

The Holy Eparchial Synod of the Archdiocese of Australia welcomes the Greek Minister of Culture, Lina Mendoni



On Saturday, 4 October 2025, the Holy Archdiocese of Australia welcomed the Minister of Culture of Greece, Ms Lina Mendoni, during a festive session of the Holy Eparchial Synod held in Sydney. The Minister visited Australia to attend the first anniversary celebration of the “living” museum Our People, Their Stories (www.optis.org.au) and the official presentation of the project in Sydney.

Minister Mendoni was accompanied by her special advisor, Dr Anna Panagiotarea, other members of her team, and the Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Mr Georgios Skemberis.

During the Synod’s ceremonial sitting, the distinguished guests were warmly addressed by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, who expressed his heartfelt appreciation to Minister Mendoni for her consistent interest and support for Hellenism in Australia. “We always feel your nearness, care, and concern for the Greek community of Australia,” His Eminence said, asking her to convey his sincere

greetings to the Prime Minister of Greece, Mr Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who, he noted, “continually shows exceptional and multifaceted interest in the matters that concern us, both institutionally, by virtue of his office, and personally, and this touches and deeply moves us.”

The Archbishop went on to offer a brief explanation of the synodal system of governance of the Orthodox Church, which was introduced into the Archdiocese of Australia during the past year. He outlined the unique pastoral and administrative circumstances of the Church in Australia that made the establishment of this system necessary. Observing that Ms Mendoni would find a very different Australia from the one she had visited three years ago, His Eminence noted that, beyond the structural developments, the mission of the local Church has significantly expanded, exemplified by the Our People, Their Stories museum, now under the patronage of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture.

The Archbishop expressed the gratitude of the Archdiocese to the Minister for her ongoing support, emphasising that this assistance arises “first and foremost from your deep personal sensitivity and moral formation, your faith in our Holy Church, and your commitment to the ideals of Greek culture, and not merely from a sense of procedural obligation.”



In another part of his address, Archbishop Makarios recalled the Apostolic Visit of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Australia in October 2024, noting that the Patriarch had been the one to inaugurate and first present online the Our People, Their Stories museum of the Greek diaspora's historical memory. His Eminence described this act as one of profound symbolic significance, conferring a universal and ecumenical character upon the project.

He continued: "This same universal dimension of Hellenism is expressed through your presence here, as the head of the Ministry of Culture of Greece and as a distinguished personality who has dedicated her entire life to the study and promotion of Greek civilisation, both through eminent positions in academia and in public service. Living in a multicultural country such as Australia, we are blessed to understand even more deeply this universality, the immeasurable breadth and enduring vitality, of Hellenism, not as an ethnic or racial concept, but as an ideal of education, language, and culture. This is the spirit of openness, mutual understanding, high learning, industriousness, integrity, and devotion to the sacred heritage of our Nation that the work of the Archdiocese of Australia, Our People, Their Stories, seeks to embody and project."

Following His Eminence's address, Minister Mendoni responded warmly, expressing her appreciation and sharing an illustrated presentation detailing the developmental and restoration initiatives of the Ministry of Culture in Greece, particularly regarding Byzantine monuments currently undergoing renovation.

The meeting concluded with the exchange of commemorative gifts, marking both the Minister's visit and the festive occasion of the Synod's session.





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