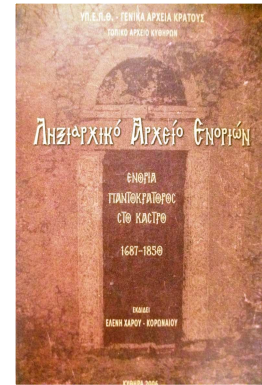


RE-CONSECRATING THE CHURCH OF THE ALMIGHTY IN THE KASTRO



In Greek Orthodox iconography, the icon of Christ Pantokrator or Ruler of All is a powerful image that reminds us of the all-powerful Christ.

Whilst many are familiar with the old church of Panaghia Myrtidiotissa adjacent to the belltower inside the Venetian Kastro in Hora, few may be aware of another church, long since closed, in the pathway leading down from the Historical Archives within the castle complex. However, in September 2011 and with proper ecclesiastical ceremony, the re-consecration of the Church of the Christ Pantokrator within the Kastro was conducted by the Metropolitan of Kythera Seraphim. The church was built in 1545 and is a typical example of an island church from the post-Byzantine era. It is a single vaulted church, built with thick stone wall and a semicircular apse at the altar, and preserves some beautiful post-Byzantine wall frescoes and wall-paintings for which the island is renown.

The church had been closed for over a century but during the recent restoration and preservation works undertaken by the Archaeological Service, a new altar was built to replace the old one that had been destroyed during the occupation by the Germans, who had turned the church into a munitions store.

The consecration service was very moving, set against the stunning backdrop of Venetian fortifications and Byzantine architecture. Interestingly, the re-consecration of this church coincides with the arrival in the Kytherian Association's library of a beautiful publication by Eleni Harou-Koroneo reproducing the archival records of the Church of the Christ Pantokrator, including births, deaths and marriages, maintained during the period between 1687-1850. It is a living record of the life of once flourishing community within the Kastro and of a small church that has once again been sanctified.



Photos courtesy of <http://kithiraikanea.blogspot.com/>

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