

23/12/2024

## **Archbishop Makarios of Australia: “Let us approach the manger of Christ and offer him that which burdens us”**



On the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, 22 December 2024, the feast day of Saint Anastasia the Great Martyr, the Deliverer from Poisons, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia liturgised at All Saints Church, in the Sydney Suburb of Belmore, and was joined by Father Chris Triantafyllou, who served for fifty years at the Parish of All Saints, and recently retired, and by his successor in the ministry of Parish Priest, Fr. Dimitrios Papaoikonomou.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, speaking to a crowded congregation and in the presence of Mr. Ioannis Chrysoulakis, former Secretary General of Hellenism Abroad and Public Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, the Archbishop firstly focused on the content of the day's feast, during which the memory of Christ's ancestors in the flesh is honoured. "One reason why the Church honours their memory," he explained, "is so that we realise that the birth of Christ is not a false story, but a real event. Jesus is a person who was born, became incarnate, passed through human history, had relatives, had a tree of genealogy, and these show that he was truly a real person and not a unrealistic person."

Then, referring to a beloved custom of the people of our time, that of exchanging gifts during the Christmas season, His Eminence paternally implored the faithful to offer a gift to Jesus Christ himself, whom we celebrate: To offer him their sins! "For Christ became man, so that man might become God," he emphasised. "But for man to become God, he must be freed from his sins," he added, pointing out that the first and most important step in this direction is to realise that we are sinners. "When we realise that we have sins," he continued, "then we can ask for the mercy of Christ and the Church through confession. This is the greatest gift we can offer to Christ and the best investment for the afterlife, for the Kingdom of Heaven."



Concluding his homily, Archbishop Makarios urged the faithful to avoid condemning their neighbour, noting that this is a great trap of the devil, as it "disorients us and prevents us from seeing who we really are." "Because the person who constantly judges and gossips about the other person will not find time to deal with himself spiritually," he observed. Summing up his message for the upcoming great feast



day of the Christian Church, he urged everyone “to celebrate Christmas in a different way, spiritually, approaching the manger of the Born Jesus Christ, ready to give what we have within us and that which burdens us and that which we do not want to give to the world to















