

## **Archbishop Makarios of Australia visits the Greek Orthodox Faithful of the regional city of Albury**



The regional city of Albury, which is located on the border of the States of New South Wales and Victoria, was visited on Sunday, 18 June 2023, by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia. With great emotion and respect, His Eminence crossed through the threshold of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Archangels and officiated at the Matins Service, and presided over the Sunday Divine Liturgy. It was his first visit to the Greek Orthodox community of Albury, hence he received an enthusiastic welcome from the Greeks living in this regional town, including many young children who brightened the eucharistic gathering with their presence.

On behalf of the Parish – Community, the Archbishop was addressed with heartfelt words of welcome by His Grace Bishop Bartholomew of Charioupolis. His Grace Bishop Bartholomew referred to the history of the Greek Orthodox community of Albury, as well as of the Holy Church of the Holy Archangels, which was founded in 1964 by the late Archbishop Ezekiel of Australia. His Grace pointed out that the Greek Orthodox of this city are distinguished for their piety, while he conveyed everyone's thanks for His Eminence's visit to their city, and their wishes for his long and blessed pastorate.

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, taking lead from the reference offered by His Grace Bishop Bartholomew, referring to the day of His arrival at Sydney International airport, exactly four years ago, recalled to his memory those infinitely moving moments of June 18, 2019, when he arrived in a place virtually unknown to him, met persons he had never met before in his life and began to walk an unknown path that he had never imagined he would follow.

"I praise God because, trying to make an account of these four years", he pointed out full of emotion, "the words of Saint John Chrysostom come to my mind who advised his disciples to love people before they get to know them". "That was the feeling I had before I got to Australia," he added, "but it's also the feeling I still have to this day." His Eminence pointed out that despite the difficulties and trials,

“at the end of the day I feel that I love this nation and I love these people, and that this love is so strong that there will be no power to break it.”



This loving disposition of His Eminence is addressed, without limitations and exceptions, to all the people of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, something which he wanted to make clear before the Greek Orthodox flock of the Albury community. “I came to tell you that you have your priest, you have a Bishop, you have an Archbishop, all who will not abandon you,” he noted and added: “We have not forgotten you. You are not alone, we are all in this together. And that is why you have your priest, to fulfill the sacramental needs of your congregation, but also to be present at any time and moment, to listen to your problems and provide solutions or help to the difficulties you face every day”.

Concluding his speech, His Eminence expressed his paternal satisfaction at the fact that the Greek Orthodox community of Albury has embraced with much love both His Grace Bishop Bartholomew of Charioupolis, Archiepiscopal Vicar of Canberra, who has the Albury region under his commission, as well as Fr. Agathangelos Masteas, who was appointed to serve the local Parish-Community and the corresponding Parish-Community in the city of Wagga Wagga. “In this way, we are not only building a bridge that connects the region here with the headquarters of our Holy Archdiocese in Sydney,” he pointed out, “but we are doing something more important, we are building the future of young children.” “And this is the main thing that our Archdiocese seeks to do,” he added, “because we respect the

old generations, but we never forget that we should move forward and invest in the young children, who are our present and our future.”

It is noted that present also at the Divine Liturgy were the Mayor of the city, Ms. Kylie King, who was waiting for the Archbishop at the entrance of the church, as



Ms. Kylie King, the Mayor of the City of Albany, the Parish -



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