



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia

ST. SPYRIDON PARISH

Telephones: 9313 6890, 9313 6899 Website: www.stspyridon.org.au

'Communication 2010'



OUR CHURCH IS OPEN EVERY DAY – It is worth remembering that our Faithful have access to our sacred Church of St Spyridon seven days a week for every spiritual yearning. It is comforting that hundreds of Faithful, every day of every week, can find the door of our Church open in time of need - to light a candle, and sit or kneel inside the Church to pray. If the floor of the Church could speak of the tears of pain and repentance it has soaked up, surely it would narrate the most moving story.

Glory be to God!

LUNCH 'IN GOOD COMPANY' – The elderly are the treasure not just of our families but of the entire community. And as the years progress they are finding things a little more challenging. However, if they are able to get about, albeit with some difficulty, then our Parish conducts a sacred mission that provides an outlet to their loneliness. Every THURSDAY, in the Parish Hall, the Church provides LUNCH IN GOOD COMPANY which is ABSOLUTELY FREE and invites you to come and join our wonderful gathering.

It is called 'Lunch in Good Company' (*Yévma Syntrofiás*) precisely because it gives our senior citizens an opportunity to get out of the house, speak to other members of the community and share a fresh, tasty meal cooked on the premises and served by the Philoptochos Ladies' Auxiliary.

Importantly, attendees also have the opportunity to participate in a special programme of music, dance, gentle exercise, talks and outings organized by the Greek Welfare Centre of our Archdiocese.

The group will recommence on THURSDAY, 5th February, from 10.00 a.m. till midday!

FELLOWSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY – Every TUESDAY evening, in the Parish Hall, young adults over 18 and those who feel young at heart (mainly in the 20 – 40 yr bracket), meet for Fellowship led by Father Steven in ENGLISH.

Contemporary issues are presented and discussed through the perspective of the Church. Answers to questions about Orthodoxy are provided in a spirit of love. Besides Bible Study, the Fellowship also engages in social events such as excursions, community dances and coffee in friendship.

Fellowship will recommence on TUESDAY, 12th February from 7.30 – 8.30 in the evening.

AFTERNOON AND SATURDAY GREEK LANGUAGE SCHOOLS – Every SATURDAY morning the Greek Language School operates in the facilities of St Spyridon College from 9.00 a.m. till midday.

Students come from all over Sydney because of the quality of education and the caring environment provided.

Lessons are conducted by experienced teachers who understand Australian-born children of the 3rd and 4th generations, using effective and contemporary teaching methods. Consequently, students who do not attend St Spyridon College have the opportunity of learning the Greek language, the Hellenic culture and the Traditions of the Orthodox Faith.

During the week, in the same premises, our Afternoon Greek Language School operates MONDAY – THURSDAY from 4.00 till 5.30 p.m.

Enrolments commence on FRIDAY 29th January 4.00 – 5.00 p.m. and SATURDAY 30th January 9.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL – Every SUNDAY morning the Sunday (*Catechetical*) School is conducted for children from 5 and teenagers to 17 years of age. Lessons are provided in an enjoyable atmosphere by Australian-born Sunday School teachers who introduce children to the will of God, the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and the Sacramental life of the Church.

Lessons are accompanied by songs and games from 9.00 – 10.00 a.m. before the children are escorted to the Church next door where they follow the Divine Liturgy Service and receive Holy Communion. It's the best school! And it's entirely FREE.

Lessons recommence on Sunday 1st March at 9.00 in the morning!

ORTHODOX SCRIPTURE CLASSES AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Australia is rapidly changing. So, we must make every effort to preserve the Ideals of our Faith and our Heritage.

St Spyridon Parish for over 36 years has appointed Scripture teachers at almost all public schools in the area to teach our children the beauty of the Orthodox Faith based on the Holy Scriptures and the Tradition of the Church. Scripture teachers are volunteers and conduct this weekly mission purely out of their love for the children and for the Church.

Please introduce yourself to the Orthodox Scripture teacher at your child's public school and show your support for the God-pleasing work being conducted through St Spyridon Parish.

Should you have the time to volunteer as a Scripture teacher yourself, please feel free to contact one of our Priests and all support will be provided to facilitate this.

Orthodox Scripture classes are a privilege STILL provided by our Public Schools.

PLAYGROUP FOR TODDLERS – Pre-school toddlers eventually reach the stage where they need to interact with other children. And young mums also need to take a break from their demanding responsibilities. The little ‘SPARROWS’ of St Spyridon Playgroup meet each MONDAY in the Parish Hall from 9.30 till 11.30 in the morning. The programme for the Playgroup is professionally organized by the Greek Welfare Centre.

