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Message of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia for International Youth Day



Not without reason has youth been described as the most creative period of a person’s earthly life. Yet we often forget that the energy and potential of youth are not simply a promise for tomorrow, but a precious gift that can bear fruit from today.

Our Holy Archdiocese has demonstrated in practical ways that we regard our young people not only as bearers of hope for the future, but also as active participants in the present life of the Church, of our GreekAustralian community, and of our society at large. Through our pastoral care for young people– through our Sunday Schools, Schools, youth fellowships and other parish initiatives, as well as the regular Youth Conferences now established in each of our Dioceses – we are working above all to nurture a living relationship with Christ and to help them develop the gifts that God has bestowed upon them. At the same time, we listen to their thoughts, ideas, hopes and concerns, and seek to give them the space they need to spread their wings with courage and the belief that they can fly.

Today, International Youth Day, reminds us precisely of this responsibility that we all share: to listen to the voice of our young people, without seeking to impose our own. To guide them along the path of virtue, without depriving them of the God-given gift of freedom. To support and encourage them, and to seek to inspire them through our own example.

Let us, then, entrust to our young people not only the future but also the present. Let us stand beside them, not as stern judges, but as humble fellow travellers, with patience and love. Let us give them opportunities to bring their visions to life, to take on responsibility and to offer their gifts for the common good.

May our Lord enlighten the steps of our young people, bless their endeavours and grant them the strength to build a world better than the one we are handing on to them.