

The Greeks of Sydney proudly honoured the Anniversary of 1821 led by Archbishop Makarios



“When Greeks are united, they achieve the impossible. Unity is our strength and division is our downfall,” conveyed His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia from the Sydney Opera House, before thousands of Greeks. In the area in front of the iconic building of the city of Sydney, the anniversary events for the Greek national revival, which were organised with great success by the Holy Archdiocese of Australia and the Greek Orthodox Community of New South Wales, culminated at noon on Sunday, 23 March 2025.

On the morning of the same day, at the Holy Cathedral of the Annunciation of Our Lady, a Doxology for the National Anniversary was celebrated, presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios. Afterwards, at the Martin Place Cenotaph, in the “heart” of Sydney, a Memorial Service was conducted by the Archbishop, who was joined by Their Graces, Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, and Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia, Chief Secretary of the Holy Eparchial Synod. Subsequently, a wreath-laying ceremony was held in honour of the heroes of the Greek Revolution of 1821,

while, starting from Martin Place, a blue-and-white “river” – consisting of thousands of members of Parishes, Communities, Associations and Schools – proudly crossed the central streets of Sydney.

The grand parade, led by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, ended in front of the iconic Opera House. There, the excitement peaked when students from the three Greek Orthodox Colleges of Sydney sang the National Anthems of Greece and Australia. Speeches were then delivered by the Archbishop and dignitaries, while the celebrations concluded with a cultural program, which included poems, songs and traditional Greek dances.



In his speech, His Eminence noted in the introduction that the Anniversary of the 1821 Revolution is an important day not only for Greece, but also for Australia, as it reflects universal ideals, such as justice, freedom and human dignity. Elsewhere, he underlined the strong connection of the National Anniversary with the Feast of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, emphasising that “without spiritual freedom, there is no other freedom”. “The struggle of the Greeks for independence”, he characteristically emphasised, “was not only about the liberation of a part of the land, but the recovery of the soul of a people”.

Finally, addressing the Greek children who enthusiastically participated in the anniversary celebrations, His Eminence reminded them that “the blood of martyrs and heroes flows in your veins” and that “the freedom you enjoy today was won at

a great cost.” “It is your duty to keep the memory alive,” he pointed out, “to honour the sacrifices of the past and to ensure that the spirit of 1821 will inspire both you and future generations.” “If we want to remain free,” he continued, “we must remain united and close to the Church. Our religious and national identities are two sides of the same coin. The heroes of the Revolution did not fight only for a piece of land. They fought for their right to worship God, they fought for the right to raise their families in faith, and they fought to preserve their Orthodox Christian heritage. Let us never forget that our true freedom comes from Christ, who conquered death and gave us eternal life.”



In addition to the Archbishop of Australia, speeches were delivered by Mr. Harry Danalis, President of the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW, His Excellency Mr. Stavros Venizelos, Ambassador of Greece to Australia, Mr. Stavros Keletsis, Member of the Hellenic Parliament and Head of a Delegation of Greek MPs visiting Australia for the National Day celebrations, The Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP, Deputy Minister for Immigration and Representative of the Prime Minister of Australia, The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, and Mr. Mark Speakman, Leader of the Opposition in New South Wales. The anniversary events were also graced by the presence of His Excellency Mr. Antonios Sammoutis, High Commissioner of Cyprus to Australia, Mr. Ioannis Mallikourtis, Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Greek Members of Parliament Messrs. Athanasios Papathanasis, Stephanos Parastatidis and Miltiadis Zamparas, The Hon. Tony Burke MP, Federal Minister for Home Affairs, The Hon. Ms. Sophie Cotsis MP, State Minister for Industrial Relations and



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