



† Archbishop Makarios of Australia

Protocol No.: 1848

## MESSAGE

My dearly beloved,

It is with great spiritual joy that I communicate with you on the occasion of the inaugural publication of the Newsletter of the Parish and Community of the Resurrection of our Lord, our Lady of Myrtles and Saint Elessa at Kogarah. I extend my best wishes and paternal blessings to the faithful who will receive and read the Newsletter as well as to all those involved in the preparation of the edition.

This significant initiative comes at a crucial time when the challenges of social distancing due to the coronavirus pandemic have had an enormous impact on the health and welfare of so many people. Therefore, this means of sharing information and connecting with the Parish and Community is a God-inspired endeavour and I commend and warmly congratulate both the Very Reverend Fr. Kyriakos and Reverend Fr. Dimitrios for their collaboration and thoughtfulness. I wish them every success, not only for this venture but also for their general outreach and ministry.

It is not by accident that the first edition will come out in September, the month in which we also celebrate the feast-day of our Lady of Myrtles as her maternal heart is always near to those who love her Son and do His will. It is my ardent hope and expectation that our holy Panagia will richly bestow her blessing upon this undertaking.

In Sydney, on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2020

With fervent paternal prayers



† Archbishop MAKARIOS

*Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia*



## **GREEK ORTHODOX PARISH AND COMMUNITY OF KOGARAH**

**The Resurrection of Christ, Our Lady of Myrtles, and St  
Elesa of Kythira**

**16-20 Belgrave St, Kogarah NSW 2217**

**NEWSLETTER # 1: SEPTEMBER 2020**

### **Parish Committee**

Father Kyriakos and Father Dimitrios wholeheartedly thank all members of the **Parish Committee** for their love and support. With their encouragement and proactive involvement, the new and exciting initiatives listed below have been made possible. A special thank you to **Antonia (Angelique) Tania Mattis** and her colleagues, **Aliki** and **Ioanna**, for their tireless efforts and moving dedication.

### **Liturgical Services**

On Sunday 31 May, during the sacred feast of Pentecost, our parish was honoured and blessed to welcome our beloved **shepherd and Primate, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia**, as well as **His Grace Bishop Emilianos of Meloia**. On this occasion, we were further honoured to greet and embrace our new parish priest, the **Very Rev. Father Kyriakos Michael**. May our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, aid in his ministry.

On Friday 19 June, we were once again privileged to welcome **His Grace Bishop Emilianos**, who presided over the **Divine Liturgy**. We also had the joy of welcoming the **Vicar General of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia** on

his name-day, Friday 7 August, on which he officiated **Vespers** and a moving **Paraklesis** service in our church.

On Friday 31 July and Saturday 1 August, our parish was thrilled and fortunate to welcome both **His Eminence Archbishop Makarios** and **His Grace Bishop Emilianos**. **His Grace** presided over **Vespers** on the Friday, whilst **His Eminence** officiated **Matins** and the **Divine Liturgy** the following morning. The services were held in honour of our glorious patron, the **Holy Martyr Elesa of Kythira**.

During the **Divine Liturgy**, **His Eminence** gave a moving sermon on the virtues of **St Elesa** and her pious mother, **Eugenia**, emphasising the need for constant and patient **prayer** on the part of each believer, especially during these trying times. Moreover, our treasured **Primate** tonsured two new **Readers** for the Church, namely, **Mr Basilios Psilacos** and **Mr Haralambos Mavrolefteros** (our chanters).

## **Philoptochos Society, Past and Present**

We sincerely thank the **former ladies of the Philoptochos** for their many personal sacrifices, especially in the terms of their time, energy, and expenditure. Our parish will forever be grateful to them for their countless contributions to the life of the church, and for laying such a solid foundation for the latest iteration of the 'Friends of the Poor'.

To be sure, the **newest iteration of the Philoptochos** has worked tirelessly since its inception, having wonderfully prepared the **Epitaphios of Our Most Holy Lady and Ever-Virgin Mary, the Theotokos**, with little notice. Indeed, they also cleaned and adorned the entire church prior to the **sacred feast of the Dormition**. We thank them for their support and look forward to their future initiatives.

The members of the **newest Philoptochos** are listed as follows: Father Kyriakos (President), Father Dimitrios, Presvytera Fiona Papaikonomou (Vice President), Sonia Giaouris (Co-Vice President), Georgia Bozionelos (Treasurer), Maria Papas (Secretary), Maria Vrondas (Vice Secretary), Melissa Anastasiou, Androulla Condoleon, Olga Houlakis, Kelly Symonds, and Nektaria Tsoukarellis.

