

YOUNG AND OLD At Church of Our Lady's Dormition, Very Reverend Doctor Michael Protopopov focuses on the welfare of parishioners young and old. Guiding the younger members of the Church, he draws upon degrees in

Church of Our Lady's Dormition, Russian Orthodox

Very Reverend Doctor Michael Protopopov OAM

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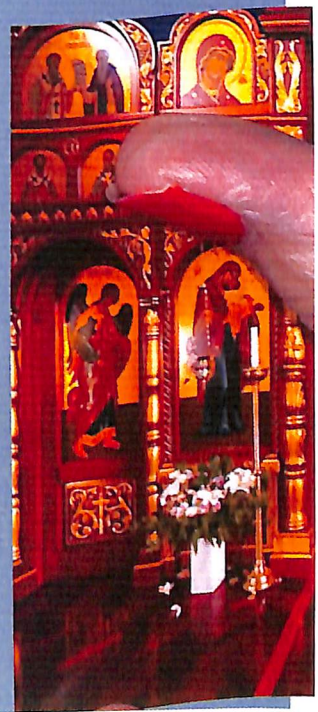
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The Interfaith Network is a place of shared communication. It's *important in as much* as it gives insights into how other people live, and it gives people an opportunity to meet and greet each other in such a way that they are not threatened; that they realise the people they are talking to are in fact people, and not monsters. Religion is the basis of our core values. I see that not only in the Russian Orthodox community but all faith communities. We live in a secular—almost atheist—society in many ways and it's the Church, the Mosque and Temple that in reality provide a good grounding in the empirical truths of this world, the things that need to be held on to.



HOUSE OF GOD In early 1960s Dandenong, early Russian Orthodox services were held in the houses of recently arrived migrants, and by 1964 the community purchased two blocks of land on Morwell Avenue for the establishment of a new community hall. Services and Sunday school sessions were held in that building between 1967 and 1982, when the parish moved into its purpose-built Church. Between 1985 and 1988, the parish employed a Greek iconographer, Anastasia Tsims, to decorate the walls and ceilings of the church with beautiful frescoes in the traditional Russian style, and they are still enjoyed today by parishioners and guests alike.

SPLENDOUR The Church has come a long way in the last four decades. In 1983, a vestry and robing room were added adjacent to the sanctuary, and two years later the original porch of the Church was enclosed to create an atrium, increasing the capacity of the building by 16 square metres to seat 200 people. A baptistry was added in 1994 and two years later, a book shop and improvements were made to the building to create wheelchair access. Today's parish is thriving, with 250 families, most of whom are regular worshippers. The parish school has nine classrooms and a 1000-seat hall.





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