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Celebrating
70 YEARS

of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society

1955 - 2025

«ΑΥΧΝΟΣ ΤΟΙΣ ΠΟΙΙ ΜΟΥ Ο ΝΟΜΟΣ ΣΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΦΩΣ ΤΑΙΣ ΤΡΙΒΟΙΣ ΜΟΥ» ΨΑΛΜ 118, 105

VOLUME 40 | ISSUE 6 | OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2025

Α ΧΝΟΣ

A GREEK ORTHODOX PERIODICAL

Η ΣΚΕΠΗ



ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ

Η δεύτερη μεγάλη εθνική γιορτή των Ελλήνων είναι η επέτειος του ιστορικού «Όχι» της 28ης Οκτωβρίου 1940. Η γιορτή αυτή υπενθυμίζει σε όλους τους ανθρώπους το απαραβίαστο της ελευθερίας και της ανθρώπινης αξίας.

Ο αγώνας των Ελλήνων μετατράπηκε σε αίτημα ολόκληρης της ανθρωπότητας: τη διάσωση της ανθρωπιάς, μέσα από τη διάθεση και την ετοιμότητα ενός λαού να αποδέχεται ηρωικές θυσίες, ακόμη και της ίδιας της ζωής, όταν αυτό απαιτείται. Από μια τέτοια στάση εξαρτάται η πνευματική αύξηση και η ωριμότητα του ανθρώπου.

Συνυφασμένη με το ηρωικό Έπος του '40 είναι και η γιορτή της Αγίας Σκέπης της Θεοτόκου, η οποία, ενώ για αιώνες εορταζόταν την 1η Οκτωβρίου, μετά το 1940 μετατέθηκε στις 28 Οκτωβρίου, ώστε να συμπίπτει με την εθνική μας γιορτή. Κι αυτό, γιατί η ηρωική στάση των Ελλήνων αγωνιστών στηρίχθηκε εν πολλοίς στην προστασία και τη δύναμη που οι στρατιώτες ένιωσαν στα βουνά της Ηπείρου από την Υπεραγία Θεοτόκο.

Το Απολυτίκιον της Αγίας Σκέπης είναι αποκαλυπτικό και φανερώνει αιώνιες αλήθειες σχετικά με τη σχέση των Ορθοδόξων με την Υπέρμαχο Στρατηγό και προστάτιδα του Έθνους μας:

Ήχος α΄

*Τῆς Σκέπης σου Παρθένε ἀνυμνοῦμεν τὰς χάριτας,
ἦν ὡς φωτοφόρον νεφέλην ἐφαπλοῖς ὑπὲρ ἔννοιαν,
καὶ σκέπεις τὸν λαόν σου νοερῶς,
ἐκ πάσης τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἐπιβουλῆς·
σὲ γὰρ σκέπην καὶ προστάτιν καὶ βοηθὸν κεκήμεθα,
βοῶντές σοι·
Δόξα τοῖς μεγαλείοις σου, Ἀγνή·
δόξα τῇ θεῖᾳ Σκέπῃ σου·
δόξα τῇ πρὸς ἡμᾶς σου προμηθείᾳ, Ἄχραντε.*

Οι αλήθειες που αναδεικνύονται είναι οι εξής:

Πρώτον, η αναγνώριση της χάρις και της στοργής της Θεομήτορος εκφράζει την αποδοχή αλλά και την αντιπροσφορά της αγάπης των ανθρώπων προς εκείνη.

Δεύτερον, η Παναγία εικονίζεται ως φωτοφόρος νεφέλη, που παραπέμπει στη φωτεινή νεφέλη της Παλαιάς Διαθήκης, όπου το Άγιο Πνεύμα καθοδηγούσε τους

Ισραηλίτες στην πορεία τους μέσα από την έρημο προς τη Γη της Επαγγελίας — δηλαδή προς τον Παράδεισο. Ήταν μια κοινωνία αγάπης του Θεού προς τους ανθρώπους.

Τρίτον, η Παναγία με την παρουσία της σκέπει, προστατεύει και βοηθεί τους ανθρώπους σε κάθε ανάγκη, ιδιαίτερα όταν απειλούνται τα αγαθά της ελευθερίας και της ειρήνης.

Τέταρτον, η ευγνωμοσύνη των ανθρώπων για όλες τις χάριτες της Παναγίας εκφράζεται με τη Θεία Σκέπη και της Προμηθείας — δηλαδή της πρόνοιας και της αγάπης της.

Έτσι, όποιος πλησιάζει με ευλαβική αγάπη, εμπιστοσύνη και ταπείνωση το πρόσωπο της Παναγίας, δέχεται μέσα του, κατά κάποιον τρόπο, τον Ευαγγελισμό της — την ενυπόστατη Χάρη, δηλαδή τον ίδιο τον Ιησού Χριστό. Διότι η χάρη της Θεοτόκου μεταμορφώνει τον άνθρωπο σε ψυχή που «γεννά» τον Θεό.

Η Παναγία ακτινοβολεί το φρόνημα της κενώσεως, της υπακοής και της θυσίας του Χριστού. Με αυτόν τον τρόπο φανερώνει στον άνθρωπο ότι στο βάθος της υπάρξεώς του κρύβεται το μυστήριο της ζωής.

Στον σημερινό αιώνα, που ο άνθρωπος «ξεραίνεται» από την αμαρτωλότητά του, μπορεί να ποτίζεται από τη Ζωοδόχο Πηγή που είναι η ίδια η Θεοτόκος. Παράλληλα, μπορεί να θερμαίνεται από τον Ήλιο της Δικαιοσύνης, που είναι ο ίδιος ο Κύριος ημών Ιησούς Χριστός.

