

Message from Archbishop Makarios of Australia concerning International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples



Twenty-six years ago, the United Nations General Assembly established the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples to encourage the respect and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, as well as international cooperation in resolving the problems and the dangers that they face.

Although important steps in the right direction have been taken, discrimination and inequality are, unfortunately, still apparent in many parts of the world. Indigenous peoples are still among the poorest and most disadvantaged people and they are also among the most at risk of serious infection from the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Today, therefore, is a strong reminder for humanity that we still have many steps to take; we still have a long way to go to reach the desired destination, where all people share the goods of divine Creation in a harmonious, loving and just manner.

In this blessed, multicultural Australian society that God has deigned for us to live, this road seems closer and more accessible. However, the effort to tread this path must be unceasing and persistent.

Our Holy Archdiocese is devoted to achieving this aim and sets as a priority to utilise the valuable cultural experience of its flock that has been garnered over the course of the decades between the Greek immigrants and the indigenous people of the fifth continent. Focussed on Christ and walking steadily on the path of peace, love and justice, we are determined to extend a hand of friendship to the Aboriginal communities and to synchronise our steps with their needs and concerns. With God's help, we will actively move forward in this direction and undertake concrete initiatives, as soon as the conditions of the pandemic allow it.