The Playgroup will recommence on MONDAY, 8th February at 9.30 in the morning!

ST SPYRIDON SOCCER CLUB - ‘OLYMPIC EAGLES’ Since 2007, the St Spyridon Soccer Club’s 15 teams, for boys and girls from ages 6 to 18, have been formally affiliated with the history-packed Greek-Australian institution – SYDNEY OLYMPIC. Whilst our Parish is responsible for all operational aspects, our teams compete under the name OLYMPIC EAGLES.

Registration of players will take place at St Spyridon College Infants School in Day Lane on Tuesday 2nd, Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th February from 2.30 – 4.00 p.m. and on Saturday, 6th February from 10.00 a.m. till midday in the Parish Hall.

Training will commence in mid-February. MORE AT: www.olympiceaglesfc.com.au

THE PARISH WALL CALENDAR - For more than 25 years, St Spyridon Parish has hand-delivered the annual Parish Wall Calendar to every Greek Orthodox house in the Parish during our Priests’ visit to the Faithful in January for the Epiphany blessing of our families and homes. It is usually left under the door or in the letter box if parishioners are not home when the priest visits. This is more than just a symbolic gesture of gratitude on behalf of the Parish. It is an important tool for the Orthodox orientation of our spirituality.

This year’s theme is “*Holy Communion – The Epicentre of our Lives*”. The icon of the calendar is the work of Michael Damaskinos from the 16th century. It depicts the Holy Trinity at the centre, with the Mother of our Lord, the Saints and the Angels in various aspects of the Divine Liturgy Service. Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of Christ. Christ is perfect. Therefore, what is contained on the Holy Cup is perfect. And what is perfect cannot be affected by anything which is imperfect. Consequently, we receive Holy Communion with absolute faith in the power of God, for the healing of our souls and bodies.

It comes down to faith ...

OTHER MISSIONS OF ST SPYRIDON PARISH

Our Parish of St Spyridon has developed a substantial missionary outreach, not only because it is an inextricable part of the Archdiocese but also because of the enormous respect which the faithful have for the work conducted in our small corner of Orthodoxy, albeit unworthily. Beyond the God-pleasing work of our Philoptochos Ladies’ Auxiliary and the St Spyridon Synaxis group, let us reflect on the following services of our Parish:

THE BENEVOLENT FUND – For 29 years now, this Fund of our Parish offers financial assistance to hundreds of poor and needy people, regardless of background. Some folk cannot make ends meet on the pension alone. Many are homeless and sleep either in parks or under bridges. The poor deserve their own dignity and the Church helps generously!

THE EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND – For 13 years, this fund has provided immediate assistance to families that find themselves in crisis. Quite often, our Parish provides new furniture, refrigerators, washing machines and clothing during such times. The Parish also offers direct financial assistance to cover emergency needs of families that have literally ‘buckled’ under the pressure of an illness or an accident. With the global financial downturn the Emergency Relief Fund will need more and more resources to cope with the demand!

SUPPORT FOR THE ‘SYDNEY CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL - Every year, thanks to the fruits of the ‘St Spyridon Golf Day’, our Parish donates technologically advanced medical equipment for use in operating theatres and other departments of the *Sydney Children’s Hospital* at Randwick.

It is an offering of love for all children who find themselves in hospital for one reason or another. It matters not what race, or culture, or faith they belong to. The pain of any child touches everyone. And none of us can remain indifferent to the suffering of children. St Spyridon Parish is currently sponsoring the new three-bed Emergency Unit for rapid response to severely ill children.

CLERGY VISITS TO HOSPITALS – For decades now, our Priests have been visiting the hospitals of the area. The Prince of Wales hospital complex has almost doubled in size in the past ten years. Unfortunately the number of our own people entering that hospital, is increasing. Our Priests are on call day and night for any patient desiring the prayers of the Church or Holy Communion. We receive Holy Communion for spiritual strength and comfort.

The Faithful should have in mind that our Priests, for reasons of privacy and consideration, visit the Private Hospital, the Children’s Hospital, the Royal Women’s Hospital and the Psychiatric Unit *at the request of the patient or their immediate family*. In emergency cases, the hospitals communicate with our Priests directly.

OUR CHURCH AND OUR PEOPLE – TOGETHER – IN THE SERVICE OF LOVE