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Archbishop Makarios of Australia to the new Hieromonk: “Empty your heart of yourself to fit the other person”



The Holy Monastery of St. John of the Mountain in Forrestfield, Perth, acquired its own monk, who will cover the liturgical needs of the brotherhood.

During his pastoral visit to the capital of Western Australia, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia successively ordained to the Deaconate and to the Priesthood the Abbot of the Brotherhood, Father Prodromos Souris, who took the name Makarios.

Present at this great joy of the local Church and especially of the Holy Monastery of Saint John of the Mountain was the Archiepiscopal Vicar of Perth, His Grace Bishop Elpidios of Kyanea, as well as the two immediate predecessors of Fr. Makarios (former abbots of the Holy Monastery), namely His Grace Bishop Emilianos of Meloa and the Very Rev. Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Throne Father Ieronymos, as well as the mother and the siblings of Father Makarios, the members of the brotherhood, the novice monks, clergy and many pilgrims.

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios proudly referred to the great spiritual role that the Holy Monastery of Saint John of the Mountain plays in Western Australia, talking about “a spiritual,” twelve-walled “city, which stands high on the hill of hope of Forrestfield in Perth” and it is “a bronze pillar of virtue, a teaching of piety, a greenhouse of love and a fragrant flower-garden of goodness.”

“As its responsible guardian and gardener, take care never to open the ‘Kerkoporta’ (hidden door) of carelessness so that the invading devil can enter from there and poison your holy work, sowing weeds, cultivating typhoons or delusions in any way”, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios stressed to Fr. Makarios.

At the same time, the Archbishop addressed spiritual instructions and advice to the ordinand. Referring, among others, to the venerable person of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, referred to His visit to a Monastery of Crete twenty years ago, where His All-Holiness opened his heart to the brotherhood there and revealed the inner experience of his soul saying: “I never forget that I am primarily a monk, and my soul and body from youth were dedicated as a whole fruit to the Lord and the Mother Church.”

With the paternal exhortation to keep as a sacred legacy the word and the example of the Ecumenical Patriarch, His Eminence pointed out to Fr. Makarios: “Never forget that you are a monk, completely dedicated to Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church. For us monastics the day of our monastic establishment is our day of birth, because that very day we received the second baptism “.

Elsewhere, His Eminence acknowledged that “being a monk and at the same time a clergyman reflects today what in the Orthodox spiritual experience of the fathers is characterised as “joyful-sorrow “. “This Joyful-sorrow combines the taste of pain with the greatness of emptying of ones self sacrificially”, His Eminence explained, and urged the new hieromonk to wholeheartedly take responsibility for the consolation and supplications to the afflicted man, which, as His Eminence pointed out to him, is inextricably linked with the joy of offering ones self and loving communion.

Extensive was the reference of the Archbishop of Australia to the great responsibility that comes from accepting the gift of the priesthood. “The priesthood is a self-emptying and an offering, it is extroversion, a turning outwards, it is a cross and humiliation,” he stressed. Having listed some of the characteristics of introversion, which can undermine the priesthood, His Eminence urged Father Makarios to perform his ministry humbly and politely, and to work with joy and not

with misery and sorrow.

He also reminded Father Makarios that Saint Seraphim of Sarof, every time he met a fellow brother, he would exclaim: “Christ is Risen, my joy!”. “This spirit-driven joy of the divine desire of the brother and communication is at the opposite end of the spectrum of euphoric atomic centrism, His Eminence stressed and concluded by urging Father Makarios, “To offer this joy with your ministry to today’s man who is sad or rather depressed and in need of spiritual and heart-felt consolation.



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