11/05/2022

Perth: Multiple Celebrations for the Third Sunday of Pascha



On the third Sunday of Pascha, the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women, in a spirit of Paschal joy, His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea officiated the Matins and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the Church of Sts Constantine and Helene in Perth WA.

This day also marks the celebration of the miraculous icon of Archangel Michael, known as Archangel Michael of Mantamados (GR. Μανταμάδος) on the island of Lesvos in Greece.

The origin of this icon begins with a raid by pirates on the monastery of the Taxiarchis on the island of Lesvos. The pirates threatened the monks with death if they would not reveal the whereabouts of the hidden villagers. The monks refused and the invaders slaughtered all of the monastics except for one novice-monk. As the pirates where leaving, the novice climbed to the roof of the monastery to be sure that the pirates had left. However, the pirates noticed him from afar and returned to slaughter him as well.

It is at this point in the story that the Archangel Michael makes his appearance in front of the Saracens with his own sword drawn forcing them to retreat in terror.

Thanks to this miracle from the Archangel the novice-monk survived and descending to the courtyard buried the bodies of his fellow monks.

The novice still in great awe and reverence for having witnessed the Archangel Michael in all his fury, gathered up the earth that was red by the blood of the martyred monks and shaped it into the icon-sculpture of the Archangel as it is today, while it was still vivid in his memory. According to legend, the monk did not have enough of this dirt-blood mix and so the head of the Archangel has turned out disproportionately larger to the rest of his body

The Church of Sts Constantine and Helene houses an elaborate icon of the Archangel Michael Mantamados which was donated by a parishioner from the island of Lesvos.

His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea had just returned from Sydney, having served with His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia on the Sunday of Thomas at the Church of St Catherine's in Mascot. His Grace conveyed the Paschal blessings from His Eminence to all the faithful of the Perth district.

In particular, His Grace conveyed the Paschal greetings of His Eminence to Mr Paul Afkos OAM, President of the Hellenic Community of WA and all of the management committee members of the community.

In his sermon His Grace Bishop Elpidios spoke about the 40 Day Paschal Season that we are currently in and gave a brief analyses of the "Christos Anesti Hymn". He went on to mention how on the third Sunday of Pascha our church celebrates the courageous myrrh bearing woman who went to the tomb during the early hours of Sunday morning, overcoming all fear, to anoint the precious Body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Third Sunday of Pascha this year also coincides with International Mother's Day and we also honour all mothers for their outstanding love and courage that they constantly show towards their children, families, parish and the general community. Parish priest, Fr Terry Gerovasilis, organised roses for each mother.

At the conclusion of the sermon His Grace placed the first rose in front of the icon of the Holy Theotokos on the Icon-screen, who as the First Lady is the mother, refuge and intercessor of all people. The second and third rose, respectively, went to the most senior and youngest mother in the congregation. This then followed with the annual procession of the icon of the Archangel Michael of Mantamados.

At the conclusion of the service, the chanters chanted the Paschal Katavasies while

pink roses








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