

Archbishop Makarios of Australia and Lina Mendoni at the Annual Sunday School Picnic of New South Wales



The Minister of Culture of Greece, Ms Lina Mendoni, had the opportunity to meet hundreds of young Greeks of the Diaspora, young “shoots” of the Greek community and the Orthodox Church in Australia, during her attendance, on Monday, 6 October, at the annual Picnic Event of the Sunday Schools of New South Wales. The event, which took place at Gough Whitlam Park in the Sydney suburb of Earlwood, saw Ms Mendoni accompanied by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia.

Also present were Their Graces Bishop Elpidios of Perth, Bishop Athinagoras of Canberra, Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia, and Bishop Christophoros of Kerasounta, along with clergy of the Holy Archdiocese, the Ambassador of Greece to Australia, His Excellency Mr Stavros Venizelos, the Consul General in Sydney, Mr Georgios Skemperis, and the Minister's special advisor, journalist Ms Anna Panagiotarea.

The children of the Sunday Schools warmly welcomed their Shepherd and the Greek Minister of Culture. On behalf of the Greek Orthodox Christian Society, which organises and coordinates catechetical work in New South Wales, the President, Dr John Psarommatis, extended a heartfelt welcome to the distinguished guests.



His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia spoke to the children with paternal love, urging them never to forget that the source of life is Christ and that the source of spiritual strength is His Church. Warm greetings were also delivered by Minister Mendoni and Ambassador Venizelos.

In turn, the boys and girls of the Sunday Schools proudly sang the Greek National Anthem and then chanted the Apolytikion of Saint Paisios the Athonite, the patron saint of Australia and the Holy Archdiocese.



More than 400 children from the parish Sunday Schools of New South Wales participated in the annual event, together with their parents and family members. After enjoying a picnic lunch, they took part in games and activities inspired by the Olympic Games. Teams were formed from different parishes working together, and the group consisting of the parishes of Saint Nicholas Marrickville, the Transfiguration of Our Lord Earlwood, Saint Stylianos Gymea, Saint Gerasimos Leichhardt, and Holy Cross Wollongong achieved the highest score of the day, being crowned champions of the 2025 annual Picnic event.













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