

Religion

Most Greek-speaking people are very religious and belong to the Greek Orthodox faith, which is the predominate religion in Greece and for Greek-speaking migrants in Australia. Some Greek-speaking people belong to a minority group who practice their faith in the Greek Evangelical church. Religion is very important to most Greek-speaking people as the church is the centre of community life, activities and is incorporated in daily living by most Greek people in a variety of different ways.

The Orthodox faith is the predominant religion of Greek people.

Orthodox life is sacramental, which means the practice of receiving **Holy Communion** and practising **Confession** are pivotal, along with **prayer**, **fasting** and the **reading of the Scriptures**. People are baptised into the church at a young age. The church is a very big part of the lives of the Greek Orthodox people with the majority of celebrations having a religious basis. Like most Christian faiths, Greek Orthodoxy teaches that Jesus Christ was the Son of God who died for humanities sins and rose from the dead.

Icons depicting images of saints play an important role as windows into eternity and are venerated through kissing and other gestures. The Orthodox Christian DOES NOT worship the saint or the wood his/her image is depicted on.

Fasting is an essential part of Orthodoxy. Fasting as it is practised in the Orthodox Church means abstinence from meat, dairy products and fish and those observing a very strict fast may include olive oil and wine. One of the most significant fasting periods is observed during Easter.

Light is another important symbol in worship and much of Orthodox worship is permeated by a focus on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter is our most important and celebrated feast.

