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His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia: ‘Let us turn to the Virgin Mary, our unshakeable support’



Message by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia

Dormition of the Theotokos 2021

Most honourable Fellow Bishops and my beloved children,

We have been counted worthy again this year, to arrive at the blessed day on which our Church celebrates the Dormition of our most holy Lady the Theotokos, the Mother of God and the Mother of us all. On this day, according to the holy hymnographer, “all in heaven are jubilant” and “the whole earth rejoices”. The commemoration of the Dormition of the Theotokos is not accompanied by mourning nor with painful feelings. On the contrary, our hearts are filled with genuine happiness because the Virgin Mary “departed to the source of life”, that is, she departed for heaven, to be near her Son and, at the same time, she becomes

the intercessor of humankind, since “in death, she did not abandon the world”.

Celebrating this great event of the Theotokos, we behold two valuable messages. First, the faith and dedication that we must show towards God’s will. Just like at the Annunciation, when the Virgin Mary was obedient and accepted to bear the Son of God and, thereby, becoming a co-worker in the salvation of humankind, in similar manner, when she was informed about her Dormition, not only was she not troubled but, on the contrary, she was joyous and prepared to meet her beloved Son. So, she was rewarded with her translation and transition from the earthly and temporal to the heavenly and eternal, and she became for all of us, “the bridge leading men from earth to heaven”, opening the road for us to travel towards the heavenly Kingdom, to partake of the true life, having prepared appropriately during the course of this present life.

The second message from today’s feast is the message of hope. Mary, full of Grace, stands by the throne of her Son and unceasingly intercedes for the people who seek her help. In every trial that we endure, Panagia is there, as “the ever vigilant in intercession and the unshakeable hope for protection”. Today, when the greatest of feasts of the Theotokos finds Australian society enduring the difficult ordeal of the pandemic with the unbearable restrictive measures, Orthodox Christians are called upon to be an example through their faith; to not be discouraged, to not lose heart, and to not lose hope. Panagia always was, and will always be, our unshakeable support. Let us turn to her again today, intensifying our prayers so that we may gain consolation, hope and strength to effectively deal with the current tribulation.

I am certain that your prayers to our Most Holy Theotokos will also include our brethren in Greece, who have been severely affected by the devastating fires these last days. During these difficult moments, they need our prayers and they need our support.

I pray that Panagia, our Mother, shelters and protects everyone.

Many blessed years to all!

