14/10/2024

The Ecumenical Patriarch among the priestly families of Sydney and Canberra



On Wednesday 9th October, the clergy and presviteres of the Archdiocesan District of Sydney and the Holy Diocese of Canberra hosted a dinner in honour of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, in the hall of the Parish-Community of the Resurrection of Christ, in the suburb of Kogarah, Sydney.

Present at the dinner were His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, members of the Patriarchal entourage, consisting of Their Eminences, Metropolitan Kyrillos of Imvros and Tenedos, and Metropolitan Filotheos of Thessaloniki, the Very Reverend Grand Protosyncellus Archimandrite Gregory, and the Grand Ecclesiarch Archimandrite Aetios, Director of the Patriarchal Private Office, the Reverend Patriarchal Deacon Evlogios, Codifier of the Holy and Sacred Synod, the Righteous Nun Iakovi, Abbess of the Holy Monastery of St John the Baptist in Akrithochori, the Honourable Archon Teacher of the Nation Mr Konstantinos Delikostantis, Director of the First Patriarchal Office, and the Honourable Archon Teacher of the Church Mr

Theodoros Yiangou, Professor of Canon Law at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and the Honourable Mr Nicholas-George Papachristou, Director of the Patriarchal Press and Communication Office, and the Honourable Mr Themistocles Karanikolas, from the Patriarchal staff as well as Their Eminences, Metropolitan Ezekiel of Dervis, Metropolitan Seraphim of Sevastiea, and the Venerable Bishops of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia.

The Ecumenical Patriarch was warmly welcomed with words of filial love, respect, and admiration by the Chancellor of the Holy Archdiocese, the Very Reverend Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Throne Christophoros Krikelis. The Chancellor's address included heartfelt thanks on behalf of the clergy of the local Church for all the blessings of the Sacred Centre toward its spiritual children in the fifth continent, as well as for the inspiration of the Ecumenical Patriarch to the clergy and laity through his God-pleasing initiatives and countless accomplishments. He expressed hope that the experiences His All-Holiness has had during the first days of his visit to Australia bring him feelings of joy and exaltation, seeing a vibrant and spiritually flourishing Church and stressed that this vitality is largely due to the decision of the Mother Church in 2019 to send Archbishop Makarios to the Antipodes, who has worked "with fervent passion for Christ and deep understanding of his pastoral responsibility."



In his response, the Ecumenical Patriarch expressed his profound satisfaction stating, "as we observe, the clergy here are filled with sound traditional principles

and the pure Orthodox priestly ethos, living in obedience and devotion to the Church and their Shepherd." In continuation, he described the phenomenon of secularisation, a danger that threatens even the holy clergy in our time, but he joyfully noted that the clergy of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia "strongly resist the leveling logic of secularisation and walk firmly in the path of the Fathers and the apostolic traditions of our Holy Church."

His All-Holiness made special mention of the role of presviteres, who "quietly, humbly, and silently struggle in their offering to the Church, and are worthy of much praise and congratulations." He further emphasised that priestly families are – and must be – healthy models for imitation "in an era when incidents of family violence are increasing, especially in an extreme form, and where the God-given institution of Christian marriage and the traditional family is being attacked like never before."

Concluding, the Ecumenical Patriarch warmly congratulated Archbishop Makarios for building up the priestly family of the Holy Archdiocese, "which he has increased during his brilliant and blessed hierarchical ministry with fifty-eight new educated and cultivated clergy and twelve monastics."

During this warm and moving evening, His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew honoured three clergymen by bestowing Patriarchal titles: Fr John Grillis with the title of Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Throne, and Fathers Miltiades Chryssavgis and Sophronios Konidaris with the title of Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Throne.


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