15/03/2022

Archbishop Makarios of Australia: “In the sacred images we are called to reflect and check ourselves”



The triumph of Orthodoxy over the heresy of Iconoclasm was celebrated with due splendor and solemnity on Sunday, March 13, the First Sunday of Lent, at the Greek Orthodox Church of Saint George in Brisbane, Queensland.

The faithful of the Parish of Saint George had the extreme joy to receive their Shepherd and Spiritual Father, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, and to celebrate with him on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, a special feast and celebration for our Church, which honors the restoration of the Holy Icons, made by Empress Theodora, her son Michael III and Patriarch Methodius of Constantinople the Confessor.

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia officiated at Orthros and presided at the Divine Liturgy, accompanied by their Graces, Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis and Bishop Emilianos of Meloa, the Protosyggellos of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, Very Rev. Fr Christophoros Krikelis, The Reverend Fathers of the Church of Saint George, Very Rev. Fr Dimitri Tsakas and Rev Fr. Stavros Karvelas, and also

other Priests from the city of Brisbane.

In his sermon, His Eminence briefly referred to the events of the 8th and 9th centuries, which were a great ordeal for our Church, and focused on the decisive contribution of Empress Theodora in ending this ordeal.

As the Archbishop explained, the Empress and later Saint Theodora, wife of the iconoclast Emperor Theophilos, was distinguished for her devotion to the Orthodox faith and fully understood that in the face of the Holy Icons some faithful Christians did not bow down to worshiped idols, but paid homage to the real persons depicted in the Holy Icons.

His Eminence also made special mention of the fact that the Empress kept an Icon whose other side was a mirror, which she venerated without being noticed by her husband.

On the occasion of this event, the Archbishop wanted to send an important message, that “every image should be an opportunity and a challenge for us to reflect ourselves in it and the person who is depicted.”

He encouraged the faithful, every time they venerate the Icon of Christ or the Virgin Mary or the patron saint of their Parish, St. George, to ask themselves if they follow the teaching or the example of their life. “Every time we venerate an Icon,” he stressed elsewhere, “it becomes an occasion to check ourselves and see if we imitate our Saints.”

“Because the Saints were not persons who came from another world,” he added, “but they were human beings, as we are, and they managed to become Saints by trying to apply in their lives the words of Christ, The life and the experience of the Theotokos (Virgin Mary) and these earlier Saint of our Holy Church”.

From the speech of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, He did not miss the reference to the current trials facing humanity, with an emphasis on the war raging in Ukraine after the recent Russian invasion.

Addressing the congregation, His Eminence asked everyone to intensify their prayers to stop the bloodshed of innocent people.

“Pray that God will pacify the world and enlighten some leaders who, instead of limiting themselves to what they have, are trying to expand their power and their lands further,” he said. “And this is something that God will not bless,” he added, noting that over time, in the course of history, nations and peoples who thought

they had an advantage over others were eventually humiliated.

n Closing, the Archbishop expressed his love for the priests of the Parish of Saint George Brisbane, Fr. Dimitri and Fr. Stavros, and congratulated them on the blessed and divine work they perform, under the spiritual guidance of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia.