Έτσι μόνο μπορούν να ζωοποιηθούν οι νεκρωμένες δυνατότητες της υπάρξεώς μας. Εδώ είναι που η Παναγία, μητέρα μας, έμπρακτα βοηθεί τον κάθε άνθρωπο να αποκτήσει χριστιανικό φρόνημα. Αυτό το φρόνημα μπορεί να τον οδηγήσει τελικά στην οικείωση της εν Χριστώ σωτηρίας.

Η Παναγία φανερώνει στον άνθρωπο ακριβώς αυτό το φρόνημα, το φρόνημα του Χριστού, όπως μας λέει ο Απόστολος Παύλος στην Επιστολή του προς τους Φιλιππησίους. Με αυτό το φρόνημα, την κένωση και την ταπείνωση, η Παναγία γίνεται αληθινό υπόδειγμα ζωής για όλους μας. Ας την παρακαλέσουμε και εμείς να μας αξιώσει να μιμηθούμε τις αρετές της και προστρέχοντας στη χάρη της να λαμβάνουμε την ακαταμάχητη προστασία της.

The Missionary Work of the Church: A challenge but also, an invitation *through the words of St John Chrysostom*



What comes to our minds first when we think of missionary work in the Orthodox Church?

Perhaps we think of Orthodox Bishops and Priests establishing churches and baptising converts in Africa, in Asia, in the Pacific Islands and elsewhere in the world. We may have supported these efforts within the context of a charitable donation or fundraising events.

Or we may have encountered aspects of missionary work ourselves such as attending Church Bible Study Groups, Sunday Schools, Parish youth groups, and Scripture Classes at local schools.

However, the missionary work of The Church is not just the sole responsibility of those who toil in the far flung reaches of the world.

Indeed, in remembering Christ's exhortation to the Apostles at the conclusion of the Gospel of St Matthew, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," let us also not forget His words of assurance, "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

St John Chrysostom explains to us that, "Christ does not say He will

be with them only, but with all who believe after them. For the apostles would not remain until the world's end; but He speaks to all the faithful as to one body: "Say not to Me that the task is difficult — for I am with you, I who make all things easy."

What is this task?

St John Chrysostom encourages us all to focus simply on the following: To contemplate the ease of Christ's commandments, to learn to admire the beauty of poverty and to help those in need whilst seeking nothing beyond necessity.

On the ease of Christ's commandments he asks, "For what challenging thing has been commanded of us? To cut through mountains? To fly through the air? To cross the Tyrrhenian Sea? By no means — but a way of life so easy that it needs no instruments, only soul and will. What tools had the apostles, who accomplished such wonders? Were they not poor, barefoot, owning nothing — yet they overcame all?"

All of us can spread the message of Christ if we live as Christ and His Apostles lived. Using Apostle Peter as an example, Chrysostom invites us imitate them, asking rhetorically, "What made Peter blessed, tell me — raising the lame man, or casting away his wealth?" and answering, "it was [the latter] — his freedom from possessions — that opened heaven to him. For God crowns and proclaims not those who raise the dead or heal the lame, but who cast away what they have — for this was the apostle's true achievement."

Let us not think that it is just wealth or money that we must "cast away." We can cast away our own time to

help others, cast away our sinful, earthly attachments for a more prayerful existence, cast away our pride, to learn humility. All these things will make us all true missionary workers, in whatever role or position we may be in.

Let us leave the last word to our guide:

"But I cannot cast it all away," you say. You can — yet I do not compel you if you are unwilling. Only this I urge: that at least in part you spend on those in need and seek nothing beyond necessity. Thus, shall we live here a peaceful and secure life, and enjoy eternal life hereafter — which may we all attain, by the grace and love for mankind of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages. **Amen.**





THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

Hebrews 9:1-7

On the feast day of the Entrance of the Theotokos (November 21), we commemorate the fulfilment of the promise of Joachim and Anna to dedicate their child to the Temple. While the event of the entrance is not recorded in any canonical text, the Church has appointed this reading from Hebrews which is rich in meaning and representation.

It describes the sacred furnishings of the Tabernacle: the lampstand, the table, the showbread, and most notably, the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the golden jar of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant.

In his homilies on Hebrews, St. John Chrysostom writes that the Ark was the point of divine presence, overshadowed by the cherubim of the Glory of God and that the high priest entered the Most Holy Place only once a year to atone for the sins of the people. The Theotokos, dwelling in the Temple from her infancy, become the new Ark, not made of acacia wood and gold, but of flesh and purity of soul.

If the soul is a vessel that must be cleansed through asceticism and practicing the commandments of God, then how pure was the Theotokos who would bear the Logos Himself. From her earliest years, she was sanctified in the Temple. Her life of prayer and purity prepared her to become the fitting dwelling place for God. Blessed Theophylact of Ohrid, in his commentary on

Luke and Hebrews also draws a direct parallel between the Ark and the Virgin Mary. He notes that just as the Ark held the manna, so Panagia bore Christ, the Bread of Life. Just as the Ark held Aaron's rod, so she bore the High Priest of the New Covenant; and just as the Ark held the tablets of the Law, so she bore the Lawgiver Himself.

Thus, the Entrance of the Theotokos is much more than a mere event. It is a proclamation that the living Ark has entered the Holy of Holies, preparing to bear the One who will feed His people with heavenly manna (His body and blood), shepherd them with divine authority and fulfill the Law.

Furthermore, the whole sanctuary was designed around the Ark of the Covenant which was the vehicle by which God chose to make Himself present. In the Old Testament, this was hidden behind the veil, accessible only to the High Priest. Yet in Panagia, the veil is lifted and she becomes the meeting place of heaven and earth.

