

«ΛΥΧΝΟΣ ΤΟΙΣ ΠΟΙΣ ΜΟΥ Ο ΝΟΜΟΣ ΣΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΦΩΣ ΤΑΙΣ ΤΡΙΒΟΥΣ ΜΟΥ» ΨΑΛΜ 118, 105

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# ΛΥΧΝΟΣ

A GREEK ORTHODOX PERIODICAL





# Apostolic Visit of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Australia

Once in a generation event. The culmination of many months' anticipation, preparation and organisation. Many blessed moments for all of us to reflect and remember for the years to come - the visit of His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, to Sydney, Australia. A 15,000 km journey from one of the most glorious centres of Christianity to the shores of this great land where our parents and grandparents migrated to, faithfully preserving their Orthodox faith and tradition. The many events commemorating the Patriarch's visit reflects the deep respect and admiration the Church holds for its leader.

All would agree the scale and breadth of his engagements was outstanding. What follows is a snapshot of public events organised for the Patriarch's visit. The Greek Orthodox Christian Society was blessed and honoured to have been invited to participate in the organisation of some of these events.



4-19  
OCTOBER

2024

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Arrival at Sydney Airport



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*"...we observe that here Romiosyne is flourishing and bearing even more fruit"*

Official Welcoming Doxology & Reopening of the Cathedral



## FRIDAY 4 OCTOBER 2024

Hundreds of faithful gathered outside Sydney Airport, keenly anticipating the arrival of their Shepherd and leader. Families, children, students from our Orthodox schools in Sydney were overjoyed to greet His Holiness. There were many who had travelled from Perth, Hobart, Adelaide, Canberra and Brisbane. Some had faint memories of His All-Holiness' last visit in 1996 whilst others looked forward to meeting him for the first time. After a short press conference in which Archbishop Makarios welcomed him "to his home", the Patriarch responded,

*"Today, under the Southern Cross, one of my deepest desires, nurtured for almost 30 years – to see the Orthodox faithful of Australia, whom I love and have missed very much – has been fulfilled."*

## SATURDAY 5 OCTOBER 2024

### *Official Doxology Service*

The official Doxology Service welcoming the Patriarch to Sydney Australia was held in the morning with great splendour at the Cathedral of the Annunciation in Redfern. Thousands of faithful gathered at the Cathedral, witnessing the grand entrance of His All-Holiness preceded by the clergy and monastic communities. The Patriarch officially reopened the Cathedral following extensive renovations. The cathedral is now resplendent with a new Icon Screen, iconography and Bishops' thrones, befitting its role as the central church building of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in Australia.



His Eminence, Archbishop Makarios, briefly described the historic journey of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia. In the Patriarch's closing address, he emphasised the role of the Mother Church of Constantinople as being the guardian and guarantor of Holy Tradition, describing it as "This good testimony, the treasure trove of faith, namely the Apostolic Tradition". He also reflected on the progress of the Church over its centenary, and expressed confidence in the Archdiocese's renewal and revitalisation as it enters into its second century.

In attendance at the Doxology service were the Governor of NSW Margaret Beazley and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. Both the Governor and the Prime Minister spoke warmly of the significant influence of the Greek Orthodox community to the broader Australian community and congratulated the Archdiocese on its centenary celebrations. In addition, the Prime Minister pledged up to \$25 million to support the further renovation and revitalisation works at the Archdiocese.

*"Our holy Church... is gathered in council, that is, assembled 'in one place' in the Holy Spirit..."*

Conferral of an Honorary Doctorate by St Andrew's Theological College upon His All-Holiness

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*"Truly our joy is fulfilled today, because we are communing in Christ, in the Cup of Life..."*

Patriarchal Divine Liturgy, ICC, Sydney

*"Beloved children, remain close to the Church and to Christ, who will never disappoint you."*

Sacred Journeys: Concert celebrating the Centenary Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia by the Greek Orthodox Christian Society



Session of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese of Australia presided by His All-Holiness

## Conferral Service and Concert

On Saturday evening, over 1,100 people attended a groundbreaking event at the Seymour Centre on the campus of the University of Sydney. First, His All-Holiness was presented with an honorary doctorate by St Andrew's Theological College, established by the Archdiocese. In his talk to the faithful, the Patriarch remarked on the importance of synodality in the Church, which ensures unity in the Church. In this context, the Patriarch commended the new Constitution of the Archdiocese, which establishes an 'Eparchial Synod' as the governing body of the local Church.



The Greek Orthodox Christian Society then presented a concert called, "Ρωμιούσνης Αντίλλαλοι - Sacred Journeys", celebrating 100 years of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia. The concert commemorated the journey of our forefathers and mothers, their sacrifices and dedication to their faith passed on as a precious inheritance to the next generation. It presented hymns, traditional songs and dances, dramatic performances and video presentations to honour the Hierarchs, all the clergy and everyone who laboured tirelessly over so many years for our Holy Archdiocese.



His All-Holiness then gave specific and heartfelt words to the students of the Theological College, the young people of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society and the youth in general, describing them as "the most beautiful and sweetest fruit, the optimistic perspective of the present and the unwavering hope of the future". He recalled the song and video prepared for his 30 year anniversary as Patriarch, and expressed his deep appreciation for its sentiment and the bond it establishes between Constantinople and Sydney.



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*"Monasticism is nothing other than the longing for the Kingdom."*

Visit to the Holy Monastery of Panagia Pantanassa

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*"The witness of monasticism is exceedingly imperative today in the Church and... in the world, which is moving away from God"*

Synaxis of the monastics of Australia



## SUNDAY 6 OCTOBER 2024

The largest public event of the program was a combined Divine Liturgy held at the International Convention Centre. On this day, all churches of NSW and ACT were closed and over 7,000 faithful gathered at the ICC for a unique Divine Liturgy officiated by the Ecumenical Patriarch, together with His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, the Bishops and clergy. It was a rare occasion for all in attendance, truly "once in a generation" and the atmosphere of the ICC supported that.



