

Archbishop Makarios of Australia: “The experience of a miracle should not be the main motivation that drives us to faith”



On Thursday, 7 August, in the evening, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, visited the Church of the Presentation of Our Lord, in the suburb of Coburg, Melbourne, accompanied by the local Bishop of Chora, His Grace Bishop Evmenios, and His Grace Bishop Kyriakos of Melbourne. His Eminence presided over the Great Supplicatory Canon to the Most Holy Theotokos, and was joined by Their Graces the Bishops, the Parish Priest, Fr. Leonidas Ioannou, and other clergy from the Dioceses of Chora and Melbourne.

At the end of the Service, after thanking the faithful for their large turnout, he referred to the deep reverence of Orthodox Christians, especially Greeks, for the Virgin Mary. “We have all created a personal relationship with the Virgin Mary,” he noted, noting that we resort to her to seek strength, courage, comfort and protection. “And each of us,” the Archbishop added, “has personal testimonies of

the Virgin Mary's interventions and miracles in our lives." However, he clarified at this point that "the experience of a miracle should not be the main motivation that drives us to faith." "Because if we believed in Christ, the Virgin Mary and our Saints because they are miracle workers, this would not be faith but a transaction," he emphasised.

He also reminded that Christ Himself, during His Crucifixion, ignored the provocations of His accusers, who mockingly challenged Him to come down from the Cross to prove that He is the true God ("Let Him come down now from the cross, so that we may see and believe" [Mark 15:32]). "Christ could have come down, but He did not, because faith that is based on miracles has no true value," His Eminence observed.



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Concluding his address, His Eminence clarified that although miracles are accepted by the Church, they should not be the ultimate goal in the life of a faithful Christian. "We come to church and venerate the Theotokos," he noted, "not because she performs miracles for us — though she does — but primarily because we love the Theotokos, Christ, and our Saints." "And we are in the Church," he continued, "not because it spares us from sorrows, but because it teaches us how to live with them, to have courage, and to face our trials head-on. For we all know that in this world we are strangers and sojourners. We know it, but often we do not want to accept it, because, as the popular poet says, 'life is sweet.' Yet the other life is sweeter, more beautiful, more radiant — and it is close to Christ. And it is something that cannot

be compared to any joy or comfort of this world."

At the end of the service, Archbishop Makarios offered appropriate wishes to the





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