Her entrance into the Temple is not just a ceremonial act, but divine preparation for the Incarnation which marks the beginning of this revelation of the presence of God the Word. In Panagia, God does not merely dwell among His people, He becomes one of them.



WITH Fr N. S.

Do we really have a Guardian Angel?

If you have ever wondered whether someone is watching out for you—guiding you, protecting you, even nudging you back when you are about to make a mistake—the Orthodox Church gives a clear answer: yes, you really do have a Guardian Angel.

The Gift of God's Care

The Church teaches that, from the moment of your baptism, God assigns each Christian a Guardian Angel, to walk with you throughout your life. Angels are pure spirits, created to worship God and to carry out His will. And among their tasks, one of the most personal and beautiful is to guard human beings.

The Psalmist says, “He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways” (Psalm 90:11). Christ Himself confirms this when He says that the angels of children “always see the face of My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 18:10). That means your Guardian Angel is never out of God’s sight, and never far from you.

The Church even prays for this in the Baptismal service. The priest asks God: “Join to him throughout his life and Angel of Light, delivering him from every design of the enemy, from any encounter with evil...” From your very first sacrament, the Church reminds you that your angel walks beside you.

What Does a Guardian Angel Do?

A Guardian Angel does not just shield you from physical danger—though many Christians have stories of miraculous escapes they attribute to their angel’s help. Even more importantly, your angel works to protect your soul. They inspire you toward good thoughts, encourage you in prayer, and prick your conscience when you are tempted to sin.

Have you ever felt an unexplained push to do the right thing, or a sudden inner check that stopped you from doing something foolish? The Fathers of the Church would say: that could very well be your Guardian Angel at work.

Our Responsibility Toward Them

Knowing we have a Guardian Angel is comforting, but it also carries responsibility. Angels are holy, and they grieve when we deliberately sin. Saint Basil the Great writes that angels withdraw when we persist in evil, because they cannot dwell where God is rejected. That means our choices matter—not just for ourselves, but for our relationship with our angel.

The Church gives us prayers to our Guardian Angel, often read in the morning or before bed. By praying to them, we acknowledge their presence and ask for their continued guidance. This keeps us mindful that we are never alone, even when life feels dark or overwhelming.

Why This Matters for You

You face pressures, choices, and uncertainties every day. Sometimes it feels like no one understands, or like you are on your own in figuring things out. But the reality is that you are never truly alone. God’s love is so personal that He entrusted an angel specifically to you.

So next time you are struggling, or even when you are just walking down the street, remember: an unseen companion is by your side. Treat them with respect, stay open to their guidance, and you will discover that God’s care for you is even closer and more real than you imagined.



Apostle James

The Brother of Our Lord

Commemorated October 23

James the Brother of the Lord is distinguished both from James the son of Zebedee and brother of the evangelist John, and from James the Less, the son of Alphaeus. While these latter men were Apostles from the Twelve; the Brother of the Lord, on the contrary, was added to the group of disciples after the Resurrection of the Lord and served as the first bishop of Jerusalem. He was distinguished even among the Apostles, and was considered along with Peter and the evangelist John as one of the pillars of the first Church.

The Apostle James is called 'Brother of the Lord' because, according to the prevailing opinion, he was the son of Joseph from a woman with whom Joseph had entered into marriage before his betrothal to the ever-virgin Theotokos. Ascetic in his way of life, he was said to have knees hardened like a camel's because he continually prayed, worshiping God and seeking forgiveness for his people. Because of his great righteousness he is also called 'James the Just.'

The Apostle James presided over the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem and made the final decision on whether the rules of the old law should be imposed on Gentiles. It is likely he wrote his catholic epistle, included in the New Testament, before the council which took place in 50AD.

An account of James' death is given by the early Christian chronicler Hegesippus, who is quoted by Eusebius in book II of his Church History. According to this account, James the Just met his death through a deliberate orchestration by the Scribes and Pharisees. Having placed him atop the temple pinnacle, they demanded that he denounce Jesus before the crowds. James answered with a loud voice: *'Why do you ask me concerning Jesus, the Son of Man? He himself sits in heaven at the right hand of the great Power, and is about to come upon the clouds of heaven.'*

When many people from the crowds were convinced by this witness, crying 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' the Scribes and Pharisees panicked and threw James from

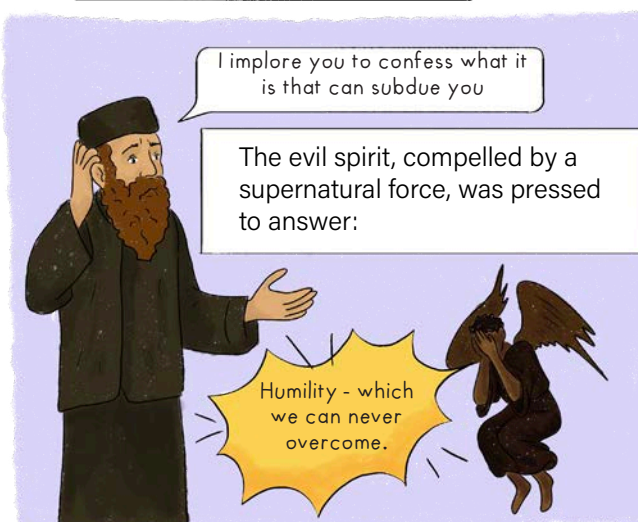
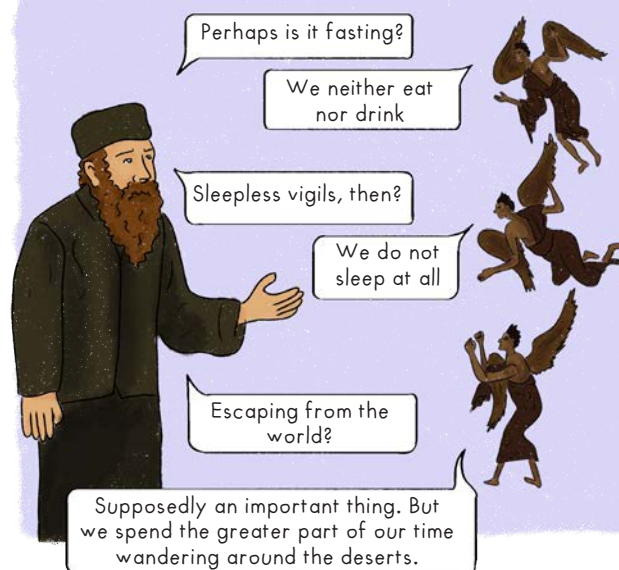
the temple pinnacle to frighten others from believing. Remarkably, he survived the fall. Turning to kneel, he prayed for his persecutors' forgiveness, echoing Christ's words: 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

