

Message of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios on World Refugee Day



Wars, civil conflicts, persecution, social inequality, economic crisis and, faith in Christ, have forced tens of millions of our fellow human beings to leave their homes.

Unfortunately, although we often complacently discover that we as humanity have made significant progress compared to past epochs, noting the significantly important scientific and biotechnological achievements at the forefront, yet the refugee phenomenon is not only not shrinking, but continues to swell year by year. The data presented by the competent international organisations is relentless and it forces us to reflect on the destruction that has taken place.

As Orthodox Christians we believe in the sanctity of the human person, of every person, without discrimination and exceptions. And this faith of ours, which is based on the teachings of the holy Gospel, we have a duty to defend in every circumstance, with every suitable means. Let us then affirm our faith before the powers of the earth, who make the crucial decisions, but also let us share the pain and help our fellow human beings according to our strength who are being tried and tested, having been displaced against their will. Otherwise, we slowly but surely accept our own “displacement” from the core of the principles of our Orthodox faith, in which love, brotherhood and justice are found.

The Christ-loving plenitude of our Holy Archdiocese, having unshakable faith in the God of Love and respect for our ancestors who in the recent past experienced the horrors of being uprooted and becoming refugees, I am convinced that they are not indifferent to the ongoing drama of refugees and do not compromise with the devaluing of human life. I ask everyone not to hesitate to raise their voices to defend justice and humanity, no matter how far away they think Syria, Ukraine, Eritrea, the Mediterranean Sea and various other hotspots around the world are, that “give birth” to refugees and “lead” to unspeakable tragedies.

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