11/10/2024

The Ecumenical Patriarch praised the work of the Greek Welfare Centre of the Archdiocese of Australia



On Tuesday 8th October, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visited Taronga Zoo in Sydney, where he had the opportunity to admire the variety of wildlife of the fifth continent. After his tour of the zoo, His All-Holiness attended a luncheon in his honour, hosted by the Greek Welfare Centre of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia at a nearby dining venue.

In his warm address to all those involved with the Greek Welfare Centre, he initially emphasised that “true and living faith in Jesus Christ is not a dry ritualistic duty, confined to the fulfillment of religious forms and ceremonies, but is activated by the love of the heart, which burns with love for God and, at the same time, for humanity, as the two cannot exist separately.” He noted that this faith, which is activated by love, constitutes the driving force behind the contributors of the Greek Welfare Centre, which for nearly half a century “has been a living testimony of the Church’s love for our brothers and sisters who are ‘in need and distress.’”

Focusing on the multifaceted work of the organisation of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, work that is not limited to providing charity but involves a systematic and comprehensive effort to address the problems of our fellow human beings, he especially praised its contribution during the pandemic. He highlighted the 24-hour availability of telephone communication, both for English and Greek speakers, which “was crucial in combating depression and preventing many suicides.”

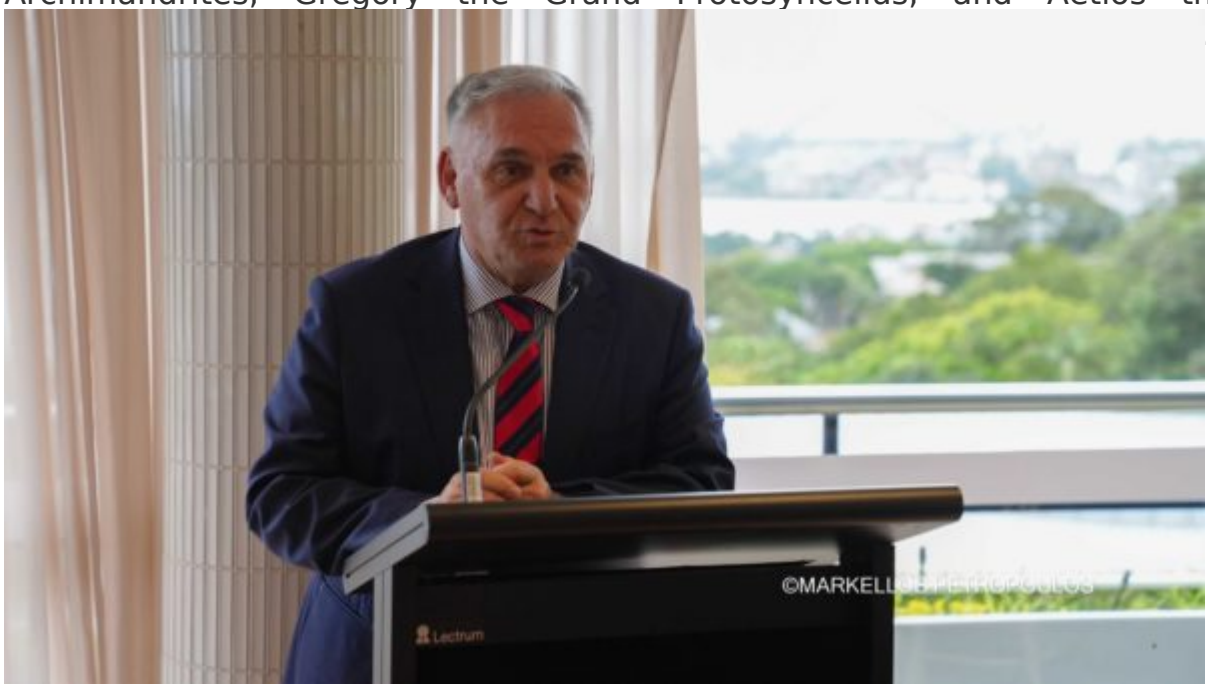


For the overall contribution and testimony of the Greek Welfare Centre, His All-Holiness warmly congratulated His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, under whose blessing and supervision the organisation operates, as well as its Director, Mr Steve Magdas who “with a high sense of responsibility, fear of God, self-sacrifice, and dedication offers his invaluable services and oversees the smooth and effective operation of the Centre.” Yet, as “nothing in the Church is the work of one person,” the Ecumenical Patriarch stressed the contribution of the

devoted staff and the multitude of volunteers of the Centre, congratulating them all wholeheartedly and expressing his grateful thanks.

The patriarchal statement concluded with praises and warm paternal wishes to all who are involved in the God-pleasing work carried out by the Greek Welfare Centre: “We are impressed, and we say this with all sincerity and without any intent of flattery, by the work being carried out here, not only for its scale but primarily for its quality, breadth, sensitivity, and the discretion with which all the actions of this charitable institution of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia are conducted, a reflection of pastoral care and sensitivity for the suffering fellow human, who is the image of God. We congratulate you all again from the heart, bless you paternally and patriarchally, and wish the abundant Grace and strength of the Lord in your arduous and highly responsible work. Warm congratulations. May God bless your efforts!”

It should be noted that apart from His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, Director Mr Magdas, and the members of the Welfare Centre’s staff, the luncheon in honour of the Patriarch was also attended by Their Eminences, Metropolitan Kyrillos of Imbros and Tenedos, and Metropolitan Filotheos of Thessaloniki, The Very Reverend Archimandrites, Gregory the Grand Protosyncellus, and Aetios the Grand



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