

New Year's Day and the cutting of the Vasilopita at the Holy Archdiocese of Australia



New Year's Day was celebrated in the Holy Archdiocese of Australia with splendour and ecclesiastical magnificence. The locus of the divine services on the feast of the Circumcision of the Lord and of Saint Basil the Great, was at the Holy Church of Saint Nicholas, in Marrickville, Sydney, where His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia officiated. After the Divine Liturgy, the Doxology was chanted for the beginning of the new year and then His Eminence blessed and cut the Vasilopita according to tradition, while all present sang New Year's carols all together.

Present among the large congregation were the Consul General of Greece in Sydney Mr. Yannis Mallikourtis, the Vice-President of the Archdiocesan Council Mr. Theo Penklis, Archon of the Holy Great Church of Christ, Mr. Athanasios Kehagioglou, and the President of the Parish Mr. Elias Dimakis.

On Monday, 2 January 2023, in the hall of Saint Andrew's Theological College, in Redfern, Sydney, an event was held for the cutting of the Vasilopita of the Holy Archdiocese, by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, with the presence of Metropolitan Seraphim of Sevasteia, Their Graces, Bishop Iakovos of

Miletoupolis, Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia and Bishop Bartholomew of Charioupolis, The Chancellor of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia Archimandrite Christophoros Krikelis, many clergymen of the city of Sydney and many laity, including Mr. Konstantinos Giannakodimos, as a representative of the Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Mr. Yannis Mallikourtis, and the Commercial Envoy of Greece in Australia, Ms. Chrysoula Prokopaki.

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, after blessing the Vasilopita, referred with emotion to the person and the invaluable theological contribution of Saint Basil the Great, stressing among other things that “it is not by chance that on the first step of the year, our Church places the figure of this great Hierarch”. “The Hierarch of Cappadocia can be a model of life for all of us”, His Eminence pointed out, “because in his person is found a world of virtues and charisms”. In conclusion, Archbishop Makarios emphasised that all of us can find something in the life of the Great Saint Basil that grants us peace and expresses us, in order that we may cultivate and imitate it.

During the cutting of the Vasilopita, Archbishop Makarios made a special reference to the Ecumenical Patriarchate and to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, expressing the gratitude of the people of the local Church of Australia for the love, his constant care and contribution to the ecclesiastical eparchy of the fifth continent, while he appealed to those present not to forget, in the Vasilopites that they cut at home, to take a piece out for the poor, showing at the same time a willingness to strengthen and support their fellow human beings in need.

Then, on the occasion of the beginning of the new year, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia referred to the need to regularly take stock of our lives, not so that we become disillusioned and depressed, as he pointed out, but in order for us to realise our mistakes, to identify their causes and to make provisions so that we do not repeat them in the future. Focusing his attention on the pandemic, which in previous years brought great trials to all of humanity, even within the Body of the Orthodox Church, His Eminence recalled a word of the Great Saint Basil, that we must have a certain course with the Church. “So we should learn from the past and move into the future with more confidence in the Church,” he noted in the epilogue of his report.

At the same time, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia referred to the challenges that 2023 has in store for the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, expressing optimism that it will be a creative year in many ways. He also announced that in the past year of 2022, approvals were issued for the construction of the new

facilities of the Holy Archdiocese and Saint Andrew's Theological College in Sydney, and therefore, now arises the challenge of realising this ambitious project, with a view to its completion within 2024, when the local Church of Australia will celebrate its 100th anniversary. On this occasion, His Eminence asked everyone to support the work of the Church and submit their ideas and suggestions regarding the events that will brighten the Centennial celebrations.

In concluding his speech, His Eminence urged all those present to set two personal goals for 2023. The first is to smile and bear witness to the joy of the Resurrection that Orthodox Christians constantly experience, while the second is to make a new beginning in their lives, walking inextricably with Christ.

The modest event concluded with New Year's carols, sung by members of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society Sydney and clergy of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia.

