

09/01/2023

Thousands of faithful at the Joint Epiphany Celebration in Sydney, Australia



The Feast of the Epiphany, during which the waters are consecrated, is not a symbolic event or simply a tradition that we have received from our ancestors and continue. It is a great challenge for all of us, to make important changes in our lives, to place Christ at the center of our life, but also to forge unity with the Church and with our fellow human beings.

With this message, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, welcomed the thousands of Greeks from the city of Sydney, and beyond, who on Sunday, 8 January 2023, flooded the Yarra Bay seaside location in Sydney to participate in the Joint Celebration of Epiphany.

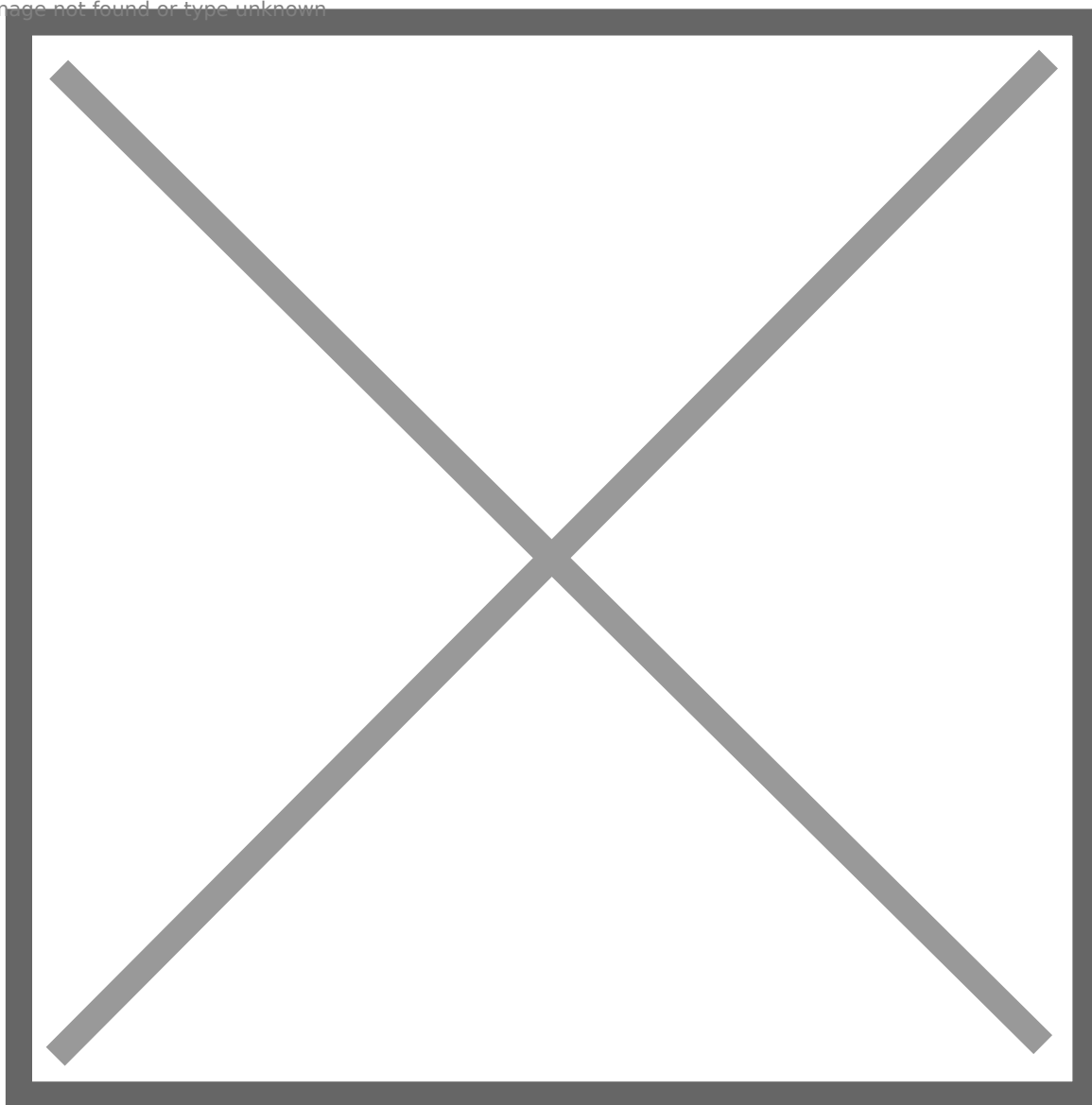
The Joint Celebration of the Epiphany, in which all the Parishes and Communities of Sydney participate, has been an established event for more than three decades. After a temporary interruption due to the restrictions of the pandemic, the event returned this year with particular momentum and anticipation.

Indicative of this, is that 176 faithful, of all ages, dove into the sea after the

immersion of the Holy Cross. The Cross was retrieved by the young Mr. Dimitrios Glastras, from the Parish of Saint Spyridon in Kingsford, who received the congratulations and paternal blessing of his Shepherd, Archbishop Makarios, like all the other swimmers.

During the service of the Sanctification of the Waters, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia was joined by His Grace Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis and His Grace Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia, the Chancellor of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, Archimandrite Christophoros Krikelis and the Holy Clergy of the city of Sydney.

