

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE
**PARISH OF ST. PARASKEVI, ST. BARBARA &
ST. JOHN THE MERCIFUL**

**22 Marsden Crescent, St Albans
Tel. 9367 2860**

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. Demosthenes Nicolaou: 0421 704 806
Email: frdemos@stparaskevi.org.au website: www.stparaskevi.org.au

PROGRAMME JULY 2019



Saint Euphemia visiting Saint Paisios of Mount Athos

**Saint Euphemia: 11th July
Saint Paisios: 12th July**

PROGRAMME JULY 2019

Every Thursday Evening the program is as follows:

6pm: The St Ignatius children's group and choir (primary school age and up)

7pm: Paraklesis service to the Theotokos (in English)- OR ENGLISH DIVINE LITURGY at 7.30 once a month

7.45: Bible study group (for all ages), led by Fr Demosthenes

MONDAY 1st JULY: **Unmercenaries Kosmas and Damian**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, and blessing of the waters, 7.30-10.00am

SUNDAY 7th JULY: **St Kyriaki the Greatmartyr**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

THURSDAY 11th JULY: **St Euphemia, St Olga Equal to the Apostles**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

FRIDAY 12th JULY: **St Paisios of Mount Athos**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

SUNDAY 14th JULY: **SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

WEDNESDAY 17th JULY: **St Marina**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

THURSDAY 18th JULY: **Evening: DIVINE LITURGY IN ENGLISH, 7.00-8.45pm**

SATURDAY 20th JULY: **Prophet Elias**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

SUNDAY 21st JULY: **St Symeon the Fool for Christ**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

MONDAY 22nd JULY: **St Mary Magdalene the equal to the apostles and St Markella**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

WEDNESDAY 24th JULY: **ST CHRISTINA THE GREATMARTYR**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

THURSDAY 25TH EVENING: HOLY AND GREAT VESPERS IN HONOUR OF OUR PARISH SAINT, SAINT PARASKEVI Presided by His Grace Bishop Ezekiel of Derbis, accompanied by the Clergy and Faithful Christians of Melbourne.
7.00-8.30pm.

FRIDAY 26TH JULY: FEAST DAY OF ST. PARASKEVI THE GREAT MARTYR.
Matins, Divine Liturgy, and a litany of the holy relics and the wonderworking icon of St. Paraskevi, presided by His Grace Bishop Iakovos of Militoupolis.
7.30-11.00am

THURSDAY 25th JULY: **Dormition of St Anna (Mother of the Virgin Mary)**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

SATURDAY, 27th JULY: **St Panteleimon the Greatmartyr**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

SUNDAY 28th JULY: St Irene Chrysovalantou, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am *Following the Divine Liturgy is our yearly Parish Festival: with Traditional Greek Dancing performances, souvlakia, live music, and Greek dancing for all!*



Saint Euphemia visiting Saint Paisios of Mount Athos

One day Father Paisios was going through a very difficult phase. A problem was created in the Church at that time and many bishops had gone to him to ask for his help. However, it was a very complicated problem and even if he wanted to, he was unable to assist; as he said, no matter from which side you look at the problem, you come face to face with a spiritual impasse. So, he decided to turn his efforts to solve the problem with prayer. During that time, Father Paisios constantly prayed for God to give solution to the Church's problem; he prayed especially to St. Euphemia: "St. Euphemia, you who miraculously solved the serious problem the Church was facing then, take the Church out of the present impasse!"

One morning, at nine o' clock, when Father Paisios was reading the service of the third hour, he suddenly heard someone discreetly knocking on his door. The Elder asked from inside:

"Who is it?" Then, he heard a woman's voice answering:

"It is me, Euphemia, Father."

"Which Euphemia?" He asked again. There was no answer. There was another knock on the door and he asked again. "Who is it?" The same voice was heard saying:

"It is Euphemia, Father."

There was a third knock and the Elder felt someone coming inside his cell and walking through the corridor. He went to the door and there he saw St. Euphemia, who had miraculously entered his cell through the locked door and was venerating the icon of the Holy Trinity, which the Elder had placed on the wall of his corridor, on the right hand side of the church's door. Then the Elder told the Saint: "Say: Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." St. Euphemia clearly repeated those words and immediately Father Paisios knelt and venerated the Saint. Afterwards, they sat and talked for quite a while; he could not specify for how long, as he had lost all sense of time while being with St. Euphemia.

She gave the solution for all three matters he had been praying for and in the end he said to her: "I would like you to tell me how you endured your martyrdom."

The Saint replied: "Father, if I knew back then how eternal life would be and the heavenly beauty the souls enjoy by being next to God, I honestly would have asked for my martyrdom to last for ever, as it was absolutely nothing compared to the gifts of grace of God!"

