



# Talk in English

## Sunday 11 May 2008

With the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop Hilarion of Sydney,  
Australia and New Zealand, Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia,  
You are invited to a talk by Priestmonk Kosmas entitled:

## Marriage: Agony or Blessedness?

Over the past few years, marriage has been viewed increasingly as a prison sentence or torture. This is evident from the fact that roughly half of all marriages end in divorce. Moreover, many young people have no interest at all in getting married. Far too many children are raised by single or unmarried parents. Unfortunately, these trends have also taken root among many Orthodox Christians.

Many blame the media for this, and without a doubt this is true to a great extent. Popular films, television shows, magazines, and books often distort the meaning of marriage, leaving many confused. For example, adultery, divorce, abortion, cheating, pornography, unnatural sexual behaviour, and second, third, and fourth marriages are presented as amusing and entertaining, and in a more supposedly serious approach, as fashionable and progressive. Meanwhile, aspects of traditional marriage, such as pregnancy, child rearing, spousal loyalty, love, mutual sacrifice, and traditional male and female roles, are mocked and portrayed as backward, old fashioned, or even impossible.

One would have thought that practicing Orthodox Christians, who have the true teaching of the Church regarding marriage, would have more successful marriages. However, many Orthodox Christians have similar problems, in that they also regard their marriages as unbearable and hopeless.

In this talk, the following question will be addressed: "Why have many Orthodox Christians failed in their marriages, including those who remain married?" Just as monks and nuns have chosen their way of life in order to gain salvation, so too married people have chosen marriage as their means to gain salvation. If they were to understand fully that a "successful" marriage is their very path to salvation, the thought of ending their marriages would not come so easily. It may be surprising to many that a truly "successful" marriage does not necessarily mean a marriage without problems, difficulties, and temptations. Those considering marriage will also find this talk helpful, in that a successful marriage begins long before the marriage itself.

**Venue:** **Saint George Russian Orthodox Church**  
15 Garfield St, Carlton, Sydney.

**At 6:00 pm** a short Paschal Service and moleben to Saints Joachim and Anna (the patron saints of marriage), will be served in English. The faithful, including those who intend to marry, will have an opportunity to submit names for commemoration.

**At 7:00 pm** the talk will be given in the hall at the rear of the church.

**A book**, *Marriage: A Spiritual Arena* will be distributed at no cost to those present.

**After every talk** there will be beverages, savouries and sweets for those who wish to stay. People are welcome to come to the service, the talk, or both. A bookstall with Orthodox books and CDs in English will also be available.

**Next talk:** Sunday, 13th July, 2008

**For more information call:** (02) 9558 2207