At the conclusion of the Liturgy, the Patriarch shared his deep gratitude on his visit to Australia and for the progress of the Archdiocese over its 100 years. He commemorated the work of previous generations, who amongst difficulties and temptations of migration, sought to establish Churches and "preserve their ancestral traditions and customs and faith."

The Patriarch spent some time explaining the new constitution of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, remarking that "the Archdiocese of Australia suffered many hardships due to a distorted and unorthodox mentality regarding the administration of the Church".



The new constitution was presented as a 'correction' of these past errors, and, as the Patriarch explained, addresses "the contemporary administrative and pastoral needs of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, but at the same time restores the absolute normal order in its structure and governance".

Following this was a presentation of ordination of Archons, described as "ambassadors of the Great Church for the rest of the world". In the local context, they are referred as members of the "Order of Christ the Saviour"; a group under the presidency of Mr Andrew Liveris. His All-Holiness wished them the illumination of the Holy Spirit and that they may be worthy – Axios!



*"True and living faith in Jesus Christ is not a dry ritualistic duty... but is activated by the love of the heart, which burns with love for God and, at the same time, for humanity, as the two cannot exist separately"*

Visit to Taronga Zoo and Luncheon hosted by the Greek Welfare Centre



*"May the Church... be a symbol and instrument of the vision for a culture of sharing and offering, of existence as co-existence, and of life as communion."*

Visit to the Church of the Resurrection, Kogarah



Official Dinner in honour of His All-Holiness

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*"For all, our prayer today rises as incense before the throne of God. Eternal be their memory"*

Patriarchal Trisagion at the Graves of the Ever-Memorable Shepherds of Australia, Theophylactos and Stylianos



monastic 'phronema' that is present at the monastery. He remarked that Panagia herself led the Fathers to Mangrove Mountain, "this most beautiful and verdant place". "Monasticism is nothing but the desire for the Kingdom" he observed.

The Patriarch presented Abbot Eusebius with a Commendation of the Great Church. He then presented a cross to Geronda Stephanos, former Abbot and founder of the Monastery, and bestowed on him the title of "Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Throne". "Elder Stephanos knew well that without the existence of Holy Monasteries, the spiritual life and presence of a local Church would be seriously deficient", highlighted His All-Holiness.

## MONDAY 7 OCTOBER 2024

His All-Holiness made his visit to the Holy Monastery of Panagia Pantanassa at Mangrove Mountain, on the Central Coast of New South Wales. This was the first visit of the Patriarch to the Monastery, and the significance was not lost on the crowd numbering over one thousand.

A doxology service was held in the Katholikon of the Monastery, at which Geronda (Abbot) Eusebius formally welcomed His All-Holiness and presented him with a unique icon of Panagia Nikopoios, painted by one of the fathers of the monastery in an indigenous style on wood from the local area. The Abbot provided a brief history of the Monastery, highlighting that it is still in its "first steps" but hopes to irrigate the land with the "tears of the ascetic" in response to Saint Paisios' prophetic words and advice on his first visit to Australia in 1977.

The Patriarch, in his response, was grateful for the warm welcome and was encouraged by the traditional

The Patriarch then blessed the newly built aquaculture ponds on the grounds of the monastery and officiated at the first Synaxis of the monastic community in Australia. In his address, the Patriarch again observed that "monasticism in the Holy Archdiocese of Australia is thriving, deeply rooted in traditional ecclesiastical principles and flourishing under the enlightened leadership of the chosen Elders and the guidance of Archbishop Makarios."



*"Continue the good fight for the preservation of the heritage of Romiosyne, the faith, the language, the ethos"*

Visit to the Church of St Euphemia and meeting with the Imbrian Community of Sydney



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Visit to St. Basil's Nursing Home, Randwick

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Visit to the Holy Archangels Church and meeting with the Imbrian Community of Melbourne

The visit was concluded with an organised lunch in honour of His All-Holiness.



## TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2024

A formal dinner was held in the Patriarch's honour at the Grand Ballroom of the ICC Sydney. Over 1,300 attended the evening, a broad representation of the parishes across New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Numerous speakers presented throughout the evening. Firstly, as a representative of Archons and the newly formed Order of Christ the Saviour, Andrew Liveris put forward a rousing representation of the Patriarch and his influence. He spoke of his early advocacy of environmental issues earning him the title "the Green Patriarch", his commitment to inter-religious dialogue and more recently his commitment to peace and unity as "the Patriarch of Peace".

Following Mr Liveris, the leader of the Liberal Party Peter Dutton spoke. He emphasised the significant

role of the Patriarch and his leadership of hundreds of millions Orthodox faithful globally. He referred to him as "an influencer, in the true sense of the word" in his advocacy of dialogue, the environment and peace, particularly in the Ukraine.

Archbishop Makarios followed, once again expressing his gratitude for the visit of the Patriarch and his respect for the history of the Archdiocese. He remarked that migrant Greeks brought to Australia three things – their faith, their language and their traditions of Hellenism. He described them as 'heroes,' who fought for their faith and orthodoxy.

The Patriarch, in his concluding speech, built on this theme. He identified that the faithful of Australia have built their life on solid foundations with hope and optimism for the future. Further, he described the community here as "Romioi". With this he drew a link between the Greek Orthodox of Australia to Constantinople, emphasising his deep respect for the community and the way it has preserved its inheritance. He concluded with some additional reflections on the new constitution, which will build a stronger bridge between the local Australian church and the "Mother Church" of Constantinople.

With a celebratory cutting of a cake among the atmosphere of over one thousand of the faithful, this keystone event concluded with a real sense that the Patriarch's words ring true – that as the Archdiocese enters its second century, it enters into a period of revitalisation and renewal, building upon the strong foundations of its first century.



