

The Archbishop of Australia blessed the teachers and students of the Sunday Schools of NSW



On Sunday, 18 February 2024, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia made a pastoral visit to the Parish of Saint Gerasimos in Leichhardt, Sydney. His Eminence officiated at the matins service and presided over the Divine Liturgy in memory of Saint Leo, Pope of Rome, and was joined by His Eminence Archbishop Damaskinos of Joppa, from the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea, Archiepiscopal Vicar of Perth. Also participating in the Divine Liturgy were Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Throne Christophoros Krikelis, Chancellor of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, and other clergymen from the city of Sydney.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, the holy sermon was preached by the visiting Hierarch, His Eminence Archbishop Damaskinos of Joppa, who analysed the Gospel passage of the day. His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia during his short greeting, thanked Archbishop Damaskinos for his visit to Australia and for his

blessed presence at the Eucharistic gathering at the Church of Saint Gerasimos. He referred, in fact, with praise to the personality of the Hagiotaphite Hierarch, while informing the congregation that Archbishop Damaskinos has been ministering in the Holy Land since the age of 14.

“His whole life has been devoted to ministering the Holy Pilgrimage sites and the Holy Sepulchre”, he pointed out characteristically, and thanked him for the blessing and grace he brings, through his visit to Australia, to the Christ-loving plenitude of the Orthodox Church of the fifth continent. Finally, he urged the Archbishop of Joppa to convey the love and respect of himself, the God-Loving Bishops, the holy Clergy and the pious People of the local Church, to His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem.

In his reply, Archbishop Damaskinos expressed his joy for the opportunity given to him to visit Australia, he thanked His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia for the cordiality with which he has welcomed him and recognised his inexhaustible paternal love for the Church and the blessed flock entrusted to him by God. He also conveyed to everyone the blessing of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos, as well as His Beatitude’s personal respect for the Archbishop of Australia.



After the Dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, Archbishop Makarios performed the Agiasmos blessing for the beginning of the new school year of the Sunday Schools

of New South Wales. He blessed all the teachers and the students who were present, while he heartily thanked the teachers for the ministry they carry out with devotion, “to sow the word of God in the souls of our children”. He also thanked the Greek Orthodox Christian Society, which organises and coordinates the Sunday Schools of New South Wales, recognising that it carries out this important ministry in an enviable and apostolic way.

Finally, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia congratulated the Parish Priest of the Church of Saint Gerasimos, Father Panteleimon Toumbelekis, distinguishing that he performs his priestly duties in an excellent way despite the shortness of his ministry in this particular Parish. He wished for him to continue

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their kind