## **‘Christ the Healer’ Chaplaincy**

We kindly wish to extend an invitation for participation in the parish’s renewed chaplaincy programme, ‘Christ the Healer’.

In obedience to our Lord’s exhortation to bring comfort to the sick and suffering, we are kindly calling on those of you who are willing and able to assist us in serving the faithful in need at St George Public Hospital, St George Private Hospital, and Calvary Hospital.

A formal training course is scheduled for the near future. For the moment, we are seeking participants aged 18 years and over. We express our deepest thanks to those who have already registered. We currently have more than thirty people, glory to God! To express your interest, please contact either **Mary Stathos** (0409 522 413), **Androulla Condoleon** (0413 472 728) or **Kelly Symonds** (0402 936 777).

## **Special Announcement: Upcoming Blood Drive**

With the blessing of our beloved Primate, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, the **Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia**, in association with the **Australian Red Cross**, is initiating a blood drive through our parish. Registration details to be provided in due course. To express your interest, please contact either **Melissa Giaouris** (0421 694 732), **Kelly Symonds** (0402 936 777) or **Maria Vrondas** (0408 899 359).

## **St Elesia Food Initiative**

By the grace of God, our new feeding programme is off to a great start. We are delighted to confirm that forty members of the faithful registered to participate at our first meeting (with many more promising to contribute very soon). Together, we outlined the objectives of the programme, including how we intend to move forward in the imminent future.

Please note that our next meeting will be held shortly. The date will be announced on Facebook. Registrations are still open should you wish to participate. Please leave your name and number upon entering the church in accordance with the COVID-19 safety measures. To express your interest, please contact either **Maria Papas** (0419 419 756), **Georgia Bozionelos** (0418 542 712) or **Sonia Giaouris** (0421 564 148).

## **Café Archontariki: Social and Cultural Centre**

With the blessing of **His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia**, we are establishing a café at our parish – called *Archontariki* – to serve as a social and cultural hub for the faithful, especially our youth. All are welcome to participate. More details shall be provided soon.

### **Family Workshops**

We are in the process of planning numerous workshops for families, including knitting, making crosses from timber and resin, producing *livani* and *karvouna*, as well as preparing *prosphoron* and *artoklasia* (with different recipes from Greece). These will draw us together and help us introduce our children to the various customs of the wider Church. Details to be provided online in the near future.

### **Our Lady of Myrtles Fellowship**

We have established a new **Fellowship Committee**, which is in the process of planning regular talks and roundtable discussions. Fellowship will soon take place on Thursdays, from 7pm, and regularly include dinner. Stay tuned to our Facebook page for further announcements.

### **Chanting Classes / Parish Choir**

We welcome your expressions of interest in commencing lessons in Byzantine chant and joining our **new Parish Choir**. Please send your title, full name, and phone number to our choirmaster, **Mr Basilios Psilacos**, should you wish to participate: [bpsilacos@sagotc.edu.au](mailto:bpsilacos@sagotc.edu.au)

Please note any prior musical experience in your email. A relevant announcement will be made on Facebook regarding the commencement of classes.

## **Renovations and Repairs**

We are currently carrying out numerous critical repairs around the church, especially of the windows and roof (which has many leaks). Moreover, we are seeking quotes to render the exterior walls and façade of the church. The rendering will facilitate the installation of **new mosaics** and **painting of original iconography**. We have also constructed **two new chapels** dedicated to our patrons, **Our Lady of Myrtles** and **St Elesa of Kythira**. These works have generously been donated by **Mr Emmanuel Alfieris**, **Mrs Louise Alfieris**, the **Kytherian Association of Australia**, and the **Nicholas Aroney Trust**. To be sure, this undertaking would have not been possible without their generous support. As a parish and family in Christ, we thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

Once finished, the chapels will remain open to the faithful for personal prayer and be the focus of the entire congregation during the relevant feast days.

## **Church's Sound System**

We have begun the installation of an entirely new sound system of the highest audio standards. This will surely benefit the entire flock, especially during our liturgical services.