*"Hold fast and preserve the faith and the Tradition of the Apostles, the Holy Fathers, the Martyrs, and the Saints."*

Patriarchal Divine Liturgy,  
Margaret Court Arena,  
Melbourne

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Visit to to the Church  
of St Eustathios,  
Melbourne



*"We are ready for the future"*

Greek Orthodox  
Youth Parade at  
KIA Arena



*"The Orthodox Church, by its nature and constitution, desires and promotes dialogue"*

Official dinner at  
Centrepiece Hall,  
Melbourne

## ΑΠΟΣΠΑΣΜΑ ΑΠΟ ΤΗΝ ΟΜΙΛΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ Κ.Κ. ΒΑΡΘΟΛΟΜΑΙΟΥ ΣΤΗ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΙΚΗ ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ, ΣΥΔΝΕΪ

Ἀληθῶς, ἡ χαρὰ ἡμῶν πεπλήρωται σήμερον, διότι κοινωνοῦμεν ἐν Χριστῷ, ἐν τῷ Ποτηρίῳ τῆς Ζωῆς, καί γινόμεθα σύσσωμοι καί σύναιμοι Χριστοῦ καί συναπτόμεθα, δι' Αὐτοῦ προς ἀλλήλους καί φανεροῦμεν τό ἅγιον Σῶμα Του, τουτέστι τήν Ἁγίαν ἡμῶν Ἐκκλησίαν, ἣτις ὡς Μήτηρ φιλόστοργος «ἐπισυνάγει τά νοσσία ἑαυτῆς ὑπό τὰς πτέρυγας» (Μτ. 23, 37) καί παρηγορεῖ εἰς τὰς θλίψεις καί τὰς δοκιμασίας, καί συναίρει μετά τῶν τέκνων τῆς τόν σταυρόν αὐτῶν, καί χαίρει μετά χαιρόντων, καί συνευφραίνεται μετά τῶν εὐφραينوμένων καί συμπορεύεται μετά τῶν κοπιώντων, καί συστενάζει μετά τῶν ὀδυνομένων καί κλαίει μετά τῶν κλαιόντων καί, ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ εἰπεῖν, ἡ ἁγία ἡμῶν Ἐκκλησία ὄχι ἀπλῶς καί μόνον περιλαμβάνει ἀπάσας τὰς ἐκφάνσεις τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου βίου, ἀλλά συνιστᾷ τό ὅλον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, διότι ἡ Ἐκκλησία εἶναι ὁ ὅλος καί ὁ παρατεινόμενος εἰς τούς αἰῶνας Χριστός.

Αὐτήν τήν ἀλήθειαν, δίχως ἀμφιβολίαν, ἐγνώριζαν βιωματικῶς καί καρδιακῶς οἱ πρῶτοι μετανάσται, οἵτινες κατέφθασαν ἐν μέσω δυσκολιῶν καί πειρασμῶν καί παραπικρασμῶν πολλῶν εἰς τήν Αὐστραλίαν, εἰς τά μέσα τοῦ προπερασμένου αἰῶνος, πρός ἀναζήτησιν καλυτέρων συνθηκῶν διαβιώσεως καί, ὡς ἔσχομεν καί ἄλλοτε τήν εὐκαιρίαν νά εἴπωμεν, τό πρῶτον μέλημά των ἦτο ἡ οἰκοδόμησις τόπων λατρείας, οἴκων τοῦ Θεοῦ, διότι οἱ Ρωμηοί, ἤμποροῦν νά ζήσουν δίχως οἰκίαν καί ἐστίαν καί ἄρτον καί ὕδωρ, δίχως τόν Θεόν ὅμως εἶναι ἀδύνατον. Καί τοῦτο δέν εἶναι λεκτική ἢ συναισθηματική ὑπερβολή· ἀρκεῖ καί μόνον νά ἀναλογισθῶμεν ὅτι ἐν μέσω τῆς προσφυγιάς καί τῆς θυέλλης τοῦ ξεριζωμοῦ ἐκ τῶν ἀρχαίων ἐστιῶν των οἱ πρόσφυγες ἀντί ἄλλων

τιμαλφῶν καί χρημάτων καί ὑπαρχόντων ἔφεραν εἰς τούς κόλπους αὐτῶν, μέ κίνδυνον τῆς ζωῆς των, τά σεβάσματα τῆς πίστεως μας, ἦτοι τὰς ἁγίας εἰκόνας καί τά χαριτόβρυτα λείψανα τῶν ἁγίων καί τῶν μαρτύρων. Παρακολουθήσαμε χθές τό βράδυ τήν σκηνήν τῆς μεταφοράς τῶν λειψάνων τοῦ Ἁγίου Γεωργίου τοῦ Νεαπολίτου ἀπό τήν Καππαδοκίαν εἰς τήν Ελλάδα. Μεγάλη ἡ χάρις τοῦ! Μεγάλως συνεκινήθημεν!

Ἄλλ' ὅμως, δόξα τῷ Θεῷ, οἱ Ὅμογενεῖς εὐρῆκαν ἐδῶ εἰς τήν Αὐστραλίαν γῆν ἀγαθὴν καί φιλόξενον καί ἐπρόκοψαν καί ἐμεγαλοῦργησαν, δίχως ποτέ νά λησμονήσουν τήν πατρίδα, τήν πατρῶαν εὐσέβειαν καί τήν πίστιν τήν ἀτίμητον τῶν προγόνων, τήν ὁποίαν, παρά τήν, ἐν τῷ μεταξύ πρόοδον καί εὐμάρειαν καί τό διαφορετικόν πολιτισμικόν περιβάλλον καί τὰς ἐπιρροάς, διετήρησαν ἀλώβητον ἕως τῆς σήμερον καί, ὡς πληροφοροῦμεθα ἀλλά διαπιστοῦμεν καί ἐκ τοῦ σύννεγγυς, ἡ Τοπική Ἐκκλησία εἶναι ἀκμαία καί θάλλουσα, ὄχι μόνον εἰς ἀριθμητικά μεγέθη ἀλλά καί εἰς ποιότητα καί πνευματικότητα, διότι οἱ Ὅμογενεῖς διατηροῦν με εὐλάβειαν τὰς προγονικάς παραδόσεις καί τά ἔθη καί τήν πίστιν, μακράν συγκρητιστικῶν ἀπόψεων καί μοντέρνων, δῆθεν, ἰδεῶν.