As they stoned the kneeling James to finish him off, a priest protested, crying out that the righteous man was praying for them. Finally, a fuller struck the Apostle on the head with a wooden club used for beating clothes, thus delivering the fatal blow.

The devastating siege of Jerusalem followed immediately after this event.

A STORY ABOUT HUMILITY

A certain hermit had a gift from God to cast out evil spirits. One time he asked to learn what they feared most and what compelled them to flee.



Celebrating
70 YEARS
of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society
1955 - 2025



Sunday School Picnic
Gough Whitlam Park, 2025



Celebrating 70 YEARS

With the blessing of Metropolitan Theophylactos, the Greek Orthodox Christian Society was established in 1955 in the church hall of Hagia Sophia in Paddington, this year marking seventy years of service to our Holy Archdiocese.

Known more colloquially as "Enosi", it was the initiative of two university students Dr Michael Anthony and Mr Phedeas Kyriakidis, who sensing the danger of migrants losing contact with their Greek Orthodox faith and heritage, set out to establish a group with the aim of:

1. Continuing and cultivating a Greek Orthodox Christian phronema among its members
2. Assisting the missionary work of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia
3. Training Sunday School teachers (to assist the few priests which existed at the time) to teach the Greek Orthodox faith to our children.
4. Promoting knowledge of the Greek Orthodox faith in the wider Australian community.

In the years following its formation, the weekly meetings continued, and the membership grew. In 1956, Father Stephanos Pantanassiotis (then still a layman, known as Stamatis Papanastasiou), joined Enosi and contributed a dynamic presence and strong spiritual leadership as a Sunday School teacher and then as the first 'Omatha' (Youth Group) leader.

In 1968, Enosi moved to the hall of the Archdiocese in Redfern, and then in 1977 to a property in Newtown, establishing a bookstore there. In 2005, Enosi and the bookstore moved again to its present address in Kingsgrove.

The female arm of Enosi, now called Ορθόδοξος Χριστιανικός Κύκλος, or simply, 'Kyklos', began in 1958. Some of the early meetings took place at Mrs Vetta Georgilas home in Surry Hills with Miss Anna Tsilivis as leader, who was also the first Sunday School teacher.

With the arrival of Mrs Julie Anthony and Mrs Vivi George in 1965, and with the continual spiritual guidance of Father Stephanos from 1971 onwards, Kyklo continued to flourish as a place where women could connect and grow in Christ and participate in the mission work of our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese alongside the men of Enosi.



Dr Michael Anthony (front, third from right) and Mr Phedeas Kyriakidis (front, third from left) with first members of Enosi, 1956



Fr Stephanos (pictured on the left) at Sunday School picnic



Orthodox Bookstore in Newtown, 1977



Early members of Enosi



Miss Anna Tsilivis (far left) and Mrs Vetta Georgilas (far right)

In the light of the fact that Saint Paisios has recently been declared the Protector of Australia we need to mention that we had the great blessing of his visit to our gatherings at Enosi and Kyklo in 1977.

Many of Enosi's missionary activities can trace their roots to the early years and the tireless efforts and enthusiasm of those early leaders.

* * *

Sunday Schools in NSW

The idea of Sunday Schools began in 1954, when Professor Michael Anthony offered informal religious lessons to children in afternoon Greek schools. This soon led to the first official Sunday School at Kensington in early 1955, followed by another at St Sophia, Paddington, led by Professor Anthony and Mr Kyriakidis. Classes, quickly grew as more families became involved, spreading to several parishes by the late 1950s into the 1960s.

Thousands of children have passed through the Sunday Schools of our Archdiocese. A number of these students went on to teach and lead within the Church, including several who were subsequently ordained to the priesthood. Today Sunday Schools have expanded with a dedicated curriculum, teacher training, exciting holiday activities, camps and picnics.

Bookstore

Recognising the need for greater access to spiritual resources, Orthodox Christian bookstalls were established in 1954 outside Hagia Sophia and Hagia Triada in Sydney — the first missionary activity of Enosi before it formally existed, aimed at bringing Orthodox teachings to the wider Greek community.

A dedicated bookstore was established at the Newtown premises in the late 70s, providing spiritual books imported from Greece. The bookstore was later moved to Kingsgrove in 2005 and renamed the "Orthodox Mission Bookstore" and subsequently expanded its reach via an online store which has delivered books worldwide.