## **Public Talks**

With the blessing of **His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia**, Father Kyriakos, Father Dimitrios, and the Parish Committee arranged a new series of talks on the theme of 'Bearing Witness to Christ,' delivered in the church throughout the month of July in anticipation of the feast of **St Elesa** (1 August). The series featured contributions from **His Eminence Archbishop Makarios**, **His Grace Bishop Emilianos**, reverend clergy, and faculty and graduates from **St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College**. The talks were followed by dinner prepared by our **Committee**. We sincerely thank the members of the **Committee** for their selflessness and generous hospitality. For a detailed summary, please see the article by the event's MC, **Mr Chris Baghos**, graciously published by **Kosmos Newspaper**: <https://kosmosnewspaper.com.au/bearing-witness-to-christ-at-the-parish-of-the-resurrection>

Please note that six of the eight talks may be viewed on the parish's official YouTube channel. Search '**Greek Orthodox Parish of Kogarah**' on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). We anticipate that this will be an annual event.

In addition, **His Grace Bishop Emilianos** has been undertaking the tremendous task of translating **Elder Aimilianos of Simonopetra's** masterful book *Λόγος περί Νήψεως* (*On Vigilance*) from Greek into English, and sharing the wisdom contained therein through a series of talks hosted by the **Central Youth Committee of NSW**. Our parish had the pleasure of supplying the venue for the sixth, eighth, ninth, and tenth instalments, which took place on 7 July, 7 August, 21 August, and 4 September, respectively. Our parish will continue to host the series throughout its duration.

The audio of the talks has generously been uploaded to the website of the CYC (visit <https://www.cycnsw.org.au/nepsis-series>). Please monitor our Facebook page for information pertaining to the next instalment.

## Related News

On Sunday 16 August, our parish priest, Father Kyriakos, had the honour of visiting the **Holy Monastery of St George, Yellow Rock** – where he formerly served as Abbot – in the company of **our beloved Primate, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios**, and **His Grace Bishop Emilianos**. Our hierarchs and parish priest were warmly greeted by the newly appointed **Abbot, the Very Rev. Father Ieronymos**. **His Eminence** presided over the **Divine Liturgy**, which was attended by other clergy, including the **Rev. Father Athanasios Giatsios** from the **Parish of St Catherine, Mascot NSW**, and members of the faithful. We are delighted to announce that Father Ieronymos and the parish will soon be organising pilgrimages to the Monastery.

To learn more about this sacred and treasured place, which is **once more open to the faithful**, visit: <https://www.stgeorgeyellowrock.org/>.

**Should you wish to assist the Philoptochos**, please contact **Sonia** (0421 564 148), **Georgia** (0418 542 712), or **Maria** (0419 419 756).

## **Updates Regarding Our Liturgical Services and Entry into the Church**

To allow more members of the faithful to attend the **Divine Liturgy** in compliance with the COVID-19 safety measures, our parish will be having separate **memorial services** on Sundays at 11am. To book your memorial services, please contact: (02) 9587 5945 or [office@kogarahgreekorthodox.org.au](mailto:office@kogarahgreekorthodox.org.au)

Quick entry will be granted for **lighting candles** after each service. Please note that there is strictly no swapping in relation to reservations. In accordance with the COVID-19 safety measures, you must provide the full details of each person hoping to attend when booking.

As a rule – to cater for as many of the faithful as possible in compliance with the COVID-19 safety measures – we kindly advise that each parishioner has one regular turn per month to attend the **Divine Liturgy**. You are, however, welcome to RSVP for a second service if there are spaces available. Please contact the parish 1-2 days beforehand (02 9587 5945 / [office@kogarahgreekorthodox.org.au](mailto:office@kogarahgreekorthodox.org.au)).

Please consider the well-being of your fellow parishioners and do not enter the church if you have cold or flu-like symptoms. Thank you for your patience during these difficult times. It is incumbent on each of us to consider the safety of our many brothers and sisters in Christ.

### **Message from Our Priests**

“We kindly invite you to please join us in this new and exciting era of our parish. We must strive to move forward as one community, that we may share our joys and treasured moments together, and – just as importantly – embrace and support one another in times of grief and sorrow. Our struggle in Christ together, as His body, will lead to triumph and true happiness; alone, there is only sorrow, pain, and darkness. Do not hesitate to contact your shepherds in Christ, Father Kyriakos and Father Dimitrios, your faithful Committee, your beloved Philoptochos, and your dedicated office staff. We are all children of Christ our God and Saviour, and, therefore, one family. God bless you all!”

The Very Rev. Archimandrite Father Kyriakos and the Rev. Father Dimitrios