### EXCERPT FROM THE SERMON OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW AT THE PATRIARCHAL DIVINE LITURGY IN SYDNEY

Truly our joy is fulfilled today, because we are communing in Christ, in the Cup of Life, and we become one body and one blood with Christ, and through Him we are joined to one another and we reveal His Holy Body, that is our Holy Church, who like a tender loving mother "gathers her chicks under her wings" and

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Visit to the Holy Monastery of Our Lady Axion Estin in the Diocese of Chora

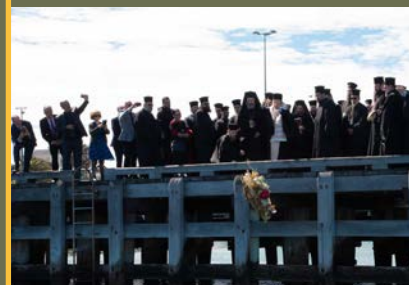


"In response to consumerism, the Church calls for a deeper reflection on the nature of human existence"  
Official reception at the Governor's residence



Visit to St John's Greek Orthodox College, Melbourne

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comforts us in our sorrows and our temptations, and bears her children's crosses together with them, and rejoices with those who rejoice, and celebrates with those who celebrate and travels together with those who toil, and groans together with those who suffer, and weeps with those who weep. In one word, we can say that our holy Church doesn't simply embrace every part of human life, but the Church is the whole of human life, because the Church is the whole body of Christ, of Christ Who is with us for all eternity.

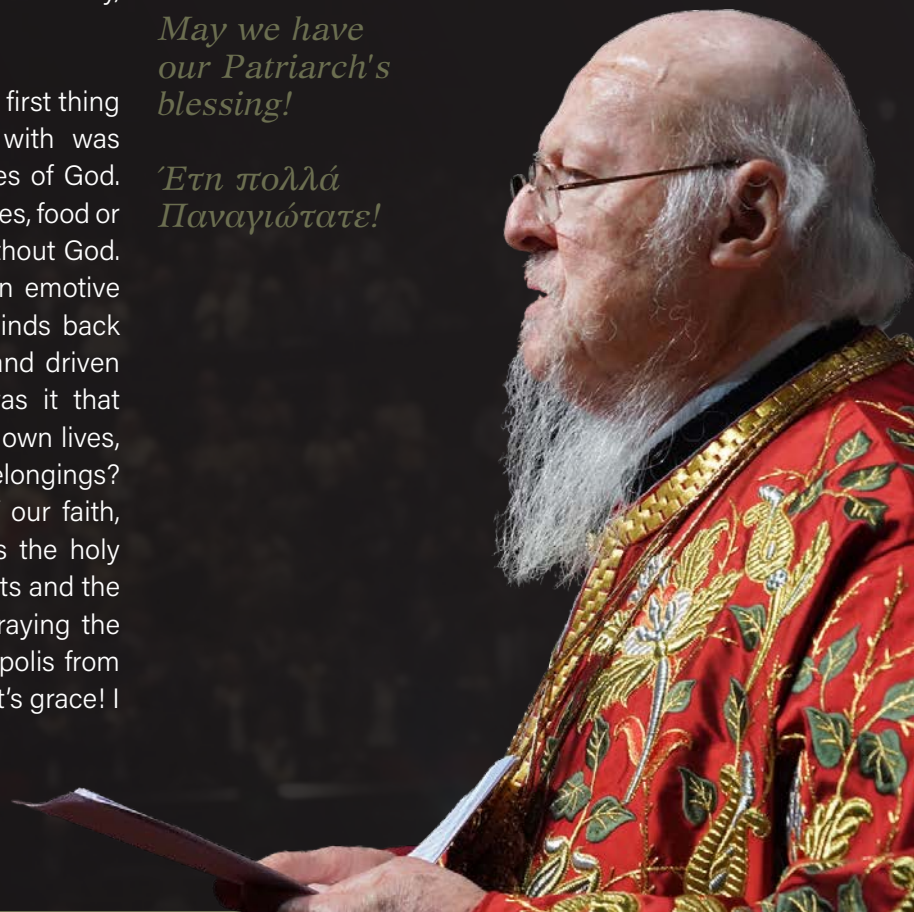
Without a doubt, the first migrants knew this truth in the depth of their hearts by their lived experience. These first migrants came to Australia in the midst of many bitter difficulties and trials in the middle of last century, searching for better living conditions.

As we have also said on other occasions, the first thing that the migrants concerned themselves with was the construction of places of worship, houses of God. Because the Greeks can survive without houses, food or water, but it is impossible for them to live without God. And this isn't just a literary expression or an emotive hyperbole. All we need to do is cast our minds back to the refugees who were being uprooted and driven out from their ancient homeland. What was it that they brought with them, at great risk to their own lives, instead of any other valuables or wealth or belongings? They carried the most venerable objects of our faith, clutching them close to their hearts, that is the holy icons and the grace-flowing relics of the saints and the martyrs. Last night I watched a scene portraying the translation of the relics of St George of Neapolis from Cappadocia to Greece. How great is the saint's grace! I was deeply moved!

But, glory be to God, here in Australia the faithful found good hospitable soil and they progressed and they thrived. But they never forgot their homeland, they never forgot their ancestral piety or the priceless faith of their forefathers. Even in the midst of progress and affluence, even under the influence of different cultures, they kept their roots and their faith unadulterated from then until this present day. And as we have been informed, and now as we have seen close up, the local Church here is at its peak and is flourishing, not only in numerical size but in quality and in spirituality. And this is because the faithful here are holding on to the faith and culture and tradition of their ancestors with reverence, far from the influence of modern relativism.

*May we have  
our Patriarch's  
blessing!*

*Ἐτι πολλά  
Παναγιώτατε!*



Visit to the Hellenic Museum of Melbourne



Visit to the Parish of the Transfiguration of our Lord of the Holy Diocese of Chora

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Patriarchal Memorial Service for Migrants

*"The charity of the Church knows no borders or limits, but is generously given to all, even to its enemies, as the Parable of the Good Samaritan teaches us."*

Visit to the 'Five Loaves' program at the Parish of Sts Constantine and Helen in South Yarra



Με την ευκαιρία της πρόσφατης επίσκεψης του Παναγιωτάτου Οικουμενικού Πατριάρχου στην Αυστραλία το παρόν άρθρο μας αφιερώνεται σ'αυτόν. Είναι γνωστό σε όλους μας οι προσπάθειες της Αυτού Θειοτάτης Παναγιότητος κ.κ. Βαρθολομαίου για την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος.

