28/06/2021

Message of Archbishop MAKARIOS on International Day Against Drugs



Every day we see the sunrise, we must reflect upon the fact that what we experience in this present life is a gift of the Almighty God and, therefore, we must glorify Him. As a practical recognition and expression of our gratitude for this great gift, we ought to live every moment authentically; in its true dimension and essence, free from illusions and all kinds of distortions of reality.

With these thoughts and since today is the International Day Against Drugs, I fervently appeal to all, and especially to young people, to close their ears to the “sirens” that promise false “blissfulness” and to reject the temporary, but often deadly, illusion of drugs.

I fully understand that this serious problem, which is a scourge on modern society, has deep roots and complex causes and it certainly cannot be tackled effectively by only giving advice, recommendations or reprimands.

This is why I believe the most important message of today should be addressed not to those who are faced with the nightmare of addiction, but to the rest of society,

which often remains an uninvolved spectator in the evolvement of the problem. Today is an ideal opportunity for all of us to reflect on the role we play, both when our fellow human beings are drawn into the dark path of drugs and when they struggle to return once they realise the deception of their pursuits. Are we there to show them the right path when we find they have deviated from their course? Are we prepared to open our arms and are we willing to embrace them when we see them returning?

On the occasion of this international day, let us make a commitment that, from now on, we will always be there for our neighbour, beginning with our family and extending to the wider community in which we live, in order to give the good testimony of our Orthodox faith by offering unlimited and unconditional love as Christ taught us. Let us show by our example what our values are, but also what is the true value of this present life!

As the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, we are continuing to work with all our strength, and as quickly as possible, to begin operating the two detox centres in Melbourne and Sydney. We look forward to the success of this sacred struggle, in order to open our embrace to our young Greek people and to all our fellow human beings, without exception, who are seeking a way out of the nightmare of addiction.

Personally, I will not stop repeating that there is a way out of this nightmare. There is a way back for those on drugs. And where it is narrow, inaccessible or uphill, we will fight with faith and unity to make it accessible!
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