15/07/2024

Archbishop Makarios addressed the youth of Perth: “Nothing can scare us when we have Christ with us”



“We are ready for the future!” exclaimed about 200 Orthodox young men and women “with one mouth and one heart” who took part in the 2024 Youth Conference of the Archdiocesan District of Perth, which was held on Saturday, 13 July 2024, in the capital city of Western Australia. Their enthusiasm, zeal and determination were increased by the words of spiritual edification, which were addressed to them at the beginning of the Conference by their Chief Shepherd, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia.

“There is nothing that can scare us when we have Christ with us,” His Eminence assured, among other things, during an inspiring speech which he delivered, in which he vividly described to the young audience how those “who labour and are heavy laden” find rest close to God. Perhaps the most suitable example that he could present before the young people is none other than that of their grandparents; people who have worked hard, who experienced and are experiencing trials, but their souls remain at rest because of their deep faith in God.

“No matter how many difficulties they face and how many things do not go

according to their plans, those who are meek and humble are not disturbed or troubled by the events of life. Yes, they hurt and feel the burden and sadness of the situation, but in the depths of their hearts a blessed peace reigns, there is security and consolation because they have Christ with them, Who supports them", said the Archbishop.

In contrast, people who are distanced from God may enjoy worldly comforts and pleasures, but they are never fully satisfied, and never find rest. As His Eminence explained: "We can be at home all day, or even on a tropical island sitting around doing nothing, and yet we have this nagging feeling that something is missing. We experience a void, which is not filled by all the pleasures of life or by anything that can be bought with money."



Unfortunately, the desperate attempt to fill the inner void, leads many people, and especially young people, to the illusions offered by drugs, to which Archbishop Makarios made a special mention: "People who take drugs and drink alcohol feel the need to consume them in order to live happily. They want to believe the lie, that it will give them happiness and joy. But, in fact, it has led them down the wrong path. Unfortunately, this is often the case in our modern society. What begins as recreational drug use, to feel a fleeting sense of happiness, quickly leads to full-blown drug addiction."

Pointing out that all worldly pleasures can only temporarily cover the voids we experience – sometimes, they trap us and lead us to painful situations – His Eminence conveyed to the young people that "only Christ can penetrate the depths of our being". That is why he urged them to put Christ in their hearts and minds,

and to make Him the priority of their lives, while he assured them that “the Church will always welcome you with open arms and its doors will never be closed, because God is the head and the Church is your home, the Archbishop is your spiritual father and he loves you very much.”



It is noted that the organisation of the Youth Conference of the Archdiocesan District of Perth was part of the anniversary celebrations for the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia. Before the start of the Conference, the proceedings of which were hosted in the Conference Hall of the Archdiocesan District, a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was held, in the English language, in the adjacent Church of Saint Nektarios. The Divine Liturgy was presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, who was joined by Their Graces, Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea and Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta, Archiepiscopal Vicars of Perth and Northcote respectively, while a multi-member Choir of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society, from Sydney, chanted the hymns of the Liturgy. After the proceedings of the Conference, lunch was served for all the conference participants.


©MARKELLOS PETROPOULOS


©MARKELLOS PETROPOULOS


©MARKELLOS PETROPOULOS


©MARKELLOS PETROPOULOS


©MARKELLOS PETROPOULOS


©MARKELLOS PETROPOULOS