Στη μεγάλη οικολογική συνέλευση στη Βενετία, τον Ιούνιο του 2002, ο Οικουμενικός μας Πατριάρχης είχε μιλήσει για την «ελλείπουσα διάσταση» στη σύγχρονη οικολογική αντίληψη, εννοώντας την έλλειψη του πνεύματος της θυσίας από πλευράς του ανθρώπου προκειμένου να διαφυλάξει και να συντηρήσει το φυσικό περιβάλλον.

Ο Θεός Πατέρας μας δημιούργησε από το μηδέν ολόκληρο το σύμπαν. Έβαλε τον άνθρωπο να είναι ο άρχοντας αυτής της δημιουργίας Του. Έκτοτε ο άνθρωπος αποτελεί το συνδεδεμένο κρίκο ανάμεσα στο Θεό και την κτίση. Την κτίση να τη διαχειρίζεται με σύνεση και σεβασμό. Και στο Θεό να την αναφέρει δοξολογικά και ευχαριστιακά. Αυτή την «καλήν λίαν» δημιουργία ο Θεός της έδωσε την προοπτική να ελευθερωθεί από τα φυσικά της δεσμά και να οδηγηθεί στη σωτηρία μέσω του ανθρώπου. Μόνο ο άνθρωπος που πλάστηκε «κατ'είκόνα Θεού» και μπορεί να γίνει «κατά χάριν» Θεός, μπορεί να συμπαράσχει ολόκληρη την κτίση και να την οδηγήσει από τη φθορά στην απελευθέρωσή της.

Μιλώντας ο απόστολος Παύλος για αυτή τη μέλλουσα δόξα που περιμένει τους ανθρώπους του Θεού λέγει τα εξής σε μετάφραση: «είναι τέτοια η δόξα εκείνη ώστε η σφοδρή προσμονή και αυτής της άψυχης κτίσεως είναι να περιμένει με πόθο την ένδοξη φανέρωση των παιδιών του Θεού. Διότι και η κτίση υποδουλώθηκε στο θάνατο και τη φθορά όχι με τη θέλησή της αλλά από το Θεό, ο οποίος την υπέταξε στη φθορά με κάποια ελπίδα. Και ποια ελπίδα; Ότι και αυτή η κτίσις θα ελευθερωθεί από την υποδούλωση στη φθορά για να πάρει μέρος στην ελευθερία της ένδοξης καταστάσεως των παιδιών του Θεού.» Ρωμ. 8:9-12 (μετάφ. κ Τρεμπέλα.)

Αλλά πώς μπορεί ο άνθρωπος να ελευθερώσει την κτίση από τα δεσμά της και να την οδηγήσει στη σωτηρία μέσω της δικής του ελευθερίας; Αυτό δεν μπορεί να γίνει αν ο άνθρωπος χρησιμοποιεί την κτίση μόνο για τη δική του ικανοποίηση και ευχαρίστηση. Σαν αντικείμενο εκμετάλλευσης και καταχρήσεως.

Η οικολογική κρίση των καιρών μας είναι αποτέλεσμα αυτής ακριβώς της νοοτροπίας. Ότι δηλαδή εμείς είμαστε οι κυρίαρχοι και τίποτα άλλο δεν μετρά παρά μόνο τα δικά μας καταναλωτικά και προσωπικά μας οφέλη. Με άλλα λόγια για να σταματήσει η οικολογική κρίση χρειάζεται οι άνθρωποι να επιδείξουμε ένα «ασκητικό πνεύμα», μια στάση αυτοπεριορισμού. Να διακρίνουμε ανάμεσα σε αυτό που θέλουμε και σε αυτό που χρειαζόμαστε.

Το γεγονός ότι θέλουμε κάτι δεν σημαίνει ότι αυτομάτως έχουμε το δικαίωμα και να το αποκτήσουμε. «Αυτό είναι ένα μάθημα που οι καταναλωτικές κοινωνίες σε όλο τον κόσμο δεν επιθυμούν να διδαχθούν» όπως ο προκατόχος του οικουμενικού πατριάρχη μας Βαρθολομαίου (Δημήτριος) είχε παλαιότερα τονίσει σε Χριστουγεννιάτικο μήνυμά του (1989). Χρειάζεται να γίνουμε φίλοι και όχι εκμεταλλευτές της κτίσεως.

Αυτή τη φρόνιμη και ασκητική στάση απέναντι στη δημιουργία του Θεού μόνο η Ορθόδοξη Θεολογία μπορεί να εμπνεύσει. Γι'αυτό και είναι πάμπολλα τα παραδείγματα από τη ζωή των αγίων ασκητών, που μέσα από μια τέτοια συμφιλίωση με τη φύση, βίωσαν ένα προχωρημένο στάδιο μεταμόρφωσης της. Π.χ. Ο Άγιος Σεραφείμ του Σαρώφ με την αρκούδα, ο Άγιος Παΐσιος με το κουνελάκι του, ο Άγιος Πορφύριος με τον παπαγάλο του κ.λ.π.

Ο τρόπος που χρησιμοποιούμε τη φύση σήμερα οδηγεί στην καταστροφή της φύσης και του εαυτού μας. Καιρός για αλλαγή στάσεως και ήθους. Καιρός για μετάνοια. Όσο ακόμα είναι καιρός.

# Q & A

WITH Fr G. L.

## What is the role of the Ecumenical Patriarch in our Church?

In the very early Church, the apostles traversed the whole known world preaching the Kingdom and establishing local Churches. They would appoint an overseer (i.e. a bishop) in each local Church that they established. The bishops would oversee the functioning of their Church, the ordination of clergy, and the spiritual direction of their flock. If there was a major dispute about the teaching or running of the Church, bishops would come together in Synods to resolve these disputes.

