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H.E. Archbishop Makarios of Australia issues an encyclical regarding the finances of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia



His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia has issued an encyclical regarding the finances of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia.

Read the full text down below:

† Archbishop Makarios of Australia

Protocol No.: **766**

To the God loving Bishops,
the Gracious Clergy,
the Monastic Orders and
the Directors of Schools
and all other Institutions and Organisations
of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia.

In their sees.

Most God-loving Brothers,
Very Reverent Fathers,
Respected Presidents and Directors
My Beloved Children in Christ,

Humanity is facing new challenges with the spread of the Coronavirus, which are not at all pleasant for anyone. Unfortunately, here in Australia, many people have lost their employment, some have suffered financial losses—and indeed are continuing to face financial challenges—whilst others are being affected psychologically. Still, others have become ill. There are others, and fortunately only a few, who have been unable to cope and have succumbed to the force of the pandemic. We are trying with every possible means to be close to our people, whom we love very much and whose pain we feel, as of course, you do as well.

Within this spirit, we acknowledge that the closure of the Churches, especially during this period and during Holy Week which is fast approaching, as well as the cancellation of philanthropic and other events have resulted in huge financial consequences to the income of our Parishes and Communities as well as all other Institutions which function under our auspices. For this reason, after much thought and research, we have made the decision to relieve parishes, who are facing financial problems, from their financial responsibilities and contributions towards the Holy Archdiocese of Australia for the current year of 2020. Even though this will impact the entire financial structure and direction of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, we consider that it is a required measure in order to support, in a concrete way, the Parish Committees, as well as the efforts not only of our Priests, but also of all other Administrative Committees.

For the Priests and the church employees, for whom it is difficult to receive their salary, due to the reduction of income to our Churches, after consultation between the Finance Office of the Archdiocese and the relevant government authorities, we attach the relevant instructions regarding how they can access an income of $1500 fortnightly. The Holy Archdiocese will offer every assistance and every justification in order to secure the basic income for all those who request it from the 1st March.

At the same time, I want to inform you that the Archdiocese does not intend to dismiss any employee from the central or district offices, from our institutions, our schools or from our Churches. I fervently ask the Presidents of the Administrative Committees, those who are responsible and the Directors of all our other Organisations and Institutions, and the Principals of our Schools, to respect this principle. In collaboration with the Archiepiscopal Vicars of the different districts, their Graces Bishops Ezekiel of Dervis, Iakovos of Miletoupolis, Aimilianos of Meloe, Elpidios of Kyanea, Silouanos of Sinope, and the Very Reverend Archimandrite Evmenios, we will continue to support and extend our welfare programs to our sisters and brothers who have been impacted by this crisis, making every attempt to be with them, not only in word, but primarily through our actions and initiatives.

I thank you in advance for your immediate response and primarily for the understanding which you have been showing; I fervently ask you to extend your prayers to God, whose intervention all of humanity awaits, through the intercessions of our most Holy Theotokos and all the Saints.

With much love in Christ and many blessings

In Sydney, 3rd April 2020

† Makarios Archbishop of Australia.

14th Encyclical, 3 April, 2020.