Youth Fellowships ("Omatha")

As the Sunday Schools continued to grow, it became apparent that the needs of the Orthodox teenage youth of Sydney required further support. "Omatha", or youth fellowships, as a result were established for high school boys and girls with weekly lessons, yearly retreats and



Orthodox Christian book stalls were among the first missionary activities of Enosi



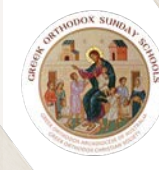
Sunday School Picnic at Centennial Park



Missionary Trip to Indonesia 2014



Sunday School Picnic at Gough Whitlam Park, 2024



ΕΓΚΑΙΝΙΑΣΤΗΚΕ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΧΟ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΙΚΟ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΠΩΛΕΙΟ



Archbishop Stylianos blessing the first Orthodox Bookstore in Newtown, 1977



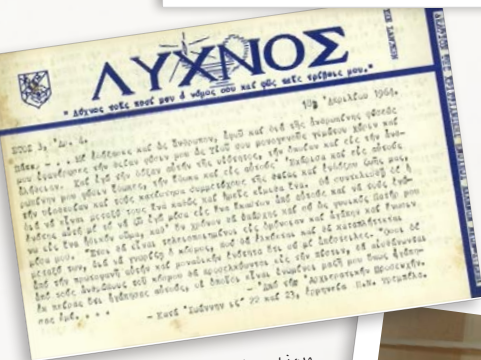
Annual Girls Omatha Retreat 1976



Boys Omatha Bushwalk



Stamatis Papanastasiou (Now Fr Stephanos - middle of top row) pictured with the first boys Omatha group



Early Lychnos publication, 1964



Hospital visit



Chanting School Concert, 2024



Mr Basil Stavropoulos and his chanting class, 2009



Greek Orthodox Christian Society Social Media



many holiday activities which have provided generations of young Orthodox Christians a strong foundation in which to come to know Christ and develop lifetime Christian friendships.

The first boy Omatha group was established in 1961 at St Michael's Anglican Church led by Stamatis Papanastasiou (Fr Stephanos), and by 1966 new groups had formed in Marrickville, Bankstown, Belmore, and Parramatta. The girls Omatha groups formally began in 1981 at Redfern, Parramatta, Bankstown and Earlwood.

Orthodox Periodical 'Lychnos'

In response to the growing demand for Orthodox reading material, the first issue of Lychnos was printed in 1960. Initially a simple pamphlet, it aimed to provide a free, brief, and accessible spiritual resource at a time when imported books were costly. Its name—meaning "lamp" or "light"—captured its mission to spread the 'light of Christ'. As Enosi expanded, Lychnos became a key source of regular spiritual reading, distributed freely in churches and at bookstalls, with virtually no other Orthodox spiritual literature readily available in Australia at the time.

Hospital visits

One of Enosi's initial acts of outreach was their regular visits to local hospitals. These visits occurred approximately once a month, typically on Sunday afternoons, a tradition which continues today on major feastdays.

Chanting School

The Sydney School of Byzantine Music was established in 1995 by the late Mr Basil Stavropoulos, head chanter of the Greek Orthodox Parish of the Transfiguration in Earlwood and member of Enosi. Following his death in 2012, the school moved from Earlwood to the Orthodox Mission Centre at Kingsgrove. Hundreds of students, both boys and girls have graduated since the school's inception, many of whom have taken on roles as head chanters in Sydney and thereby preserving the sacred art of Byzantine chant.

Multimedia

As society leans more heavily on technology to disseminate information, Enosi has followed suit. The establishment of a multimedia committee saw the creation of podcasts and online videos, as well as a social media presence which posts about various topics such as the lives of the saints. Music CDs, such as

Christmas carols and hymns have also been recorded and published. Of note, in 2015 the young women of Kyklo recorded and published the Paraklesis to the Theotokos in English, one of the first publicly accessible English recordings. Enosi's social media pages have reached many thousands.

Apart from the CD and music albums, some other initiatives of Kyklo have been the publishing of a book called, "Remembering the Occupation" which describes the experiences of many of the older ladies of Kyklo who lived during the German occupation of Greece in WWII. The establishment of 'Story Time' where young mothers with pre-school children can come to the bookstore and explore children's books and participate in activities.

A booklet describing the Forty Day Blessing of our Church and other information for young parents was also produced by the young mothers of Kyklo and is currently distributed by all the parish priests in Sydney to young couples as they approach the church for the Forty Day blessing or for the baptism of their child.

The radio program, the Voice of Orthodoxy, has been operating continuously for decades and has allowed people to hear the Word of God from their homes or cars and now, online.

Scripture

Many of the members of both Kyklo and Enosi have at some point assisted in the work of Special Religious Education (Scripture) in NSW as Scripture Teachers and/or assisting our Archdiocese in the organisation of Scripture in NSW. This initiative reaches even more children in NSW than Sunday Schools, Greek Schools and Orthodox Day Schools put together.

* * *

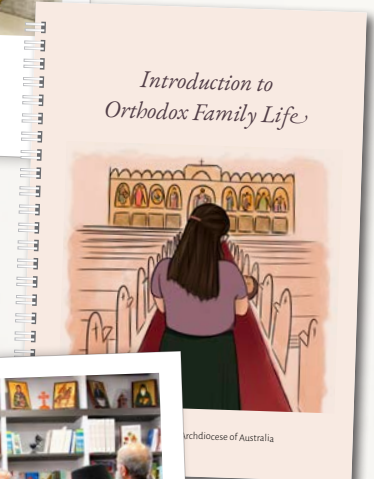
Throughout the last seventy years, the missionary work of the Greek Orthodox Christian society has been blessed and guided by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia. With the continued support and blessings of our beloved Archbishop Makarios, we look forward to more years, God willing, of assisting the Church in its mission to spread the message of Christ, to convey the love of God, and to cultivate an Orthodox Christian phronema in our community as it has been passed on in the Church, since the beginning.