Towards the end of June, the doctors informed [Elder Paisios] that he had about 2-3 weeks left. On Monday, July 11, on St. Euphemia's day, Father Paisios received Holy Communion for the last time, kneeling in front of his bed. During the last 24 hours, he was very serene, and even though he suffered, he did not complain at all. He did not wish to take any more medication. The only medicine he accepted was cortisone, because, according to the doctors, it would not prolong his life span, but it would only give him some strength. On Tuesday, July 12, Elder Paisios humbly and peacefully rendered his soul to God, whom he had deeply loved and served since his early childhood.



THE LIFE OF ST EUPHEMIA THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR

"The Holy Great Martyr Euphemia the All-Praised was the daughter of Christians, the senator Philophronos and Theodosia. She suffered for Christ in the year 304 in the city of Chalcedon, on the banks of the Bosphorus opposite Constantinople.

The Chalcedon governor Priscus circulated an order to all the inhabitants of Chalcedon and its surroundings to appear at a pagan festival to worship and offer sacrifice to an idol of Ares, threatening grave

torments for anyone who failed to appear. During this impious festival, 49 Christians were hidden in one house, where they secretly attended services to the True God.

The young maiden Euphemia was also among those praying there. Soon the hiding place of the Christians was discovered, and they were brought before Priscus to answer for themselves. For nineteen days the martyrs were subjected to various tortures and torments, but none of them wavered in their faith nor consented to offer sacrifice to the idol. The governor, beside himself with rage and not knowing any other way of forcing the Christians to abandon their faith, sent them for trial to the emperor Diocletian. He kept the youngest, the virgin Euphemia, hoping that she would not remain strong if she were all alone.

St Euphemia, separated from her brethren in faith, fervently prayed the Lord Jesus Christ, that He strengthen her in her impending ordeal. Priscus at first urged the saint to recant, promising her earthly blessings, but then he gave the order to torture her.

The martyr was tied to a wheel with sharp knives, which cut her body. The saint prayed aloud, and as it happened, the wheel stopped by itself and would not move even with all the efforts of the executioners. An angel of the Lord, came down from Heaven, removed Euphemia from the wheel and healed her of her wounds. The saint gave thanks unto the Lord with gladness.

Not perceiving the miracle that had occurred, the torturer ordered the soldiers Victor and Sosthenes to take the saint to a red-hot oven. But the soldiers, seeing two fearsome angels in the midst of the flames, refused to carry out the order of the governor and became believers in the God Whom Euphemia worshipped. Boldly proclaiming that they too were Christians, Victor and Sosthenes bravely went to suffering. They were sent to be eaten by wild beasts. During their execution, they cried out for mercy to God, asking that the Lord would receive them into the Heavenly Kingdom. A heavenly Voice answered their cries, and they entered into eternal life. The beasts, however, did not even touch their bodies.

St Euphemia, cast into the fire by other soldiers, remained unharmed. With the help of God she emerged unharmed after many other tortures and torments. Ascribing this to sorcery, the governor gave orders to dig out a new pit, and filling it with knives, he had it covered over with earth and grass, so that the martyr would not notice the preparation for her execution. Here also St Euphemia remained safe, easily passing over the pit. Finally, they sentenced her to be devoured by wild beasts at the circus. Before execution the saint began to implore that the Lord deem her worthy to die a violent death. But none of the beasts, set loose at her in the arena, attacked her. Finally, one of the she-bears gave her a small wound on the leg, from which came blood, and immediately the holy Great Martyr Euphemia died. During this time there was an earthquake, and both the guards and the spectators ran in terror, so that the parents of the saint were able to take up her body and reverently bury it not far from Chalcedon.

A majestic church was afterwards built over the grave of the Great Martyr Euphemia. At this temple the sessions of the Fourth Ecumenical Council took place in the year 451. At that time, the holy Great Martyr Euphemia

confirmed the Orthodox confession in a miraculous manner, and exposed the Monophysite heresy. Details of this miracle are related under July 11. With the taking of Chalcedon by the Persians in the year 617, the relics of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia were transferred to Constantinople (in about the year 620). During the Iconoclast heresy, the reliquary with the relics of St Euphemia appears to have been thrown into the sea. Pious sailors recovered them. They were afterwards taken to the Island of Lemnos, and in the year 796 they were returned to Constantinople."

