

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia issues fire appeal



His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia has issued a fire appeal. Read the full text below:

My dear friends,

With great sadness and heartache, we find ourselves in the midst of a fire crisis, which has unfolded in front of our eyes in recent days, here in our blessed Australia. We share the grief of the families and friends who lost their loved ones, including volunteer firefighters, who lost their lives while heroically battling hellfire. Beyond the precious human lives lost, the destruction of thousands of hectares of land, fruit trees, precious vineyards, local businesses, innocent wildlife and thousands of homes,

the fires have created serious living problems for many of our fellow humans.

The Holy Archdiocese of Australia hurts deeply with the pain and suffering of all those affected. However, we know well that gentle and sensitive words are not enough. Many of our compatriots need real material help at this time, having lost everything from the disasters caused by fires around the country. So, it's time for the words to become action. It is time to turn Christian teaching into practical and organized love and charity for our neighbour.

For this reason, on Sunday, January 5th, a collection tray will be circulated in all Greek Orthodox parishes of Australia. All money collected from this fundraiser will reach the people who need it.

At the same time we call on everyone who wants and can – Greeks and non-Greeks, Orthodox and non-Orthodox, Christians and non-Christians, faithful and non-believers, young and old, even young children and students of all levels of our nation's schools – we invite all of you to deposit your donation at

Greek Orthodox Fire Appeal
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia
BSB: 082-057
ACCOUNT: 616958567

Or donate via the various websites of our Archdiocese, parishes and charities.

We must help our suffering sisters and brothers. All donations over \$ 2 will be tax-exempt. Within forty days the Archdiocese will publish the names of the donors, the amounts each has deposited, and how the money was distributed. Please warmly offer as generously as you can.

I also paternally urge our people not to lose hope in God. God's love will undoubtedly be dominant over this tragedy and the suffering we face. I ask that we pray. Let us kneel and fervently beg our philanthropist Lord to release the rain from the skies to put out these most devastating fires

that have shaken our beautiful Australia. With Christ at the centre, let us unite our hearts and souls so that our silent cries reach the throne of God.

With the opportunity of this press release, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia expresses once again its sincere congratulations to the volunteer firefighters. We are all

proud of them because they have spent endless hours and days trying to save lives and property. Their courageous sacrifice and their brave altruism are admirable.

Finally, I convey to all, the deep concern and blessings of our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who despite his many obligations, focuses his heart's love and fatherly care, here in far-off Australia, and is constantly monitoring the critical situation that is afflicting our country.

My dear friends, I'm sure you will respond, not to the voice of your Archbishop, but to the pain of our fellow human beings. Open your heart and your embrace.

Thank you in advance for your immediate response and I hope that no one ever experiences the inferno of fire, neither in this life, nor in the next.

With paternal wishes and in the Lord love

Your Archbishop

+ Makarios of Australia