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Archbishop Makarios to the youth: “compete with unwavering faith, but also with honesty, integrity and virtue”



More than 450 young men and women from Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth are currently participating in the National Schools Event of the Greek Orthodox Colleges of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, which is hosted in Sydney, by Saint Spyridon College. In particular, the three-day National School Event, which includes a series of sporting and artistic activities, is attended by the following Schools; Saint Spyridon College, All Saints Grammar and Saint Euphemia College from Sydney, Saint John’s College and Oakleigh Grammar from Melbourne, Saint George College from Adelaide and Saint Andrew’s Grammar from Perth.

The official Opening Ceremony and Blessing took place on Tuesday afternoon, 7 May 2024, with the celebration of the Doxology by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, in the Church of Saint Spyridon in the suburb of Kingsford. During the Service, a choir made up of students also chanted the hymns and all the Dismissal Hymns (Apolytikia) of the patron saints of the respective Greek Orthodox Colleges.

His Eminence, during the inspiring and didactic speech he addressed to the student

body, first analysed the Greek word “competition” (συναγωνισμός), which denotes the joint effort of a group of persons to achieve the some goal, without disputes and conflicts between them. “So you have gathered here, to compete – but not against each other”, he emphasised and added: “While you may be dressed in different uniforms and colours, you are united in the Orthodox faith and Greek ideals, you are united in your ultimate goals and always under the protection of your mother, the Holy Archdiocese of Australia”.

Next, the Archbishop described the strong connection between sports and art, making relevant references to the Olympic Games of Ancient Greece, as well as to the Orthodox Christian Tradition. He reminded the young students that “behind every great athlete and every great artist, there is a story of perseverance, dedication and faith”. “Just as the heroes of Ancient Greece and the saints of our Church faced challenges and sorrows on their journey, so you, my dear children, will face obstacles and challenges on your way. Look to the Saints of our Church and you will see the virtues of determination and unwavering faith, and this will help you overcome adversity and reach new levels of excellence,” he pointed out.

At the end of his address, Archbishop Makarios focused on the idea of “Ευ Αγωνίζεσθαι / to fight well”, stressing that this is at the core of the organisation of the National Schools Event of the Greek Orthodox Colleges. “This event exhorts us not only to struggle, but to do so with honesty, integrity and virtue,” he underlined. In closing, he blessed all the participants of the National Schools Event and wished the youth to create good memories and create lifelong friendships during the coming days.



The Archbishop of Australia was first welcomed by the Saint Spyridon Head of College, Mrs. Amelia Katsogiannis. “We express our heartfelt gratitude to you, Your Eminence, for your presence here tonight, for your paternal care, unwavering support and deep love for our school communities,” Mrs. Katsogiannis said, among other things, and she urged the youth to compete with integrity, respect for their opponents and with a spirit of good sportsmanship. Regardless of the outcome,” she pointed out, “let’s remember that the bonds we make and the lessons we learn are what really determine our success.” It is noted that as part of the three-day National Schools Event of the Greek Orthodox Colleges, the participating students



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