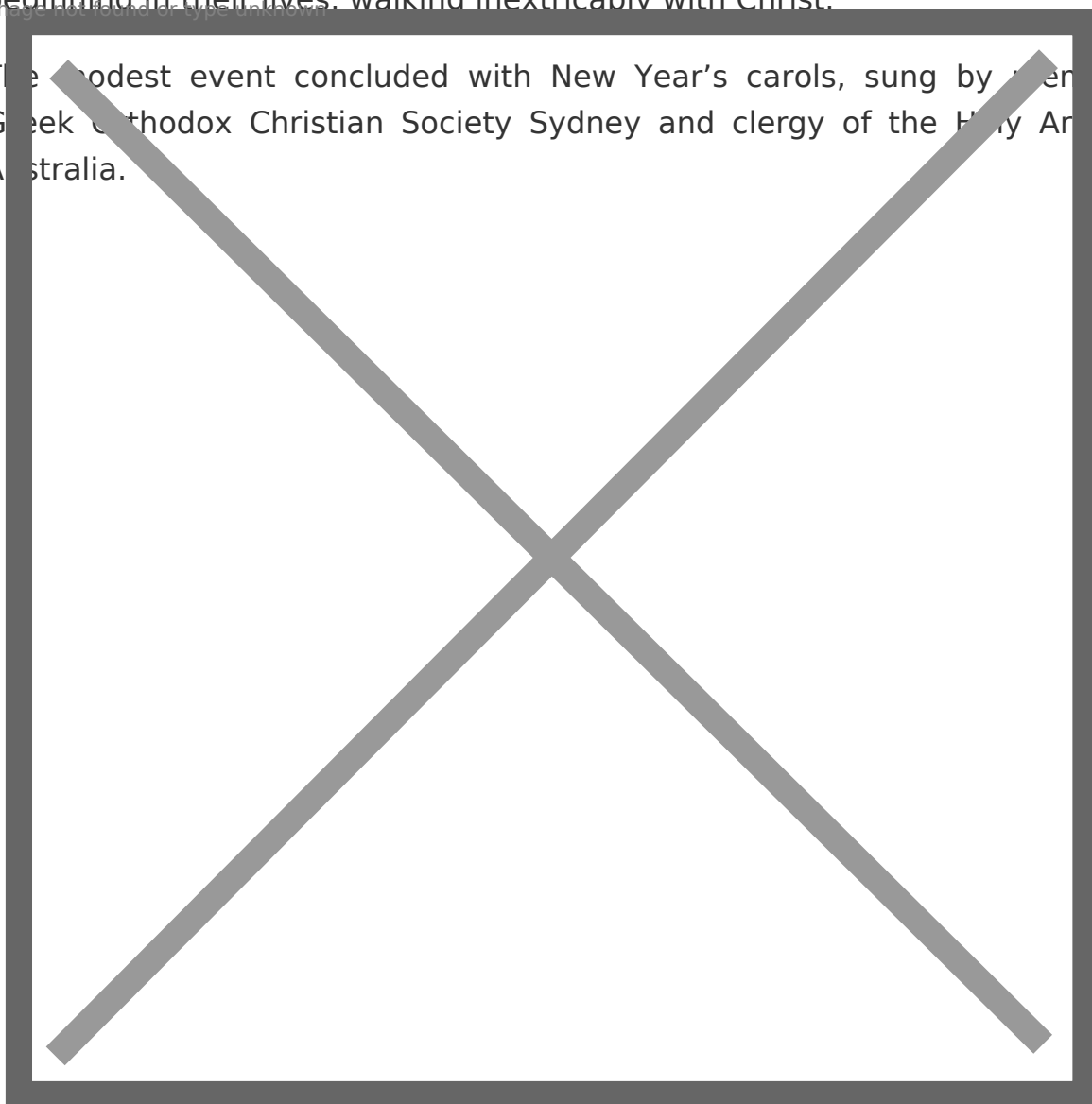








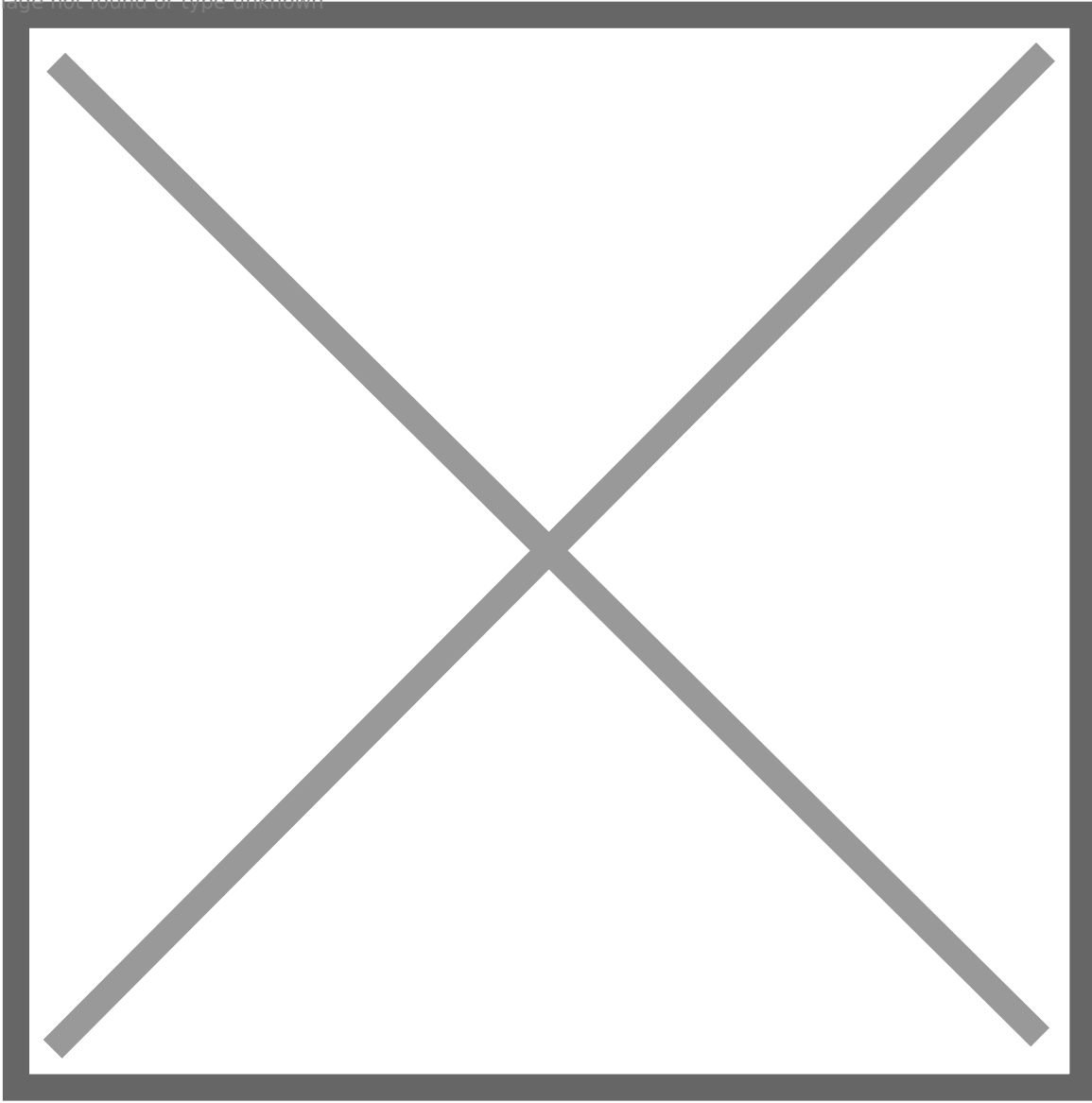








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