Story Time at the Orthodox Mission Bookstore



'Voice of Orthodoxy' Radio Program



Blessing of the Orthodox Mission Bookstore in Kingsgrove, 2015



25th of March Celebrations



With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, we look forward to many more years

Οι Μικροί Προφήτες - Ο Ωσηέ

Ωσηέ είναι ένας από τους δώδεκα μικρούς προφήτες. Ο πατέρας του ήταν ο Βηρείς. Το όνομα Ωσηέ σημαίνει σωτηρία. Γεννήθηκε στο βόρειο βασίλειο του Ισραήλ, και εκεί στρέφει όλη την προφητική του δράση.

Στην αρχή του βιβλίου του ο προφήτης ορίζει τέσσερις βασιλείς του Βασιλείου του Ιούδα – τον Οζία, τον Ιωάθαμ, τον Άχαζ και τον Εζεκία, και έναν βασιλιά του Βασιλείου του Ισραήλ, τον Ιεροβοάμ II. Επομένως ο Ωσηέ θα έζησε τον 8ο αιώνα ΠΧ και η δράση του διήρκεσε περίπου 25 χρονιά μέχρι πριν τη πτώση της Σαμάρειας το 722-721 ΠΧ. Ήταν σύγχρονος του Ησαΐα και του Αμώς.

Ο Ωσηέ έζησε σε εποχή που το Ισραηλιτικό βασίλειο περνούσε μεγάλη θρησκευτική και ηθική διαφθορά. Στη Σαμάρεια υπήρχε ειδωλολατρία και στο Ισραήλ πολυθεΐα. Αργότερα όμως, οι Ισραηλίτες θα γινόντουσαν ειδωλολάτρες. Εκτός απ' αυτό ήταν πολύ ανήθικοι, κλέβανε, μοιχεύανε, σκοτώνανε και αδικούσαν οι μεγάλοι το μικρούς.

Ο Ωσηέ αντιδρά αυστηρά ενάντιων της διαφθοράς αυτής. Προλέγει ότι η διαφθορά θα οδηγούσε το Ισραήλ σε καταστροφή, κάτι που πράγματι έγινε το 722 ΠΧ.

Το βιβλίο του Ωσηέ χωρίζεται σε περίπου δυο μέρη. Τα πρώτα τρία κεφάλαια διακρίνονται γιατί μιλάει ο Προφήτης για τη σχέση του με τη γυναικά του την Γόμερ, κόρη του Δεβηλαΐμ. Αυτή η σχέση είναι πολύ σημαντική γιατί την παίρνει τη γυναικά του κατά εντολή Θεού. Την ονομάζει «γυναίκα πορνείας» γιατί είχε τάση για την πορνεία. Μετά τη γέννα του τρίτου παιδιού πείθεται για τη πορνεία της και απομακρύνεται. Επειδή όμως αναγκάζεται να την αγαπήσει κατά το Θεό την ξανά παίρνει κοντά του.

Ο γάμος αυτός ήταν σύμβολο της σχέσης το Θεού με το Ισραήλ. Ο Θεός, ο σύζυγος, παίρνει σαν σύζυγο τον Ισραηλιτικό λαό, ο οποίος έχει κλίση προς την ειδωλολατρία, δηλαδή την πνευματική πορνεία. Ο Θεός οργίζεται εναντίων του λαού Του, σταματάει να τον ελεεί,

τον αποχωρίζεται και τον στέλνει σε εξορία. Τελικά όμως δεν εγκαταλείπει τον λαό Του. Τον επαναφέρει από της αιχμαλωσίας της Βαβυλωνίας και τον τοποθετεί κατά πνεύμα Ισραήλ μέσω του Μεσσία.

Τα υπόλοιπα κεφάλαια περιέχουν την αχαριστία του Ισραηλιτικού λαού, την αποστασία τους, την τιμωρία του Ισραήλ, την αιχμαλωσία, την αγάπη του Θεού και την αποκατάσταση του Ισραήλ.

Μέσα σ' αυτό το πολυθεϊστικό περιβάλλον ο Ωσηέ μένει σταθερός στη πίστη του στον ένα Θεό.

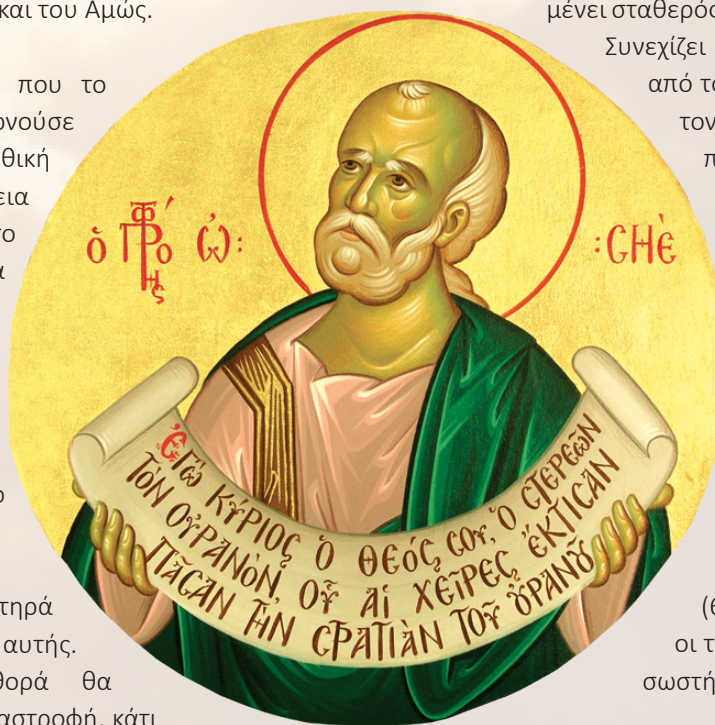
Συνεχίζει την μονοθεΐα που άρχισε από τον Αβραάμ και έφτασε μέχρι τον Χριστό. Δε δειλιάζει παρόλο που το πιστεύω του ήταν αντίθετο με το άμεσο και ευρύτερο περιβάλλον του.