Over time, some local Churches gained greater prominence, according to the prominence of their city. From this, there arose the five Sees, i.e. the Pentarchy, made up of the five most prominent local Churches: the Churches of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. The stature of the Church of Constantinople continued to rise, such that in the 6th Century, the bishop of Constantinople acquired the title of Ecumenical Patriarch. In the 7th Century, the Islamic conquests of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem left Constantinople the only practical authority in the East. Moreover, at the beginning of the second millenium there was the great Schism between East (Greek Orthodox) and West (Roman Catholic), leaving the Patriarch of Constantinople as the great ecclesiastical authority of the Orthodox world.

For the duration of the Byzantine Empire (330-1453 AD), the Ecumenical Patriarchate served to maintain the wellbeing, harmony and interests of the Church and to grow the Church into new lands. At the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the Patriarch of Constantinople

was given wide-ranging authority over the Greek Orthodox community of the Ottoman Empire. This was an ominous position to hold, as the Patriarch was often held responsible for any uprisings or other problems among the Greek population. Many Patriarchs paid for such problems with their lives.

Today, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople has jurisdiction over the Orthodox Churches in Turkey, as well as Mt Athos, Crete, part of Northern Greece, the Dodecanese, and the Greek Orthodox Churches in the Diaspora, including Europe, the American continents and Oceania. At the same time, he continues to hold a special place of honour within Orthodoxy; holding the status of *primus inter pares* (first among equals) among the world's Eastern Orthodox heads of Churches.

The current Ecumenical Patriarch, His All-Holiness Bartholomew, is the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople. He works tirelessly under difficult conditions to maintain the spiritual interests of the Orthodox people. St Paisios had said in 1992 that "God gave us during these difficult times the best Patriarch". His All-Holiness has also been recognised globally in his work relating to the protection of the environment, and in promoting religious freedom and human rights.

As for us, we continue to pray that the good Lord protects and strengthens him so he can continue to worthily guide his flock according to God's Will. May we have his blessing.



# Saint Arsenios *the Cappadocian*

(November 10)

St Arsenios of Cappadocia (1840 - 1924) was the spiritual father of St Paisios the Athonite and Protector of Australia, having baptised the Saint as a infant. He is very well loved in Australia, and we are blessed to have some of his holy relics at Pantanassa Monastery.

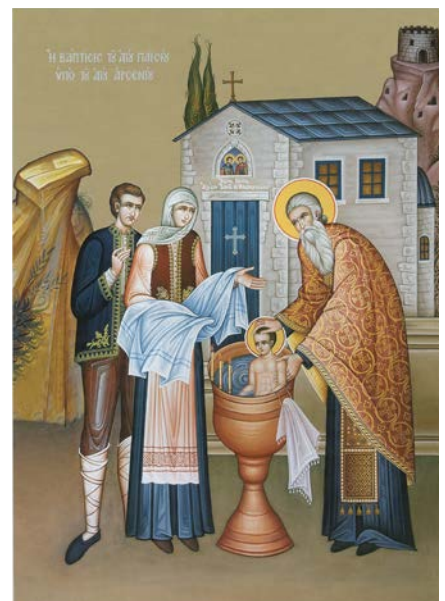
St Arsenios was born with the name Theodoros in the Orthodox village of Pharasa, Cappadocia (Central Turkey). Although his parents were rich in virtues, they unfortunately passed away at an early age, leaving Theodoros and his older brother Vlasios as orphans.

One day, Vlasios and Theodoros went to cross a fast-moving stream, but the current was too strong and it carried Theodoros away. In tears, Vlasios called on St George to save his brother, and suddenly he saw Theodoros return to him. Theodoros joyfully told him that he had seen a horseman, dressed as a monk, saving him from the water and that he himself would also become a monk. And so it happened - after completing his studies, at the age of 26 he entered the Holy Monastery of the Flaviana, dedicated to St John the Baptist, and was tonsured and given the new name, Arsenios.

Despite his desire to stay as a monk and pray, the Metropolitan sent him back to Pharasa to teach reading and writing to the children and illumine the darkness of the Greek youth. He did this work with great discernment, always avoiding provoking the Turks who looked upon him and the villages with great suspicion.

At 30, Arsenios was ordained a priest and given the blessing to act as a spiritual father. His spiritual activity continued to intensify, and he committed himself to acts of asceticism, prayer, teaching and mercy. He lived in a small cell with an earthen floor, fasted often and was in the habit of shutting himself in his cell for at least two whole days every week to devote himself entirely to prayer. He would also not allow others to care for him or praise him, and would often act critically so as to dissuade people from helping him. For example, if someone tried to help him by bringing him food, he would abruptly say that it was not well-cooked and send it away. Or if someone expressed admiration for him, he would reply: *"So you think I'm a saint? I'm only a sinner worse than you. Don't you see that I even lose my temper?"*

None of these attempts, however, were successful, and the people of Pharasa were convinced he was a saintly and holy man, not least because of the many miracles he performed. He was known not just for his spiritual healing, but also for curing physical illnesses. Whenever anyone (whether Greek or Turkish Muslim) would visit him, he would find the right prayer or psalm for their specific illness and, almost immediately, they would be healed. Arsenios, however, refused to accept money for healing, despite the best attempts of those he had healed, regularly telling people *"Our faith is not for sale."*



Life continued in this way for many years, with Arsenios as the spiritual leader of the village, strengthening both the adults and the youth in their Orthodox faith.

In 1924, the Greeks were expelled from Asia Minor. Arsenios predicted this before it happened, and organised the people for the departure. When it came time to move, the Saint led his people on the very long journey across Turkey. Before they left, St Arsenios took time to protect all the holy items and relics in the village, and then baptised all the unbaptised children of the village, including the son of the village president. The son's parents wanted to give him the name Christos, after the child's grandfather, but St Arsenios insisted that the child be called Arsenios, so that the child could become a monk and follow after him. That child called Arsenios was later tonsured Paisios, the great modern day Saint.

