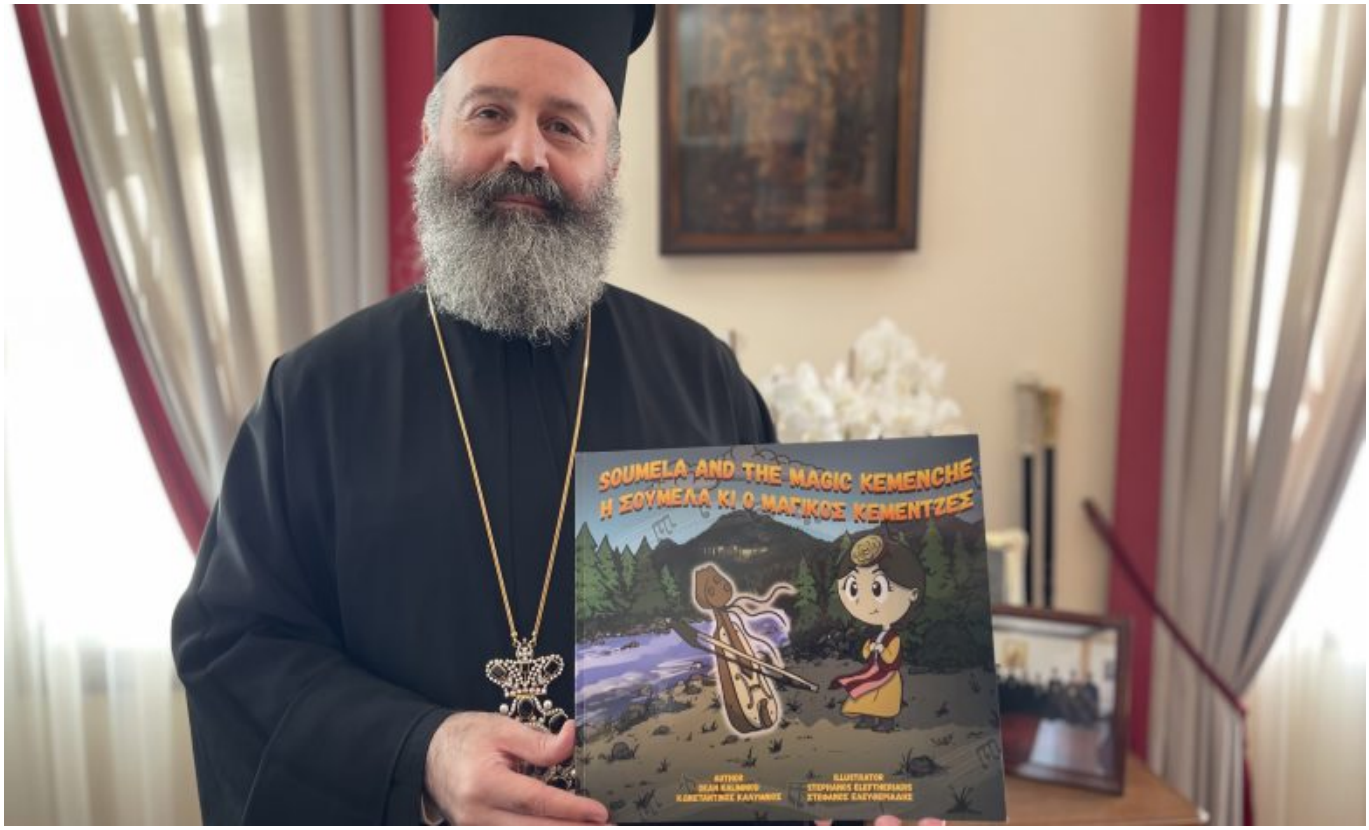
12/10/2021

MESSAGE OF HIS EMINENCE FOR CHILDREN'S BOOK SOUMELA AND THE MAGIC KEMENCHE



Stories are perhaps the most engaging way to communicate timeless and eternal truths. This is especially the case for the young, who love fairy tales, but not only; as adults there is nothing we enjoy more than an uplifting, or poignant—but always meaningful—narrative. Even the Gospel, as we have received it in written form, is in the shape of a story—the most important story ever told.

For these reasons, I warmly commend our spiritual son in Christ, Mr Konstantinos Kalymnios, for writing this beautiful children's book, Soumela and the Magic Kemenche. Indeed, when he first sent it to me, I made it a prerogative of our St Andrew's Orthodox Press to have it published. As a sensitive father of three children—the eldest of which, Helene, asked her father to write this book (and, from what I hear, co-wrote it with him!)—Mr Kalymnios delicately portrays the protagonist, Soumela, as a devoted daughter of a caring mother; as a daughter of our beloved Pontus. The tragedy of the Genocide of our Pontian brothers and sisters is then tacitly unveiled as Soumela is led by a magic kemenche—a characteristic Pontian lyra—to the holy monastery of Panagia Soumela, and, by the protection of Panagia and the saints, to deliverance from destruction.

The artist, Stefanos Eleftheriadis, has done a remarkable job with his contemporary artistic expression, and I congratulate him also. This book represents the first-fruits of our holy Archdiocese's attempt to communicate timeless and eternal truths regarding the Orthodox Christian faith, the importance of family, but also our treasured culture, to young children. For the sake of the latter, this book is in both modern Greek and English. It is dedicated to our Pontian brothers and sisters, who have suffered and inherited much pain, to our beloved fellow Hellenes, and also to people of good will everywhere; to anyone who enjoys well-written stories for the meaningful and inspiring truths that they contain.

Note: Soumela and the Magic Kemenche is available to purchase at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia's Book Centres in Sydney and Melbourne, and online at the following link: www.greekorthodoxbookshop.com.au
vema.com.au