

Message of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia on the occasion of the feast of the 25th March



Venerable brother fellow Bishops and beloved children,

Feelings of spiritual reverence and national pride flood our hearts today, as we bow our knees before the Mother of God and, at the same time before our brave ancestors. We bow down with respect and gratitude to the Virgin Mary” Full of Grace”, who freed the human race from sin, and to the Heroes of the Revolution of 1821, who with their struggle and sacrifice freed the Greek nation from centuries of slavery.

In accepting the message of Archangel Gabriel, the Theotokos cooperated in God’s plan for humanity’s salvation. With her free will, she agreed to conceive the God-Man in her womb – not, however, without a sense of concern and reservation. The concern she held stemmed from her human nature. Nonetheless, due to her deep and genuine faith in God, she finally obeyed His will, refusing to give in to the reservations emanating from human nature. For this redemptive and salvific decision, she is glorified today and will be glorified for all ages as the holiest person

of humanity.

Similarly, our ancestors who resolved to revolt and determined to shed their blood for the sake of freedom, overcame their formidable internal reservations, hesitations and concerns. Moreover, their human nature and worldly logic far from encouraged their intent to rebel that would see them face a disproportionately strong, numerically large, and organised army. And yet, with deep faith in God and love for country, they overcame their personal will and the resistance of their own human nature. They dared to take a leap of faith thus granting the following generations of Greeks the supreme virtue of freedom. For this reason, they passed into the “Pantheon” of the glorious heroes of our country, and Hellenes all over the world honour them today and will continue to do so, forever.

Dearly beloved friends,

If there is a lesson to be learnt from these two great events that we celebrate today – the Annunciation of the Theotokos and our National Regeneration, it is that securing the virtue of freedom -whether on an individual, national or global level - presupposes that we are equipped not so much with material means, as much as, primarily, spiritual ones. It presupposes that we have deep faith, values and ideals with which we will be able to shake off primarily our inner shackles: the reservations, hesitations and the worldly logic, which drives us to despair.

A person who believes in God and has the values and ideals of our ancestors deeply rooted in their soul, undoubtedly, has an inner strength that allows them to go the extra mile and be ready to defend personal and collective freedom and salvation. We ought to imitate this model of the free person as well as cultivate it in the younger generations.

With these thoughts, I wish everyone many blessed years of freedom!

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