

Archbishop Makarios of Australia: “In a society full of rejections, the human person wants to feel affection from the Church”



On Sunday evening, 10 August, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, who was joined by Their Graces, Bishop Kyriakos of Melbourne and Bishop Evmenios of Chora, visited the Parish of The Presentation Our Lady to the Temple in the suburb of Balwyn North in Melbourne. His Eminence presided over the Great Supplicatory Canon to the Most Holy Theotokos and at the end of the Service, he bestowed the office of Spiritual Father-Confessor upon the Parish Priest, Fr. Nicholas Georgiou.

In his inspired address, he first emphasised the significant role of the sacred Mystery of Confession in the life of the Church and encouraged every believer to approach it with great humility, sincerely confessing their sins, mistakes, and weaknesses, seeking God’s mercy and the healing of their spiritual wounds.

Then, addressing the newly appointed Spiritual Father-Confessor, he urged him in his ministry to give particular emphasis to the pastoral and advisory dimension of the Mystery of Confession. He encouraged him to offer guidance to those confessing, not based on his own personal opinions or perceptions, but strictly according to the teaching of Christ and the Church.

He also exhorted him to pray: "My Christ, help me never to advise anyone wrongly" — a counsel that Archbishop Makarios himself had received before entering the priesthood from Elder Paisios of Mount Athos, who was later canonised as a Saint of the Orthodox Church and is the Patron of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia.

In another part of his address, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios focused on the well-known parable of the "Prodigal Son" — or, more accurately, the "Compassionate Father" — and observed that this father "had created the conditions so that, if his child found itself in a difficult situation, it would know that someone was waiting for him and that a door would be open." "This is how I envision the ideal Spiritual Father in our Church," he emphasised, "to be full of love and compassion, avoiding the imposition of penances." Noting, moreover, that modern society is filled with rejections, he strongly emphasised that "a person cannot bear one more rejection from the Church. They want to feel affection from the Church."

In conclusion, the Archbishop expressed his confidence in Fr. Nicholas, stating his belief that he will continue to minister with humility and a deep sense of responsibility. "The role of the Spiritual Father is not an honorific title, but a



