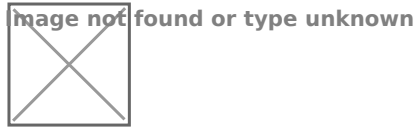


## **Inaugural Feast of Pascha at the newly established Parish of St Sophrony of Essex in Adelaide**



With the blessing and holy prayers of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, the newly established Parish of St Sophrony of Essex, in Hectorville Adelaide, celebrated its first Pascha. Established in February 2023, the church was full of people during the services of Holy Week, with many young families and new converts to the faith. The services of Holy Week were particularly notable as it is the first time that the faithful had heard all the Holy Week services in English, which brought much joy and deep emotion.

We thank God and our Archbishop, His Eminence Makarios of Australia for his pastoral concern in establishing this new initiative of our Holy Archdiocese. We pray that it will fulfill the pastoral needs of upcoming generations of Orthodox Christians who desire the blessings of the spiritual life, whether they are raised in the faith from their youth or convert in adulthood.

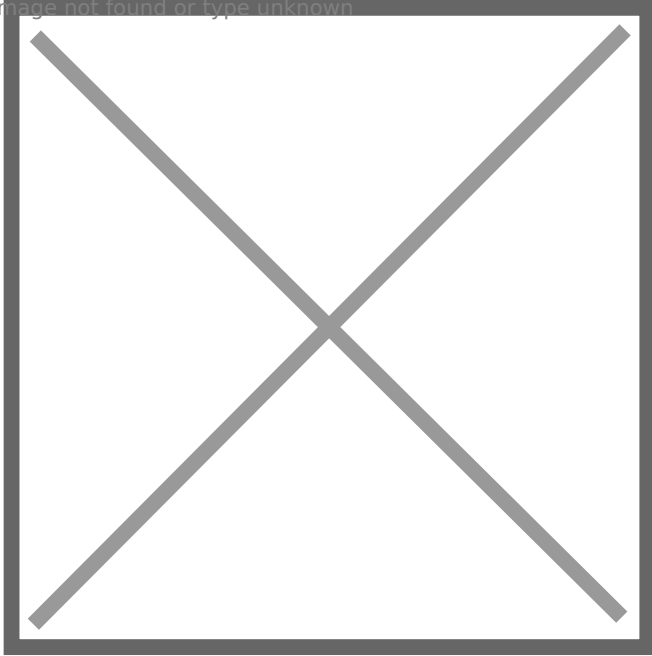
The members of the Committee and volunteers of the parish, under the guidance of the Parish Priest Fr Daniel Bradshaw, enthusiastically and sacrificially contributed to the functions of Holy Week. Of great significance were the contributions of the chanters who tirelessly and with love dedicated themselves to learning the somewhat unfamiliar English versions of the Holy Week hymns, for which the Parish Priest, Committee and all parishioners are exceedingly grateful.

The parish was blessed to celebrate Holy Week in a historic stone building which assisted with conveying the gravitas and sublimity of these significant services. It was particularly moving to witness the beautiful fellowship of Christians lovingly decorate the Epitaphios within the church for the first time, followed later by brothers and sisters in Christ singing lamentations together during the procession of the Epitaphios around the church in the sombre tomb of the night. The night enveloped us all as does death eventually, but the tiny dance and flicker of candlelight signifies the life and light of Christ's resurrection, reminding us that the radiance of God overcomes all darkness in this world; in that knowledge we can

always be joyous and full of spiritual hope.

Through the prayers of our Archbishop, the first Pascha of the newly established parish of St Sophrony of Essex was a source of blessing and spiritual strength for the faithful in Adelaide and we glorify Christ's Holy Resurrection. Glory to God.

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