08/02/2022

PM attends service for new parliamentary year in at Canberra’s St Nicholas church



Prime Minister Scott Morrison attended the ecumenical service before the start of the new Parliamentary year that was held on Tuesday at the Greek Orthodox Church of St Nicholas in Canberra. The event was also attended by Archbishop Makarios of Australia.

In his speech at St Nicholas, Mr Morrison thanked Archbishop Makarios who he and his wife Jenny knew well and added that it was his first to an Orthodox Church.
“First time we’ve done that, and it reminded me, as we consider some of the big issues of today and the Parliamentary year, that people from all around the world have come to our country. And they’ve so often come from many different faiths and many different backgrounds. They’ve come from places where they were discriminated against for that faith and for that belief,” Mr Morrison said.

Referring to the Religious Discrimination Bill that is due to come before Parliament, the prime minister said: “On this day, it’s important that we remember that for so many Australians – it doesn’t matter whether you’re Hindu, whether you’re Sikh, whether you’re Christian, whether you’re Muslim, whether you’re Jewish, whether

you choose to have no religious faith at all – that is also important to protect this country because we sing, ‘Australians all one and free’.

“And I hope that means something today as we gather together and we seek to put in place the opportunity for those who wish to live their religion here in this country and live their faith, which has such an important contribution to our country and always has – binding Australia together, not forcing it apart. This is why I made that pledge before the last election, and that is why I continue to stand very strongly on this point,” Mr Morrison said.

He said Parliament would be faced with big issues. The parliamentary year would begin by “acknowledging the terrible events that have taken place in our own Parliament, and that began an important conversation … about how Australia can be better when it comes particularly to the treatment of women in our workplaces, in our society and in our lives”.

Making the right choices towards achieving and maintaining a strong economy, keeping Australians safe and the borders secure and ensuring Australians great together rather than apart were some of the key issues in the year ahead.



“All of this will be the issues that I’m sure will weigh heavily on the minds of Australians this year as we work through to when the election is held,” he said
Answering media questions about the Religious Discrimination Bill, the prime minister said that he was completely committed to the bill which he said was an important issue to millions of Australians.

“We were very clear that this was a bill that we wanted to see passed, so it will go

to the Parliament. ”

Asked whether religious schools would be able to expel trans students under proposed amendments to the Sex Discrimination Act, Mr Morrison said that the bill ‘does not provide for that’.

“You’re referring to an existing law that was introduced by the Labor Shadow Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus. That is the Dreyfus law that you’re referring to. He put that in place. This bill does not seek to endorse that arrangement. That is an existing law. What we are dealing with here today are not those matters”, he said.

“This bill does not seek to endorse that arrangement. That is an existing law. What we are dealing with here today are not those matters. They are going through a process with the Australian Law Reform Commission. ...What we’re dealing with today is discrimination against people for their religious belief and faith,” the Prime Minister said.

neoskosmos.com