

Archbishop Makarios shares his views on bioethical issues



The Greek word μακάριος, means ‘blessed’. It is an apt name for Archbishop Makarios, who felt ‘blessed’ to be in Melbourne for the first time, even though it is the city from where he was issued his Masters of Bioethics from Monash University.

The field of bioethics is all-encompassing, ranging from debates over the boundaries of life, such as abortion and euthanasia, all the way to surrogacy. Despite having grappled with numerous philosophical theories as part of his studies, Archbishop Makarios wanted to look at these issues through the prism of ecclesiastical dogma when asked questions by *Neos Kosmos*.

He said the ‘ideal life’ is found in the Gospels. “For example, a child who believes in God will never turn to drugs because drugs and Christ don’t go together,” he told *Neos Kosmos*, adding that this is the way of life he wants people to know. “If you’re philosophically up in the air (without faith in God), you’ll turn to drugs.”

Looking at Australian society, he said it is “better than society in Greece” but he

did have an observation to make. "Australia, though I think it may be too soon to judge, has been sunk by a process of creating an impression and is carried by the idea of human rights and liberal thoughts," he said. But if you look deep down, you'll see that things aren't as they seem. They are neither too free nor inclusive and this will harm the country in the future. They speak of freedom and say 'yes' to abortions until the ninth month, 'yes' to euthanasia in Victoria, but this is not a sign of civilisation. When you say 'yes' to abortion and euthanasia and – at the same time – I as an archbishop can't bring three clergy members to Australia because the state won't give us visas, then what freedom is that and what human rights?"

As a supporter of people's rights, he said that Holy Communion is the right of every Christian and should be offered freely. "You can't ask for communion and want euthanasia – that is an oxymoron," he said, but added that it would be offered nonetheless in the hope that enlightenment would come with the sacrament.

He stressed that "dialogue is a trait of the church" despite criticisms to the contrary. He is looking forward to more dialogue, which by definition is "discourse to bring about change".

/ Source: neoskosmos.com