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# Message of Archbishop Makarios of Australia on International Migrants Day




The phenomenon of migration, as ancient as human history itself, reflects the enduring human need to seek out new places in the hope of building a better tomorrow.

It was chiefly this need which, especially in difficult times for our homeland, gave rise to large migratory movements and led to the formation of vibrant Greek communities at the futherest ends of the earth. And it was through this courageous journey of hope that hundreds of thousands of Greeks settled and took root in the then-unknown land of Australia.

On the occasion of today, International Migrants Day, we first turn our thoughts with respect and gratitude to all those, our living and departed brothers and sisters, who, through great hardship and under adverse conditions, laid the foundations of the Greek Diaspora in Australia. We reflect on the trials they faced, the anxieties they endured, and the obstacles they were called upon to overcome in order to prosper both individually and collectively. We admire their strength, both spiritual and physical, by which they managed to overcome their fear of the unknown, to endure the pain of life far from home, to labour tirelessly, to make

personal sacrifices, and to secure the conditions for a better future for their children and grandchildren. We hold them up with pride as examples worthy of imitation, because, without forgetting their faith, their language, their traditions, and their Greek identity in general, they simultaneously came to love the country that welcomed them and offered them opportunities. With willingness and openness, they wove their own thread into the broader social fabric and contributed with all their strength to the cohesion, progress, and prosperity of Australia.

This migratory experience of our Diaspora, deeply engraved in our collective memory, constitutes not only a precious legacy of the past but also a compass of responsibility for the present and the future. For in a world that continues to be tested by poverty, inequality, war, and environmental crises, the phenomenon of migration remains an ongoing challenge for contemporary societies. In this context, our own witness must be a witness of respect for the human person, a witness that promotes the social inclusion of migrants, harmonious coexistence, and ultimately the common good of our society.

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