

Ordination of Priest and Deacon in Melbourne, Australia



Two ordinations of clergy, a Deacon and a Priest, were conducted by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, on Sunday, January 16, at the Church of Saints Constantine and Helen in Melbourne's South Yarra.

Also during the ordinations, His Eminence was accompanied by their Graces, Bishop Kyriakos of Sozopolis and Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta , by the Protosyncellus of the Holy Archdiocese, Very Rev. Fr Christophoros Krikelis, and by other priests of the city, His Eminence ordained Irineos Koikas to the diaconate and Fr Panteleimon Laskaris to the Holy Priesthood.

Fr Irineos Koikas, who until recently served the members of the Community of Saint Paraskevi in St Albans as an non-canonical clergyman, during his address before his ordination as a Deacon, first expressed his gratitude to Archbishop Makarios, for the affection with which he received from Him by placing him within the ranks of the canonical Church.

"I see in your face the loving father of the parable of the prodigal son," he said

characteristically, while asking His Eminence to forgive him for his previous anticanonical behavior.

He then expressed his anguish for the success of the efforts of the whole St Alban's Community to return to the canonical Church, the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, welcoming the presence of many of its members at the ordination ceremony.



“As long as I have been in the community, my main purpose and concern, especially after your election to the leadership of our Church, has been the end of the schism that has caused so much suffering in the parish and in our Church,” he said, and continued: “We boasted and rejoiced for the inclusion of the Community of St. Spyridon Clayton, in 2019, within the Mother Church. We hoped, and it was also our ardent desire, that our issue in the St Alban's community would have the same happy ending. However, I firmly and wholeheartedly believe, judging by the presence of some historical, old presidents, and the ladies and former president of the Philoptochos society of St Albans, that this community will soon come into the hospitable, paternal embrace of our Shepherd”.



For his part, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios congratulated the new Deacon for his courage and for his spiritual bravery to leave the dark past of the schism and to enter the bright present and the glorious future of the truth of the Church and the canonicity of the priesthood. “The grace of God,” he stressed, “requires you today to appear before the canonical and under the Orthodox Church recognised Archbishop of Australia, to receive the first degree of the priesthood, after a great adventure of your life or, if you allow me to characterise more correctly, after an ecclesiastical nightmare in the schism and anti-canonicity. But God really showed you the way of truth and you, on your part, bowed your neck and obeyed God’s call, and with exemplary humility you acknowledged your mistakes, confessed your errors and asked for the mercy of the Church “.

Afterwards, His Eminence addressed the ordinand with spiritual instructions and advice, with a central message, during his priestly course, to dedicate himself to the struggle for the unity and peace of the Church. “This peaceful state, the state of love and unity, I have envisioned and ministered with all my might since the first moment of my arrival on the blessed great continent of Oceania,” the Archbishop said, and continued, “We ought to, as true successors of the Apostles, to heal the wounds and scandals of the schisms that have plagued our Holy Archdiocese for many years. That is why, my dear sub-deacon, your return to the canonical Church gave me the joy and the hope that soon all our brothers will be able to return, in the spirit of repentance and unity, to normalcy, and to enter into the embrace of our Holy Church, which awaits them, as a common mother, with open arms and

with much love “.



Prior to the other ordination, Deacon Fr Panteleimon Laskaris addressed words of thanks and gratitude to those who guided and supported him in his life, leading his steps in the priesthood and bringing him before his Spiritual Shepherd to receive the rank of Priest. He thanked, in particular, His Eminence Metropolitan Ezekiel of Dervis and their Graces, Bishop Kyriakos of Sozopolis and Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta, his spiritual father Fr. Christos Demolianis, and other clergymen of Victoria and the parishioners of Sts Constantine and Helen Church, as well as his family and friends, especially his wife, Silouani, for the sacrificial love, support and encouragement she provided. “You supported me without hesitation a fact that shows your great love and service to Christ and the Church,” he said, addressing his wife, acknowledging that she and their two children are a source of inspiration for his ministry.

In addition, the newly ordained Fr Panteleimon, made special mention of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, stating that “I am indebted to you for the love, guidance, support and trust you have shown me”. He closed his speech by noting: “Through all these people I thanked, I have seen the love of God and it is this love of God that brings me here today. It is this love which gives me the opportunity to give my life in the ministry of Christ and the Church, with complete trust and faith in God “.



Afterwards, Fr. Panteleimon, who will henceforth serve in the Parish of Saints Constantine and Helen, listened respectfully to the Archbishop of Australia outlining the manner in which a clergyman consistently performs his spiritual and priestly duties.

His Eminence, quoting passages from patristic texts, urged the new Priest to be aware of his sinfulness and at the same time of the forgiveness he must show to the faithful, as well as to rightly teach the word of Christ's truth, not being carried away by human cares. "God will not save you for your good works, nor will He condemn you for your mistakes and omissions," he stressed, "but will have mercy on you, as a merciful and lover of mankind, for your love towards Him and for your love also to the least of His brethren".

In closing, he stated with conviction that the new Priest, Fr Panteleimon has received many gifts from God and has the requirements and conditions needed to serve the Church and man, and lead him to salvation. "I am sure that you will think serve our Church successfully and spiritually and you will appear worthy of the demands of the times and the expectations of your Shepherd and Archbishop," he concluded.

vema.com.au