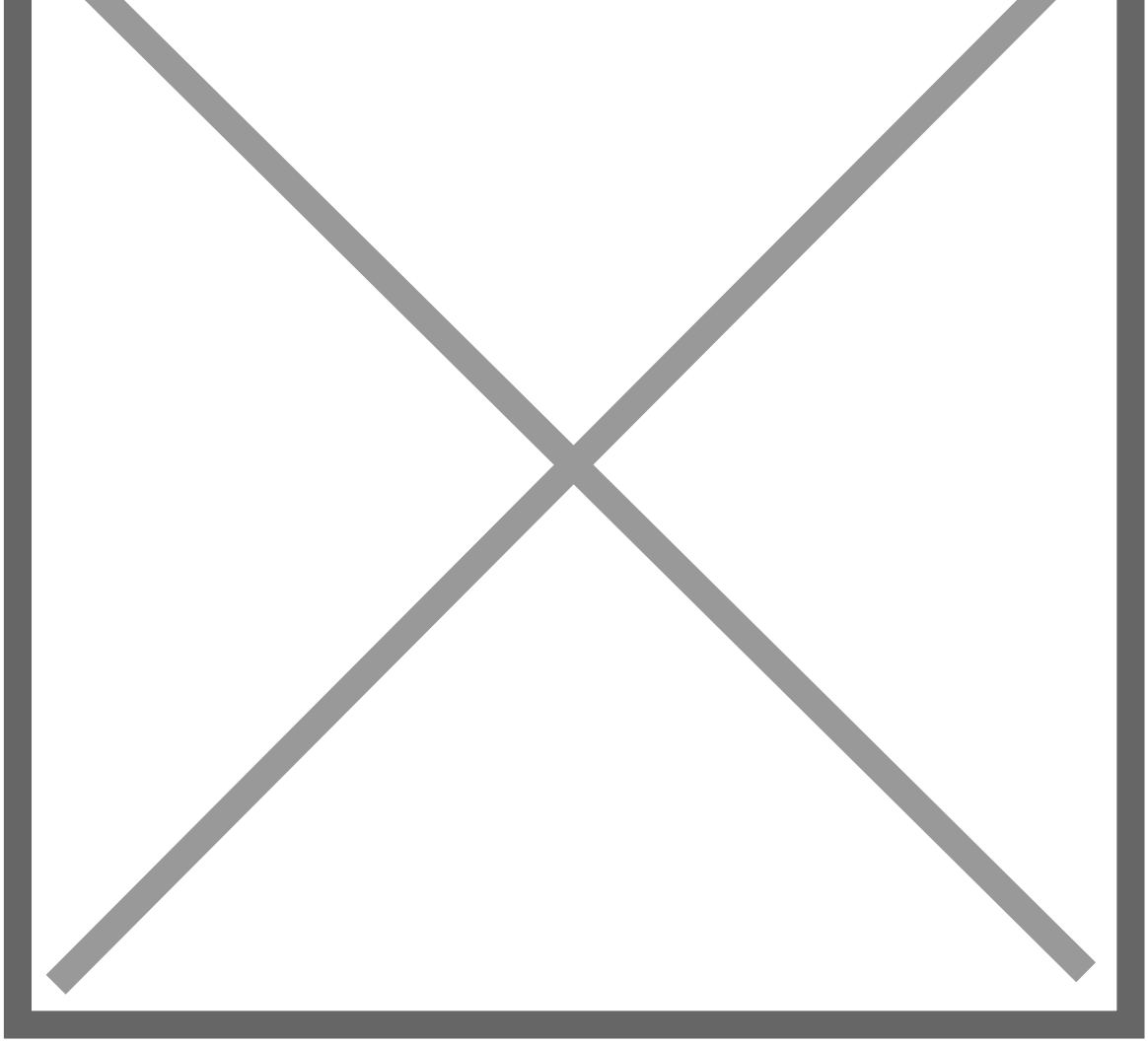
Before the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, according to the tradition and order of our Church, the procession of the Holy Icons and the reading of a part of the

