

Annual Hierarchical Memorial Service for the Late Protopresbyter Elias Kentrotis in Melbourne



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In an atmosphere of deep emotion, the annual Memorial Service for the late Protopresbyter Elias Kentrotis was held on Sunday, 23 August, at the Church of Saint Haralambos in Templestowe, Melbourne. The Memorial Service, as well as the preceding Divine Liturgy, was presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, assisted by His Eminence Metropolitan Ezekiel of Dervis and His Grace Bishop Kyriakos of Melbourne.

Speaking from the heart about the blessed and exceptional personality of the late founder of the Parish of Saint Haralambos, the Archbishop observed, among other things, that he had been destined by God—"set apart from his mother's womb" (cf. Galatians 1:15)—to serve at the sacred Altar and, through the priesthood, to become a bearer of the Holy Spirit.

Indeed, as His Eminence noted, the late Fr Elias loved Christ and His Church from an early age and demonstrated a calling to the priesthood. He subsequently studied sacred theology in Greece, where he was ordained. Upon returning to Australia, he founded and organised two parishes: the Presentation of Our Lord in Coburg and Saint Haralambos in Templestowe.

His Eminence expressed the gratitude of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia for the late clergyman's many years of invaluable service, while especially praising his ecclesiastical ethos and great spiritual stature.

Having previously interpreted the day's Gospel reading (Matthew 19:16–26), which describes the rich young man's attachment to material possessions, the Archbishop observed that Fr Elias' life had been an example of detachment from such things, in both the narrow and broader sense. "I am not referring only to money," he clarified, explaining: "I am referring to anything that keeps us bound to this earth, to this false world. For Fr Elias, all worldly things were an illusion. Even health, which most people regard as the most precious good, was never placed by Fr Elias above his relationship with Christ.

“When I met him, I realised that he was a truly exceptional person. Within himself, he had stripped away the absolute value that we commonly attribute to health. He would say that what is important, what saves us, is not health, but Christ. What should ultimately concern us is not whether we are healthy and live for many years, but whether we are united with Christ and inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.”



In conclusion, Archbishop Makarios conveyed to Presvytera Stavroula, the late priest's children and his spiritual children, who had filled the Church of Saint Haralambos, the Patriarchal prayers and love of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. As His Eminence noted, the Ecumenical Patriarch had known Fr Elias personally and held him in particular esteem.