Even on the long journey, St Arsenios' great sensitivity would not allow him to tire animals and rest himself, and so he made the journey on foot. After arriving in Greece, as an old but radiant man, he knew that he would only live for forty days. One day, near his death, his chanter Prodomos saw a louse crawling on him, and took it off discreetly to kill it. The Saint cried out loudly "Don't kill the poor thing", and put it back into his clothing. He said to Prodomos:

*"Let it have a little flesh to eat as well, since it found the chance to get near me now. After all, why should the worms eat all the flesh themselves?"*

Then, turning to all his visitors, he said:

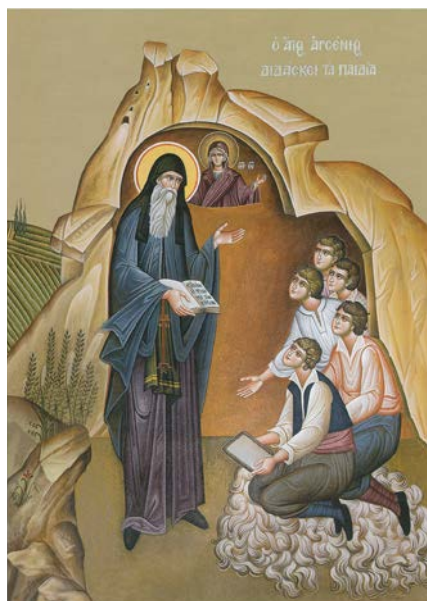
*"The soul, the soul you must take care of far more than*



*the body, which will go into the earth and be eaten by worms."*

Those were the final wise words of St Arsenios on our journey in life, and the next day he passed away, on 10 November 1924. He was declared a Saint by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1986.

May the Saint intercede for all of us.



# Hebrews

## 7:26-28; 8:1-2



*“For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.”*

...

This epistle reading features in almost all feast days of hierarch saints. In her wisdom, the Church puts forward a passage on such feast days which identifies Christ as the archetype; the perfect High Priest.

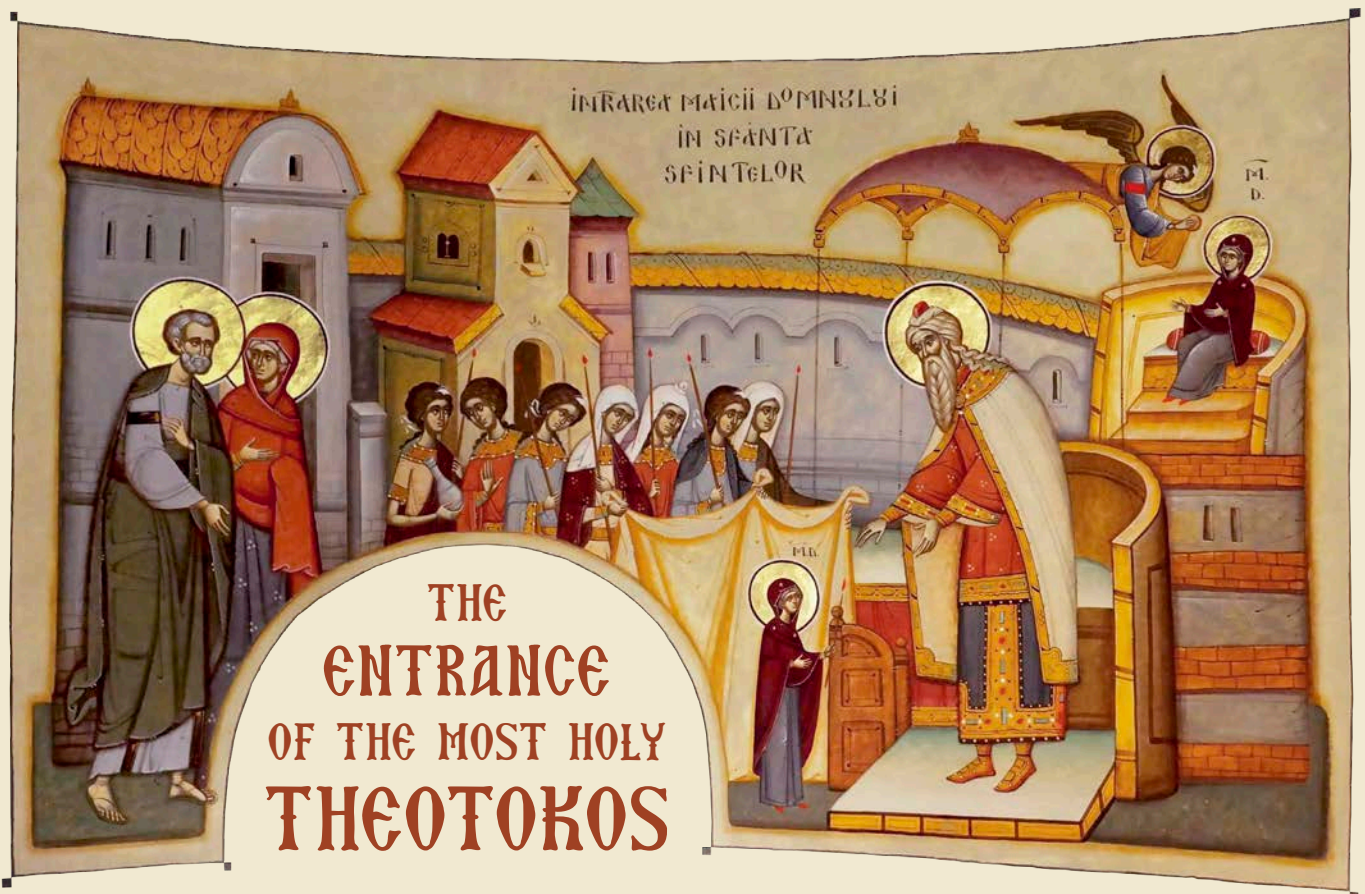
In the centuries before Christ, and during His earthly life, the position of high priest was held by a man of the tribe of Levi who would be chosen to serve in the role for a year. Only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies and only the priests would make blood sacrifices on behalf of the people. Of course, these high priests were human and liable to sin like all fallen humanity. There are examples of sinful priests throughout the Old Testament.

