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Meeting of the Ecumenical Patriarch with the Greeks of Imvros and Tenedos in Melbourne



“Imvros awaits you, the Great Church awaits you, the Patriarch awaits you… Come, dear compatriots, because Imvros and the Patriarchate are your home, where the most precious treasures of faith and Romiosini are preserved… Come, because Imvros needs to hear the voices of the children of the Romians, the songs of the Romians, even the mournful hymns at the bedside of the deceased, for Romiosini even turns death into song and, in fact, mocks it, because where the Risen Lord reigns, death no longer holds dominion, and this is the message of Imvros, the message of the Resurrection. Romiosini is the culture, the way, and the ethos of Resurrection, of joy, and of optimism.”

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew extended this emotional invitation to the Imvrians of Melbourne and generally to those in the state of Victoria when His All-Holiness met with members of the Imvrian Society, led by their President, Mr Athanasios Piniros, on Saturday, 12th October, at the Parish-Community of the Holy Archangels in the suburb of Mentone, Melbourne. Present at

the meeting were His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia and the Shepherd of Imvros, His Eminence Metropolitan Kyrillos of Imvros and Tenedos.

Speaking to his compatriots, His All-Holiness imparted the message that “pessimism, resignation, and defeatism are not characteristics of the Romians.” In this spirit, after mentally transporting everyone to the Aegean Island and briefly describing the harsh times experienced by the Romians there, he then continued by focusing on the optimistic aspect, stating that “there remains small leaven, which leavens the whole dough, and in our days we have the blessing to see our land blooming again, regaining life, our schools reopening, our churches filling with congregations, and our festivals teeming with youth. Glory be to God!”

He then referred to the exiled children of Imvros who are scattered abroad, expressing certainty that the fire of their yearning for return still burns in their souls. “The Imvrians, like migratory birds of the sky,” he noted, “in the midst of storms, hail, and snow, left the land of their ancestors and built their nests in new homelands around the world.” “And they also arrived here, in Hellenic Melbourne,” he continued, “the city of the Greek diaspora, where they thrived and prospered, but never forgot, for we Imvrians, wherever we are, carry Imvros with us, and the yearning for return never fades but ignites the very existence of every exiled Imvrian.”

Finally, the Patriarch made special mention of Metropolitan Kyrillos, highlighting that “the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Great Church, sent to Imvros a worthy and capable Shepherd who, with sacred zeal and tireless labour, has become the guardian and protector of the Romiosini of Imvros, and we are particularly pleased that he accompanies us on this apostolic visit and brings you his own testimony of the wonders, by the grace of God, that are being accomplished on our island after a prolonged and extended period of silence, pain, decline, and, at times, pessimism.”

It is worth noting that with great emotion His All-Holiness introduced the Imvrians who are part of his Patriarchal entourage: His Eminence Metropolitan Kyrillos of Imvros and Tenedos, the Archon Didaskalos of the Nation Mr Konstantinos Delikostantis, Director of the First Patriarchal Office, and Mr Themistoklis Karanikolas, a member of the Patriarchate’s staff. Furthermore, His All-Holiness gave the floor to Metropolitan Kyrillos and Professor Delikostantis, who spoke ardently about much-suffering Imvros.

At the meeting with the Imvrians, as well as the Tenedian Greeks of Melbourne and

Victoria, accompanying the Ecumenical Patriarch were, other than those aforementioned, His Eminence Metropolitan Filotheos of Thessaloniki, The Very Reverends, Grand Protosyncellus Archimandrite Gregory, and Grand Ecclesiarch Archimandrite Aetios, Director of the Personal Patriarchal 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 Akritochori, the Honourable Archon Didaskalos of the Church Mr Theodoros Yiangou, Professor of the Theological School at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and Mr Nicholas-George Papachristou, Director of the Patriarchal Press and Communication Office, along with Their Eminences Metropolitans Ezekiel of Dervis, Seraphim of Sevastia, and the Bishops of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia. Also present were His Eminence Metropolitan Myron of New Zealand, the Consuls General of Greece in Melbourne Mr Emmanuel Kakavelakis and in Adelaide Ms Alexandra Theodoropoulos, the biological brother of His All-Holiness, Mr Nikolaos Archontonis, and the parents of Archbishop Makarios of Australia, Emmanuel and Fotini Griniezakis.






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