

## The Funeral Service of the Late Protopresbyter George Athanasiadis in Melbourne



image not found or type unknown

On Wednesday, 8 March 2023, at the Church of Saint Spyridon in Clayton, Melbourne, the Funeral Service of the Late Protopresbyter George Athanasiadis took place, officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia.

Present also for the funeral service were, Metropolitan Ezekiel of Dervis, Their Graces, Bishop Kyriakos of Sozopolis, Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta, and from the Patriarchate of Alexandria, His Grace Bishop Prodromos of Toliara and South Madagascar, as well as many clergymen from the State of Victoria, relatives of the late clergyman and many parishioners of Saint Spyridon, who emotionally said goodbye to their dear priest, praying for the repose of his soul. His Eminence Makarios, during the eulogy he delivered, expressed the belief that indeed the blessed cleric will be accepted into the choir of the saints and the righteous. "Father George, a blessed person, struggled for many years in the Church to preach Christ and give people salvation", he underlined and continued: "Of course, we all know that there were some trials in the life of the late Father George.

But you see that God blessed his journey so much, that at this moment he is leaving this present life blessed and praising God, in the presence of all the local clergy and all of you, people who loved Father George so much and accepted his advice, especially his last exhortation and advice, that you should all come into the body of the canonical Church." Recalling, moreover, a word of St. John Chrysostom, that the schism within the Church, not even the blood of martyrdom can wash it away, the Archbishop pointed out that the late Father George "may have passed his adventure, despite this never forget that what ultimately saves us is the Church. That we were called to be saved by the Church, not to save the Church." His Eminence noted, in fact, that there have also been Saints of our Church, who, for a certain period of time, had stopped commemorating the Ecumenical Patriarch.

But, afterwards, they came to their senses and re-joined the body of the canonical Church, realising that the connection with the respective canonical Bishop or Archbishop contributes to sanctification according to the holy canons, while, on the

contrary, schism contributes to demonisation. Given these, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios assured that Father George “leaves this life, having the seal of holiness”. “Because he sealed his life ecclesiastically and not egocentrically. And the end of his life shows that he did not work for himself, but worked for the Church. The end of his life shows that he did not work for his own benefit and personal glory, but worked for the glory of Christ”, His Eminence added.

Finally, Archbishop Makarios read with emotion a letter sent to him by the late cleric a few days before his passing away. It is a letter which, both in its content and in its style, highlights the ecclesiastical ethos of Father George. Therefore, through this letter he informed his Shepherd about the deterioration of his health, which no longer allowed him to exercise, as his conscience dictated, the duties of the Parish Priest of the Church of Saint Spyridon.

And he asked His Eminence to take the necessary actions for his succession. With the request, at the same time, to allow him to continue to minister, depending on his strength, either at the Church of Saint Spyridon or in any other church that the Archbishop would indicate to him, without any monetary or other remuneration. Concluding the reading of the letter, His Eminence emphasised that “such clerics should minister to our Church” and added emphatically that the late Father George “may at some point have been outside the Church, but he never betrayed it”.

In closing, His Eminence conveyed the condolences of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Presbytera and the daughter of the late Father George, as well as to his other relatives, to the President Mr. Athanasios Mandalos and to all the members of the Parish – Community of Saint Spyridon, Clayton.

After the funeral service, the burial of the late Father George followed at the Northern Memorial Park cemetery, which was performed, on behalf of the Archbishop, by His Grace Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta.



[vema.com.au](http://vema.com.au)