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Among the thousands of faithful who attended the event, there were also many officials, representatives of the consular authorities, the political authorities of Australia and the organisations and institutions of the Greek Communities. Among others, the Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Mr. Yannis Mallikourtis, the Federal

Member of Parliament, Mr. Matthew Thistlethwaite, who represented the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Anthony Albanese, the Greek Senator Mr. Peter Poulos, who represented the State Premier of New South Wales, Mr Dominic Perrottet, the Leader of the Opposition Party in the Parliament of New South Wales, Mr Chris Minns, Greek NSW State MPs, Ms. Sofia Kotsis and Mr. Steve Kamper, the Mayor of the City of Randwick, Mr. Dylan Parker, the councillor of the City of Randwick, Ms. Alexandra Luxford, the Secretary of the Archdiocesan Council and Secretary of the Consolidated Trust of the Holy Archdiocese, Mr. Nick Papas and the Secretary of the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW, Ms. Nia Karteris.

After the Blessing of the Waters, a rich festive program followed with traditional dances, live music and traditional Greek food. The master of ceremonies for the event was Mr. Elias Economou, President of the Parish of Saint Spyridon Kingsford and Vice President of the Intercommunities Council. In the short greeting addressed by Archbishop Makarios, He wished a blessed and joyful New Year to all the participants in the event, while he congratulated the members of the dance groups and all the musicians who embellished the Greek festival with their presence.

Earlier that day, at the Cathedral of the Annunciation of Our Lady, a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was held, presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia. His Eminence, analysing the Gospel passage of the day, focused on the repeated exhortation “Repent” of Saint John the Forerunner and Baptist, emphasising that this timeless sermon of Saint John is a primary need for the modern person as well, so that we too are able to change our way of thinking and by extension our way of life, choosing to follow Christ.

Finally, His Eminence warmly thanked Father Miltiades Chryssavgis and Father Nikolaos Bozikis, two clergymen with many years of invaluable service to the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, for their participation in the Divine Liturgy. “When I see them, I feel a great honour and a great pride as the Archbishop of the local Church, which has been served by clergy of such spiritual and ecclesiastical stature,” he noted in closing.















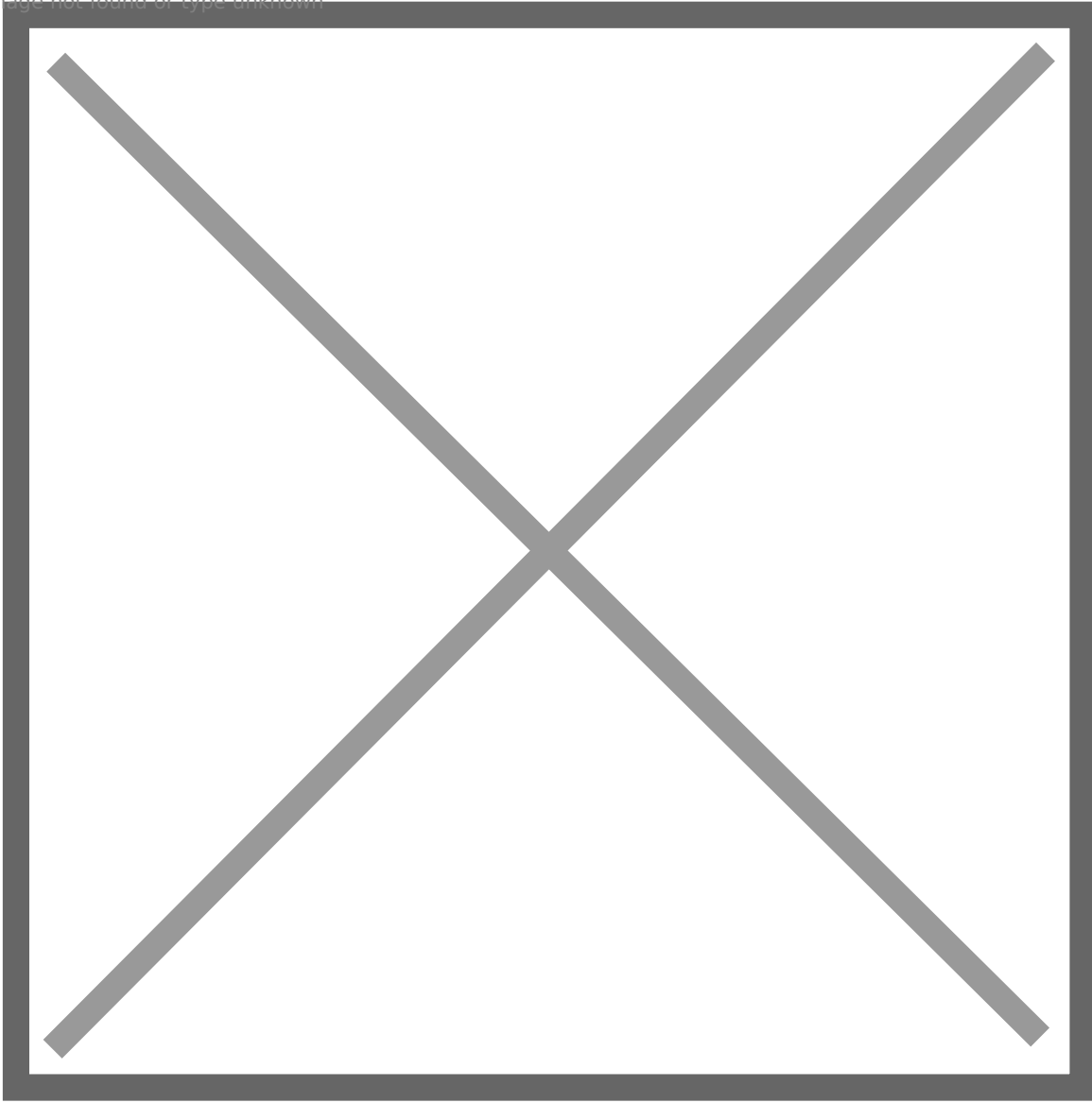








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