18/04/2020

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia issues Paschal Message



His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia has issued his Paschal Message. Read the full text down below:

MAKARIOS

by God’s mercy, Archbishop of the Most Holy Archdiocese of Australia, Primate and Exarch of All Oceania, to the God-loving Bishops, the gracious clergy, the monastic brotherhoods, to the Presidents of the honourable Administrative Committees and Philoptochos Associations, to the teachers and students in the Schools, to those who work in the philanthropic institutions and to all the Christ-loving plenitude of the Orthodox Church in Australia, grace and peace from Christ our Saviour who gloriously rose.

Venerable Brother fellow Bishops and my beloved children,

The Grace of the Risen Christ enabled us to celebrate Easter this year in an entirely different manner, which does not refer to what we Orthodox would call a “traditional Easter”. The pandemic that engulfed all of humanity created new situations and new circumstances which physically separated us from the space of the Church and distanced us from Holy Communion. All of a sudden, we found ourselves outside of “the bridal chamber of Christ” and “from afar” we tried to experience the greatest events of the Orthodox Church.

God allowed this to happen in this way for reasons that He Himself knows. We glorify Him and we give thanks to Him, because we know that, even from within this trial, something good for our salvation will most certainly transpire. I believe that one of the greatest lessons that we have learnt during this time is that, in the end, we must not lose sight of our daily and living fellowship with the person of Christ; whether we are inside the space of the Church or whether we are outside. Many times, we mistake the spiritual life for a condition that we could experience within the Church but estranged from each other. Such a thought is convenient and appeases our conscience, primarily when we have taken our neighbour out of our life. But the Resurrection of Christ teaches us the communion of heaven and earth, the relationship of those living with those who have departed, the unity of all people amongst themselves. This year’s Resurrection presents this great challenge for all of us. We experience it removed from the space of the Church, but I want to believe, not isolated from the person of our neighbour. Ultimately, the pandemic closed our Churches; it deprived us from Holy Communion, but it united all of us in the name of Jesus Christ as one great family and taught us something that for many years we had forgotten: family prayer. In the end, the pandemic helped us to understand that love is not a simple emotion. In reality, it is a mode of existing within the world.

Christ is Risen!

I wish you all many years, filled with light, joy and the resurrected life of Christ.

Your Archbishop

† Makarios of Australia