

Greek Orthodox Parish and Community of Burwood and District St Nectarios

Holy Friday

Holy Friday commemorates the crucifixion & burial of Christ. This is a day of mourning & fasting amongst the Orthodox Christians.

As I recall my childhood memories, the crucifixion, burial & resurrection of Christ were for my family, amongst the most important events of the Orthodox Easter calendar, as I'm sure in many ways, it was as important to every Greek family.

My mothers' agenda was simple, every day of the Holy week, rain, hail or shine we were expected to attend mass. My mother did not let us forget the importance and rele-

or half a day. Each and every person there, contributed in making the final result one that was worthy of the task that had been bestowed to it. Parishioners put their love and heart into what represented for them a passion for their Christ.

As a sign of respect, the Sepulcher, a carved wooden bier that symbolises the Tomb of Christ was decorated lavishly with flowers.

The service was a time to commemorate the suffering of Christ, as we remember his death on the cross. At the same time this offered piece and a time to reflect as we prayed for our spiritual well

community.

The Epitaphio was carried on the shoulders of the faithful as a candlelit procession made its way through the streets of Burwood.

The same streets that we walked on daily, were now transformed into the path that would lead the procession of the Epitaphio back to its final destination, St Nectarios Church.

The parishioners had come by the thousands, as the Epitaphio was carried to the front steps of the Church, a sea of candle light followed that seemed to fade in the distance. Here were the faithfully paying their respects.

As the Epitaphio was put in its final resting place, Parishioners took the time to reflect on what the day meant to them and their family.

The Sklavenitis family took some time out after the service to admire the beauty of the Epitaphio.

It was not until I became a parent, with children of my own, that I truly understood my mothers pride in taking part in this significant event. In some small & perhaps significant way we had all been part of the service that took place that evening.

I have now instilled my mothers' traditions in my own children and looking back now I see there was no real agenda, just her way of upholding a tradition of faith she had passed down to her as I have no doubt as your parents had to them.

A special Thank You must be given to the St Nectarios Burwood Ladies Philoptochos and the volunteers who supported them on the day.

Athena Eliopoulos



vance of the days leading up to Easter Friday. The most memorable for me was the early morning arrival to church on Easter Friday, to help decorate the bier, in readiness for the Epitaphio that it would carry that afternoon. **"This was a day to reflect on the pain that was endured and the extreme humility that Christ suffered for our salvation"**.

This day took place once again last Friday 2nd April 2010. Easter Friday morning saw the same ritual take place at St Nectarios Burwood. The courtyard was a busy place, buckets of fresh roses filled the footpath and there at the head of the path stood the bier, ready to be transformed into a tomb fit for a king. Everyone had a job to do and every role was just as important as the next, from the stem cutters, Camellia pruners to the coffee makers. We all had a reason for being there, whether it was for half an hour

-being.

As Fr John Kapetas read the Scripture, the service was intensified by the hymns of the cantors as the myrofores showered the Epitaphio with flower petals.

The lights on the bier were lit and it was now time to start a processing that would see the Epitaphio carried through the local streets of the parish