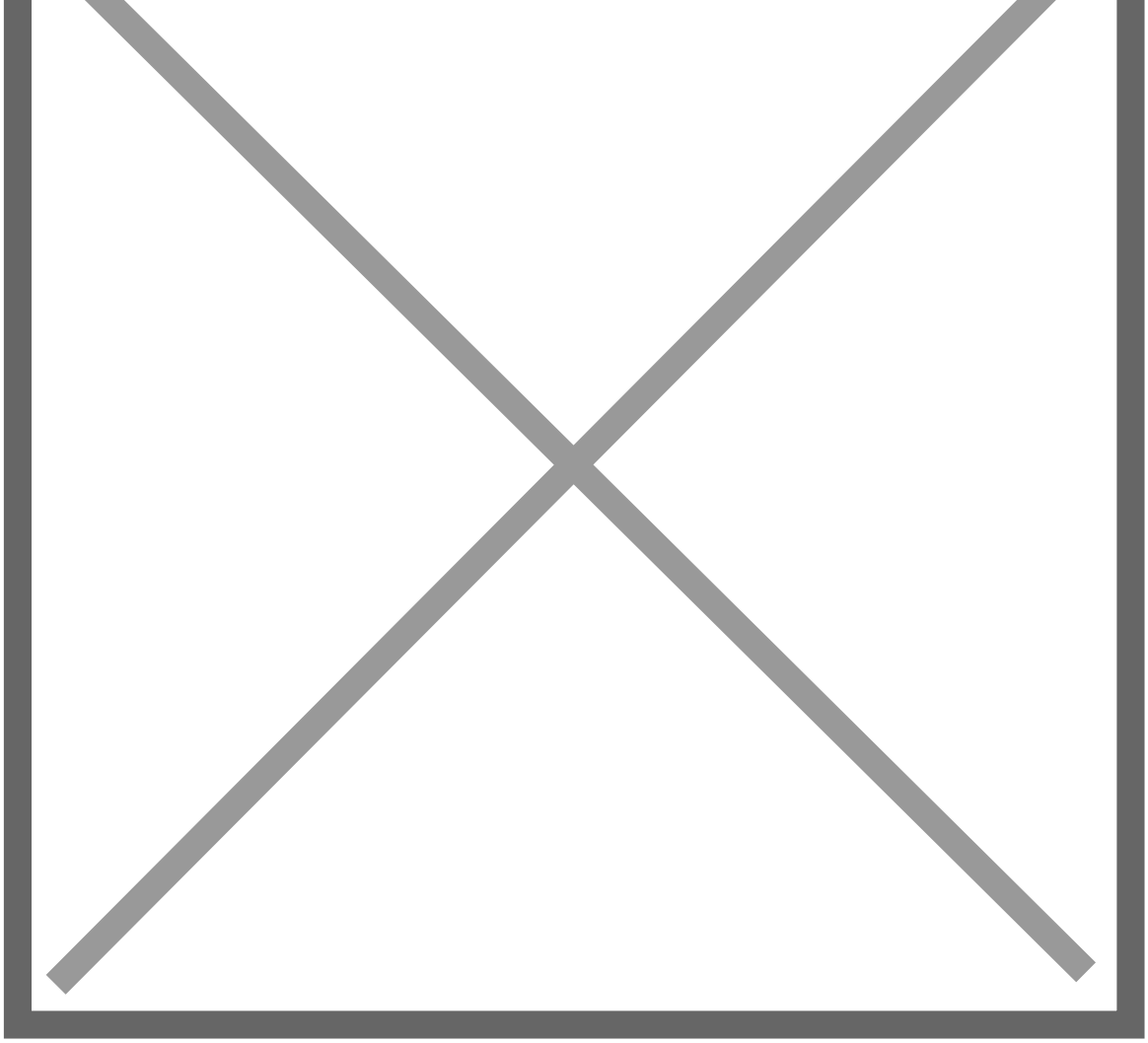


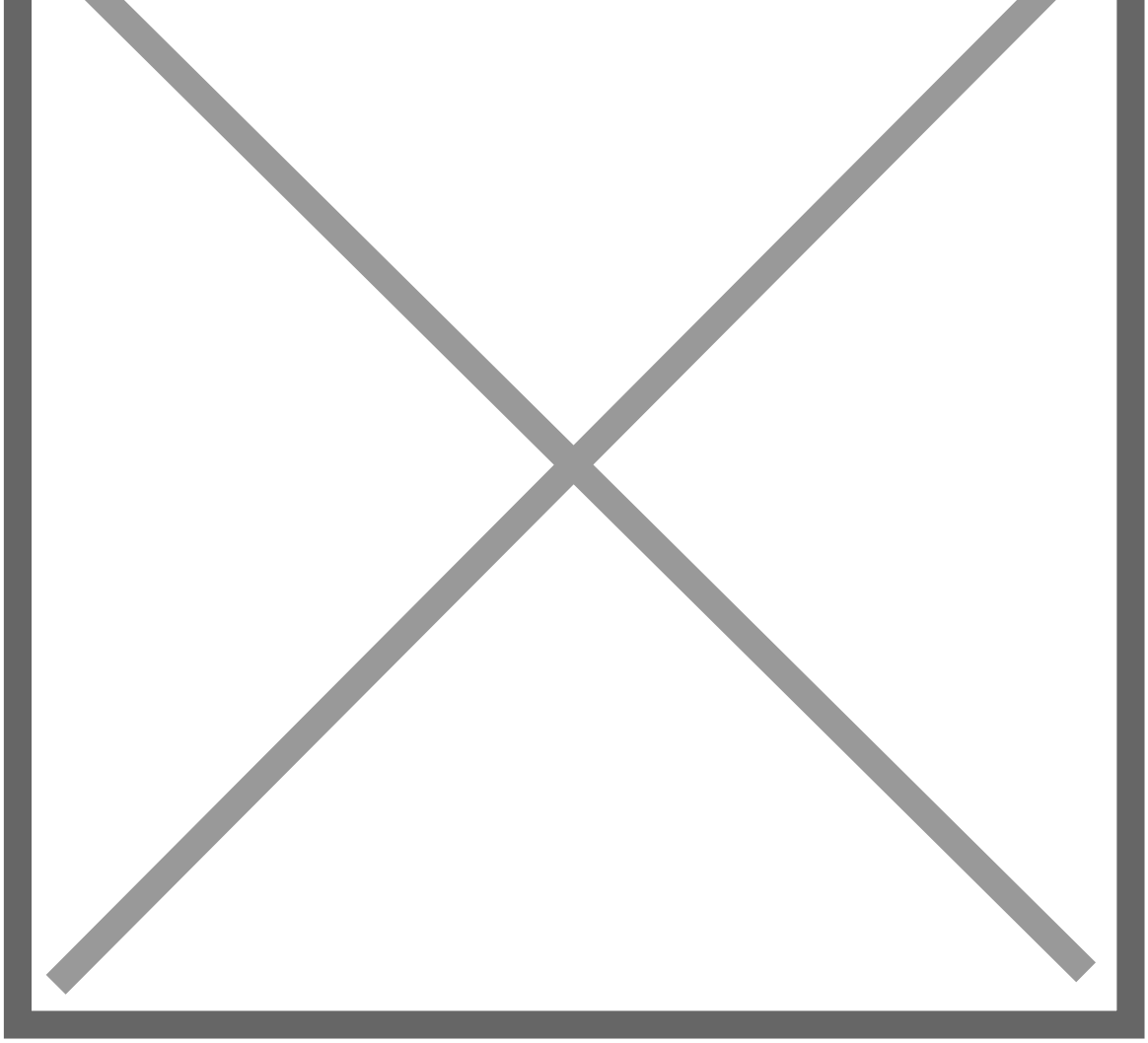
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