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Darwin Mayor condemns Greek community for heckling at Ohi Day celebration



A sacred morning celebrating Ohi Day turned into a yelling match about modern-day freedoms

Darwin Lord Mayor Kon Vatskalis has publicly condemned the behaviour of members of the Darwin's Greek community following a church service on Sunday.

The event involved officials being heckled during and after the Ohi Day service at St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, which was attended by Mr Vatskalis, Opposition Leader Lia Finocchiara and other authorities.

"It was a small minority," Mr Vatskalis told Neos Kosmos in reference to the 20 to 30 people from the 300 people who yelled out "shame" and "sold out".

"It does not, at any rate, express our city's Greek community," he said.

When Mr Vatskalis went to lay his wreath, there were members of the Greek Australian community who yelled out "Shame" and other characterisations to express their disappointment concerning the vaccine mandate.

"If you've got your differences, fine, happy to do that but do it in the right place at

the right time. Yesterday was the wrong place and the wrong time," Mr Vatskalis said on ABC Darwin.

Greek Australians from Darwin who called Neos Kosmos to express their disappointment said that the Greek Australian community was humiliated by the behaviour of some Greek Australians in front of Australian politicians, police and the local media.

The same circles said that people who had never before taken part in such Greek national day events suddenly became "super-patriots" and started swearing and attacking those they did not agree with.

Police advised people at the church to calm down, and waited until the group dispersed.

Mr Vatskalis said it was extremely "embarrassing and disturbing" that Greek Australians were acting in such an aggressive manner toward other people.

I am still steadfast about the vaccination and still call people to get vaccinated," Mr Vatskalis said.

"The way people behaved was very threatening – it was a Greek National Day, not a rally."

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