

The blessing of knowledge: The gift of the Archdiocese of Australia to the Diocese of Toliara



By His Grace Bishop Prodromos of Toliara and Southern Madagascar

When two years ago I first travelled to the unknown and distant Fifth Continent, Australia, with the blessing of the Father and Patriarch Theodoros of Alexandria, I felt anxious, perhaps even somewhat afraid, in the face of the unknown and the different mentality of the people. Everything seemed new, and the size of things seemed inconceivable compared to Greece, and even more inconceivable when I compared them to the poor Southern Madagascar, where I humbly minister. However, God always comforts and opens ways. And then suddenly the story of Abraham came to my heart and the voice of God saying: “Go where I will show you.”

When you follow the voice of God, you will never regret it. This journey was truly a miracle. The blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia and his practical paternal interest in the needs of the Mission, the assistance of his Bishops, the support of the clergy and the people, were more than touching. It was as if I was living in the early apostolic years, when the strong Communities supported the poorer ones, and thus the miracle began to be born.

In the heart of Southern Madagascar, where education is not a right but a privilege for the few, a miracle has taken shape. A school – Primary, Middle and High School

- now stands as a beacon of knowledge and hope for 510 children, illuminating their future with the truth of learning.

This miracle was born of selfless love. The Archdiocese of Australia, under the guidance of the much-respected Archbishop Makarios, an inspired Hierarch and a man of open horizons, with paternal affection saw to the needs of the Mission in Toliara. In a gesture of love and fraternity, he gifted the Holy Diocese of Toliara and Southern Madagascar an entire school complex, offering the children what they so desperately sought: an opportunity to learn, to develop, to dream of a better future and a better world.

This donation is not just a building. It is a living testimony of Christian brotherhood and solidarity, a work that proves that love knows no distances, borders, peoples and races. From Australia to Madagascar, the bridge of giving was built with prayers, sacrifices and true care for the suffering brother, for the orphaned child, for Christ himself ultimately. Because giving to one of our brothers or sisters in need is giving to Christ.

Today, within the halls of this school, the school named "Archbishop Makarios", 510 children laugh, write, read, dream. Children who once had no access to knowledge, hold books in their hands, form their first letters, gain hope. The flame of learning lights up in every look, in every voice that proudly recites a word they have learned.

The Holy Diocese of Toliara and Southern Madagascar, with emotion and gratitude, raises praise to God and expresses its deepest gratitude to the Holy Archdiocese of Australia and His Eminence Archbishop Makarios. This donation is not just a gesture of charity; it is an investment in the souls of the children, a seed that will bear fruit in a society enlightened by knowledge and faith.

May the grace of God always bless those who open paths for the children of the world. To the Holy Archdiocese of Australia and to His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, the Church of Southern Madagascar extends a humble but heartfelt "thank you." Through their love, not just a school was built; a future full of hope was built.

This humble "thank you" of the children of Southern Madagascar and my own I have come to bring these days to the venerable and elder brother Archbishop Makarios and to all the blessed clergy and people of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, and to seek once again the mercy of their spacious hearts.

I am leaving Australia with my heart filled with love and gratitude, and with nostalgia already overwhelming me for all the beautiful and spiritual things that

Australia has given me.

We are waiting for you, Your Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, in Toliara, to see the good works of your hands and to hear the “thank you” of our children. This alone has value and not my own inarticulate words... We are forever grateful!





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