St Paul explains in this passage that a perfect High Priest has been appointed who fulfilled the law and is seated at the right hand of the throne of Majesty in heaven. He is “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners”. This, of course, is a reference to Jesus Christ, the High Priest; whose sacrifice is His very Body and Blood of which we commune and by which we become members of Him and thereby, members of His Church. This sacrifice He made “once for all when He offered up Himself”.

The hierarchs and priests perform this same sacrifice in remembrance of Him at every Divine Liturgy. Our hierarchs represent our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

They are appointed to carry out the apostolic work of our Lord as He commanded of His own disciples. As people, they strive to nourish the spiritual welfare of their people by leading by their own example of holiness, prayerfulness, union with God; haters of sin and champions of the faith. The hierarchs of our Church, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, gave us our theology, our canons, saintly lives to imitate, and though the centuries have shepherded the Orthodox through tumults and storms towards the Kingdom.

On the throne in our churches, one will find an icon of Jesus Christ depicted clad in the vestments of a bishop. The icon bears the title “High Priest”. Thus, the faithful and our hierarchs are reminded that our Church is guided by a representative of Christ in each city and country. In every Divine Liturgy we pray for our hierarch and ask our Lord to remember him among the first, to grant him to the “holy churches in peace, safety, honour, and health, unto length of days, rightly teaching the word of [His] truth”. Just as our hierarchs pray for us, so too, we ought to pray for them that they may live in accordance with the example of the Great High Priest, Jesus Christ. May we have their blessing.



The Entrance of the Most-Holy Theotokos into the Temple, celebrated on the 21st of November, honours the moment when the Virgin Mary, as a young child, was brought into the temple by her parents, Saints Joachim and Anna. They longed for a child but remained childless into their old age. With deep faith and perseverance, they vowed that if God granted them their desire, they would dedicate their child to His service once it was weaned.

In ancient Israel, childlessness often carried a heavy burden of shame, suggesting that a couple was somehow unworthy in the eyes of God. This is echoed in the story of Elizabeth, the mother of St. John the Forerunner, who rejoiced after conceiving, saying, "The Lord...has shown his favour and taken away my disgrace among the people" (Luke 1:25). For Joachim and Anna, fulfilling their vow was not only a testament to their faith and obedience but also an act of public redemption in the eyes of their community.

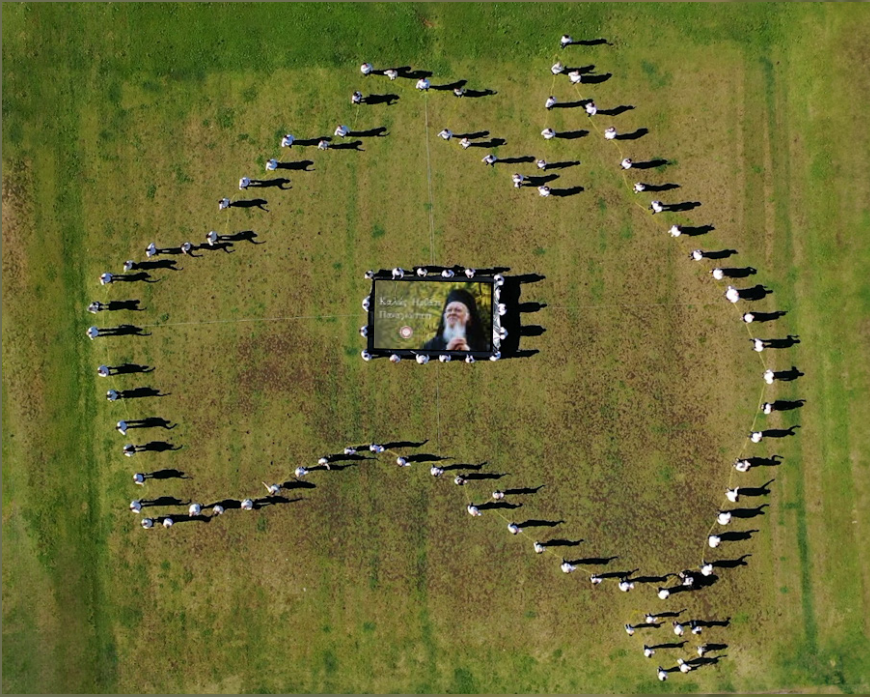
As they journeyed to the temple, a grand procession formed, with relatives and neighbours joining them and young maidens bearing lamps to light their path. They were met by Zachariah, the high priest, dressed in his ceremonial garments, affirming the sacredness of the moment. In a profound act of dedication, Joachim and Anna officially offered Mary to the high priest, and she was placed in the Holy of Holies. This was the most

sacred part of the temple, where the high priest would only enter once a year. Her presence in the Holy of Holies represents that she was destined to be herself a "Holy of Holies", a living tabernacle of God.

In fact, she is the mercy seat between the two Cherubim (indicating God's redemption and reconciliation), the golden vessel containing manna (the bread of life who is Christ), the rod of Aaron which budded (signifying life from death) and the golden censer (used for intercession and prayer).

The feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos emphasises the role of the Virgin Mary in our salvation, as she was set aside and raised to become the dwelling place of God. It highlights her purity, dedication to God and readiness to receive the fullness of grace, to become the Mother of God. Hence, she is called *κεχαριτωμένη*, or "full of grace" (Luke 1:28).

In addition, it serves as a reminder of the importance of nurturing faith from an early age and highlights the vital role of family in spiritual upbringing. Liturgically, this feast incorporates themes of light and hope, pointing towards the forthcoming celebration of Christ's birth. In honouring the Virgin Mary's entrance into the temple, we are called to reflect on our own devotion to God and how we can ultimately serve His purpose in our own lives.



Today, under the Southern Cross, one of my deepest desires, nurtured for almost 30 years – to see the Orthodox faithful of Australia, whom I love and have missed very much – has been fulfilled.

*His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew*



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