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Message of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia on International Day Against Drug Abuse



Unfortunately, in many corners of our world, bloody conflicts rage, shaking us deeply and we pray daily for their cessation and for peace to reign. Simultaneously, however, an undeclared and often invisible war rages in all modern societies, claiming hundreds of thousands of lives each year and spreading pain, sorrow, and despair in countless homes. The insidious enemy attacks our youth with particular ferocity. It misguides and draws them into dark paths, where it seeks to trap them. It does everything possible to deprive them of the light of life, hope, and truth.

Today, on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse, we are called to reflect on this invisible war and the insidious enemy that lurks to destroy our children. We are called to send a clear message that nothing true and bright in life is achieved through the use of narcotics.

There is an urgent need to properly guide our youth so that they avoid traps and temptations. And there is no better and safer a guide than the Holy Gospel and the

teachings of the true God. I implore all of you, show our youth the right path to light, hope, and truth. Encourage them to seek the meaning of life near Christ. Discourage them from false and deceitful paths.

Our local Church serves and will continue to serve this sacred purpose, standing alongside those already trapped in the clutches of drugs, struggling to escape the nightmare of addiction. We declare unequivocally that there is an escape from this nightmare, that dark paths have a way back! And we are here to inspire, support, and extend a helping hand to those striving to break free.

Moreover, in our Orthodox faith, there is no room for indifference towards our neighbour, nor for entrenched attitudes and social exclusion. Let us once again bear witness to our faith, advancing the weapons of love and solidarity against the insidious enemy that threatens our children and brethren. Let us become beacons of hope for those returning from darkness, striving to emerge into the light of a true life. A life without drugs!

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