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With these touching words, the newly enthroned Archbishop Makarios paid special tribute to all the early Greek Australians and their achievements. He addressed the crowd at a dinner hosted by St Basil's homes at the Adelaide Oval on Tuesday night in honour of his appointment as hierarch of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia.

This was Makarios' first pastoral visit to South Australia since his enthronement in June.

His arrival at Adelaide Airport last Sunday was met with enthusiasm. “We are blessed to have him as our new spiritual leader,” said Bishop Nikandros of Dorylaeon, who extended a warm welcome to the archbishop upon his arrival at Adelaide Airport where he was also greeted by South Australian Premier Steven Marshall, and an enthusiastic crowd of over 500 people which included families and children from the various Greek-Orthodox Parishes, Communities and schools.

His jam-packed schedule included an official welcome dinner at the Krystal Function Centre at Port Adelaide on Monday night by the Greek Orthodox

Archdiocese of Australia Inter-Communities Council.

“At the heart of Orthodoxy is family, which is why the arrival of His Eminence, as the Father of the Church in Australia, is such a significant event for the Orthodox faithful of all ages,” Mr Con Dalas said, taking the floor as President of the Inter-Communities Council of South Australia.

Archbishop Makarios’ five-day schedule consisted of community and official events including meetings with the founders of Adelaide’s Greek community, heads of all parishes, government officials including the Governor of South Australia and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of South Australia, and a special visit to St Basil’s Homes in St Peters on Father’s Day to meet with aged care residents and their families.

The religious leader also visited youth and community groups in line with one of his key priorities, which is to engage more with the younger generation.

“Your fathers, mothers, your grandfathers, your grandmothers, left Greece not to go to Germany, not to go to America, but to go to an unknown place, and make a life on the other side of the world. This shows courage, determination and bravery and it also proves that the Greeks that migrated here (Australia) did not do things by chance. They had courage and faith and they worked really hard to progress and excel making us all proud of their achievements and ethos,” he said.

Archbishop Makarios assumed duties earlier this year following the death of the late Archbishop Stylianos Harkianakis, who passed away in March after serving Australia’s Greek Orthodox for more than 40 years.

Born in 1973, Archbishop Makarios has a strong academic career, having completed three Masters, and a Doctoral dissertation in Bioethics, and he has served at the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople, Greece and Estonia before being unanimously elected as the new Archbishop of Australia.

His visit to Adelaide concluded on Wednesday.

- Source: neoskopos.com & greekorthodox.org.au