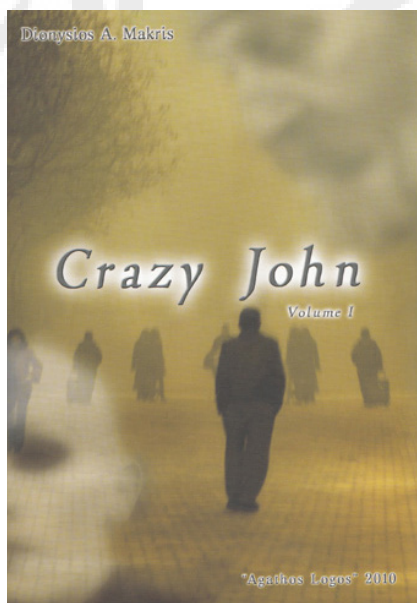
Οι Ισραηλίτες νόμιζαν ότι αν κάνανε θυσίες θα τους συγχωρούσε ο Θεός για την ανηθικότητα τους. Ο Ωσηέ τους έλεγε «έλεος θέλω και όχι θυσίες, επίγνωση Θεού και όχι ολοκαυτώματα (6,6)». Δηλαδή δεν έφταναν οι τυπολατρίες, χρειαζόντουσαν σωστή επίγνωση του Θεού.

Ενώνοντας ηθική και θρησκεία ο Ωσηέ κάνει κάτι σπουδαίο, συνδέει το Θεό με την αγάπη. Η σχέση μεταξύ Θεού και λαού είναι σαν τον γάμο που δε διαλύεται, όπως έγινε με τον Ωσηέ και την Γόμερ. Τιμώρησε ο Θεός τους Ισραηλίτες με την εξορία αλλά τους αποκατέστησε στην πατρίδα τους. Η τιμωρία είχε παιδαγωγικό χαρακτήρα.

Αυτή η αγάπη του Θεού είναι ευαγγελική. Το Μεσσιανικό αυτό μήνυμα της αποκατάστασης του λαου στη βασιλεία του Θεού το βρίσκουμε στο ευαγγέλιο αλλά το βρίσκουμε 750 χρόνια πιο πριν στη διδασκαλία του Προφήτη Ωσηέ ο οποίος προφήτεψε την εμφάνιση του Μεσσία ο οποίος θα φέρει τη λύτρωση.

Γιορτάζεται στις 17 Οκτώβριου.





Imagine if someone knew the worst things about you. Your most disgusting thoughts, your secret addictions, your hidden past... and instead of despising you, or never speaking to you again, they loved you with their whole heart.

Crazy John had this gift of love. This is why this little series has appealed to so many Orthodox Christians, who feel downhearted and hopeless about their lives, their sins, their mistakes and failings. Crazy John saw the worst of people and in imitation of Christ, lifted them from the sin that they had fallen into. Readers finish this book with lightheartedness and joy, no longer worried and afraid but ready to follow Christ with hope and love.

This two volume series is a collection of true stories and experiences about a real holy man who was a fool for Christ.

Crazy John was a saintly man who lived in one of the many apartment complexes in Athens in recent times. He had the gift of God to tell the future, to know people's needs - and secrets, and to give selflessly with his whole

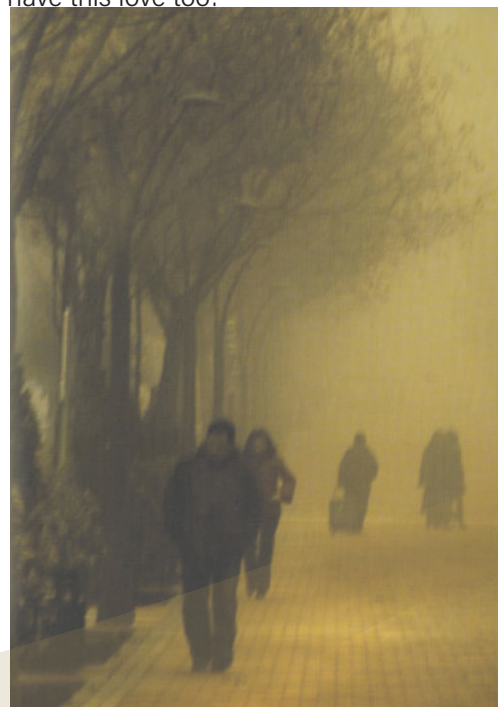
heart.

To hide the many spiritual gifts that he had, he pretended to be crazy, a "fool for Christ" as we say in the Orthodox Church. So the people in his neighbourhood disregarded him and treated him poorly, until they each individually had a unique experience of his gifts that made them realise how special he was.

Over time Crazy John worked a quiet revolution, awakening sleeping consciences, softening people's hard hearts, turning them away from their sins and leading them to Christ, to confession, and to the Church. His life, and the testimonies in this book remind us how important one person can be in bringing Christ to the people around them. As Crazy John would say,

*"I love Christ more
than anyone or anything else!"*

May we all ask God to have this love too!



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The Church in the Home

In this series "The Church in the Home", we examine practical ways that we can encourage spiritual cultivation and growth in our homes and with our families.

