parishioners attended the Divine Liturgy. After the service, people were able to purchase tsourekia and three-dozen eggs with red dye.

Everyone was in awe of the church, which was beautifully decorated with the help of President of the Greek Orthodox Community & Church of Canberra, John Loukadellis, Mary Efkarpidis, Anna Tsoulis, George Pertsinidis and John Tzavaras, among many others.





**Melbourne:**

The annual Palm Sunday service was held by the Archdiocesan Vicar of the Northcote District, Father Evmenios Vasilopoulos, at the Greek Orthodox Parish of St Nicholas in Yarraville. A luncheon was enjoyed afterwards.

“Wishing everyone a blessed Holy Week!” the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, District of Northcote, Victoria, wrote on Facebook after the service.



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