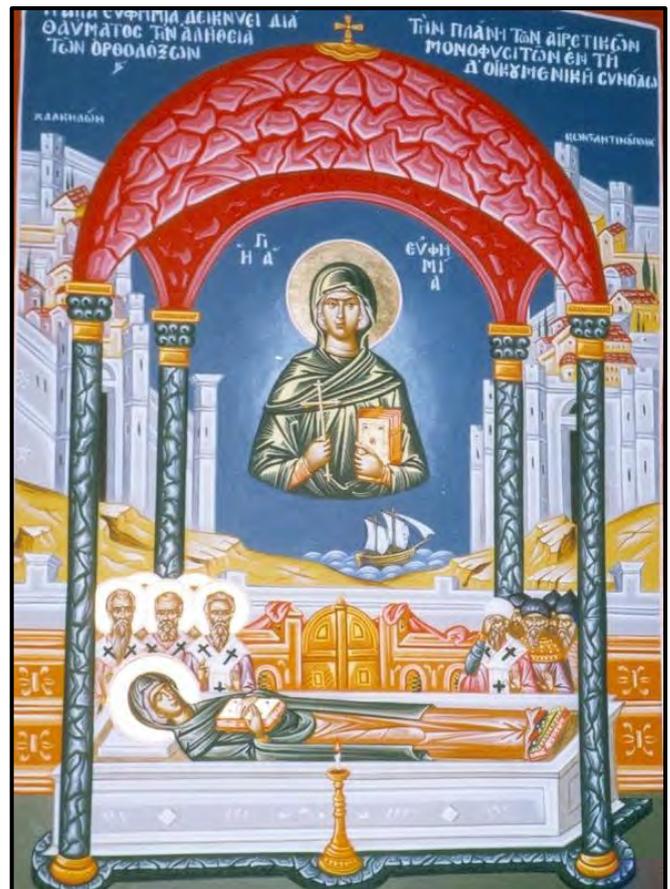
Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone

O Lord Jesus, unto Thee Thy lamb doth cry with a great voice: O my Bridegroom, Thee I love; and seeking Thee, I now contest, and with Thy baptism am crucified and buried. I suffer for Thy sake, that I may reign with Thee; for Thy sake I die, that I may live in Thee: accept me offered out of longing to Thee as a spotless sacrifice. Lord, save our souls through her intercessions, since Thou art great in mercy.

THE MIRACLE OF ST EUPHEMIA AT THE 4th ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

The holy Great Martyr Euphemia (September 16) suffered martyrdom in the city of Chalcedon in the year 304, during the time of the persecution against Christians by the emperor Diocletian (284-305). One and a half centuries later, at a time when the Christian Church had become victorious within the Roman Empire, God deigned that Euphemia the All-Praised should again be a witness and confessor of the purity of the Orthodox teaching.

In the year 451 in the city of Chalcedon, in the very church where the glorified relics of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia rested, the sessions of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (July 16) took place. The Council was convened for determining the precise dogmatic formulae of the Orthodox Church concerning the



nature of the God-Man Jesus Christ. This was necessary because of the widespread heresy of the Monophysites ["mono-physis" meaning "one nature"], who opposed the Orthodox teaching of the two natures in Jesus Christ, the Divine and the Human natures (in one Divine Person). The Monophysites falsely affirmed that in Christ was only one nature, the Divine [i.e. that Jesus is God but not man, by nature], causing discord and unrest within the Church. At the Council were present 630 representatives from all the local Christian Churches. On the Orthodox side Anatolius, Patriarch of Constantinople (July 3), Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem (July 2), and representatives of St Leo, Pope of Rome (February 18) participated in the conciliar deliberations. The Monophysites were present in large numbers, headed by Dioscorus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, and the Constantinople archimandrite Eutychius.

After prolonged discussions the two sides could not come to a decisive agreement. The holy Patriarch Anatolius of Constantinople proposed that the Council submit the decision of the Church dispute to the Holy Spirit, through His undoubted bearer St Euphemia the All-Praised, whose wonderworking relics had been discovered during the Council's discussions. The Orthodox hierarchs and their opponents wrote down their confessions of faith on separate scrolls and sealed them with their seals. They opened the tomb of the holy Great Martyr Euphemia and placed both scrolls upon her bosom.

Then, in the presence of the emperor Marcian (450-457), the participants of the Council sealed the tomb, putting on it the imperial seal and setting a guard to watch over it for three days. During these days both sides imposed upon themselves strict fast and made intense prayer. After three days the patriarch and the emperor in the presence of the Council opened the tomb with its relics: the scroll with the Orthodox confession was held by St Euphemia in her right hand, and the scroll of the heretics lay at her feet. St Euphemia, as though alive, raised her hand and gave the scroll to the patriarch. After this miracle many of the hesitant accepted the Orthodox confession, while those remaining obstinate in the heresy were consigned to the Council's condemnation and excommunication.

***Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God,
have mercy on us and save us! Amen!***