

Message of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia for ANZAC Day



As we journey through a turbulent period, in which our world faces a multitude of challenges and uncertainties, today offers us a valuable opportunity to pause and reflect on the greatness of history that is shaped by courageous and virtuous souls, by those who fight for justice and human dignity rather than seeking the comfort of silence and inaction.

Indeed, such greatness is embodied by the men and women of the ANZACs, who were not merely members of a military force. They were individuals devoted to high ideals, for which they fought with a spirit of self-sacrifice, thousands of kilometres away from their homeland and their families.

As Greeks, we have no excuse to ignore or forget their glorious path, for it is closely intertwined with the recent history of our beloved homeland. From Lemnos to Crete, from the Peloponnese to Macedonia, and beyond, the blood of Australian and New Zealand soldiers mingled with that of our ancestors in common sacrifices for the defence of universal ideals.

Especially for those of us who trace our roots to the great island of Crete, the memory of the ANZACs is sacred. In May 1941, when our island faced the invasion of Nazi Germany, the heroic ANZACs fought valiantly alongside our grandparents—not only for Crete, but for everything that Freedom represents.

We therefore owe them our boundless gratitude, and the least we can do is keep their memory alive, passing their precious legacy on to future generations.

Today, as we bow with reverence before their memory, let us promise that we will not remain merely in words but that we will have as our guiding compass the values they fought for; that we will not remain silent in the face of injustice; that we will not hesitate to defend the weak. And finally, that we will never allow the ANZACs to be forgotten. For the memory of heroes is not just a piece of history; it's a light that leads us towards the right direction for the future.