Do you have a question on parenting or family life? Send your question to editor@lychnos.org



In the past, traditions and customs were handed down from generation to generation. Many of these traditions might seem basic or regimented, even against the grain. But in understanding these practices we discern greater truths that remind us of our spiritual inheritance.



Death and memorial services

In the Orthodox Church, we are not afraid of discussing death. We feel the pain of loss and separation, we grieve and mourn the person who has passed. But when someone dies in our family or extended family, it presents an opportunity to learn and embrace the Orthodox traditions relating to prayers of healing, confession, prayers for the departed and the funeral service more generally. Orthodox traditions relating to death are clear-minded about the reality of suffering, death

and resurrection. These traditions give hope and comfort to each of us and our children. We can show our children how and why we pray for the dead. We pray for them because we believe that they are still part of the living church. We ask God to remember them because we love them.

A particular tradition, which is sadly diminishing in practice, is the making of 'koliva'. This is a small dish made of wheat kernels soaked and boiled, dried and covered in sugar and raisins and other spices. We can explain to our children how the koliva or wheat kernels symbolise our belief in eternal life, "unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains alone but if it dies, it bears much fruit". The koliva represent our belief that the one who has died will rise to a new life, which gives us comfort and a certain joy. The wheat covered in sugar and raisins symbolise the sweetness of eternal life. In this way, we can view the sad reality of death with hope, and love for those who have departed.



Fasting, preparation for Holy Communion, making a Proskhoron

Fasting as a family is a foundational element of a Christian home. We fast because Jesus himself fasted and taught us the value of fasting. Fasting helps us concentrate and pray, it strengthens our will power against temptations and helps us to identify with those who hunger. Traditionally, someone who fasts shares what they save with others, especially those in need.

On the question of how we fast, and when to introduce fasting to our children, we seek the counsel of our spiritual father.

Closely related to fasting is preparation for Holy Communion. Again, we seek the advice of our spiritual father on how we and our children should prepare for Holy Communion. We prepare for Communion so that we can approach the Holy Cup with the "fear of God, faith and love". We should prepare for Communion regularly, and encourage our children to prepare too.



We can learn to make 'prosphoron' or the 'bread of offering'. The prosphoron is bread which symbolises life and by offering this holy bread we are offering our life to God. Our children can help us with the prosphoron, and they can write a list of names of the living and the departed to give with our prosphoron which the priest will read during the Orthros service.

As we can appreciate, there are many traditions in the Orthodox home which help us 'focus' on a liturgical and spiritual way of life. So often, the busyness of our lives causes us to forget the central role that the Church has. These practices, although they might seem small and inconsequential, help re-direct our lives toward the Church and help our children understand how to grow in a living faith.

There are many traditions in the Orthodox home which help us 'focus' on a liturgical and spiritual way of life.



AN ANALOGY BY ST ANTHONY THE GREAT



The blacksmith, who pounds a piece of iron, has previously thought about what he wants to make - a sickle, a knife, an axe - and works accordingly...



And so let the man of God ponder in advance which virtue he wishes to acquire, in order not to toil aimlessly.



Answers to The Quiz

1. Day One: Light and dark; Day Two: Sky and waters; Day Three: Dry land, sea and plants; Day Four: Sun, Moon and Stars; Day Five: Birds and fish; Day Six: Land animals and humans; Day Seven: Rest 2. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil 3. 969 years old (Methuselah) 4. Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, Mary (Panagia) 5. Augustus 6. The veil of the Temple 7. b) The Gospel of Thomas 8. St. Ananias 9. Revelation 10. Amen



Annual Sunday School Picnic

The Minister of Culture of Greece, Ms Lina Mendoni, had the opportunity to meet hundreds of young Greeks of the Diaspora, young "shoots" of the Greek community and the Orthodox Church in Australia, during her attendance, on Monday, 6 October, at the annual Picnic Event of the Sunday Schools of New South Wales. The event, which took place at Gough Whitlam Park in the Sydney suburb of Earlwood, saw Ms Mendoni accompanied by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia.

News & Events



Annual Sunday School Camp

With the prayers and blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, over 70 Sunday School children from across Sydney and Newcastle, led by their Sunday School teachers, travelled to Galston Gorge on the Annual 3-Day Sunday School Camp during the October School holidays. The theme of the camp – "With Christ & His Saints" was explored through six groups dedicated to saints. The children learnt about their saint through stories and activities, reflected on how to be like the saint, and chanted their apolytikion.



70 YEARS of SUNDAY SCHOOL

Anniversary Concert

«Με το Χριστό
και τους Αγίους Του»
"With Christ and His Saints"

With the blessing and in the presence of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, all the faithful of our Holy Archdiocese are invited to celebrate this special milestone.

Sunday
14 December 2025
5pm

Sports & Performing Arts Centre
St Spyridon College Senior Campus
1130 Anzac Pde, Maroubra

**Booking is
Required**

Scan to book a
free ticket
to the Concert



The QUIZ + Bible Edition +



1. What happened on each day of Creation, in the right order?
2. Which tree did Adam eat from?
3. How old was the oldest person in the Bible?
4. Which five women appear in the genealogy (ancestry) of Christ in Matthew 1?
5. Which Caesar was ruling when Christ was born?
6. What was torn in half when Christ died?
7. Which of the following books is apocryphal, i.e. not considered by the Church to be a true book of the Bible?
a) Baruch; b) Thomas; c) Jude
8. Who baptised St Paul?
9. Which is the last book of the Bible?
10. What is the final word of the Bible?

Answers on page 15



«ΛΥΧΝΟΣ» is a bimonthly publication of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society under the auspices of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia.

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