

Opening of the 12th Clergy-Laity Congress of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia: “We are ready for the future”, everyone shouted together!



“We are ready for the future!” Their determination to move forward, united, alongside their Shepherd, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia, for the glory of Christ and the Church and for the advancement of Hellenism on the fifth continent, was chanted “with one mouth and one heart” by the participants of the 12th Clergy-Laity Congress of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, at the start of its proceedings in Sydney, Monday, 25 September.

More than 650 community representatives (including clerics) from across Australia responded to the invitation of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, a historically unprecedented number and almost three times that of the 11th Clergy-Laity Congress which was held in 2013.

Visibly moved by the number of participants, in His opening address the Archbishop described the proceedings as a “great and historic day” for the Orthodox Church here in Australia. Whilst giving thanks to God for allowing Him to call a Clergy-Laity Congress for the first time, and after making mention with gratefulness to all His predecessors, with solidarity His Eminence promised that the connection which the Clergy-Laity Congress’ represents will dynamically be brought back to the foreground with the Congress’ again to take place every four years, as had been decided in the past. He underlined “I have the deepest conviction that this link between us is both useful and necessary for the life of the Church, because the unity and like-mindedness of the Ecclesiastical Body is highlighted and any thoughts and opinions of dissociation between the Clergy and People is destroyed”.



Afterwards, His Eminence welcomed the official guests from abroad, first of all, His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyatira and Great Britain who as representative of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, performed the Commencement Service – Agiasmos at the beginning of the Clergy-Laity Congress and addressed the participants with a warm greeting. The screening of the Ecumenical Patriarch’s message stirred with warmth the emotions of the people. The Archbishop referred to the person of His All-Holiness with thanksgiving for the love and trust with which he embraces the Holy Archdiocese of Australia and Him personally. He beseeched Archbishop Nikitas to convey with filial affection the love and gratitude of the local Church, as well as His own unwavering devotion to the Ecumenical Throne and to

the all respected Ecumenical Patriarch.

In addition to the Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain, the Clergy-Laity Congress of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia is honoured with the presence and participation of the visiting Hierarchs from Greece: His Eminence Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Messenia, His Eminence Metropolitan Athenagoras of Ilion, Acharnes and Petroupolis, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of Petra and Cherronesos and His Eminence Metropolitan Prodromos of Rethymnos and Avlopotamos. After thanking everyone for their effort and for making the long journey to Sydney, His Eminence addressed the participants (clergy and laity) from across Australia saying with emphasis, “I welcome you all with a lot of love and I invite you to gather in unity and with a spirit of cooperation”.



It is noted that the opening session of the Clergy-Laity Congress, which has as its theme “Walk Within the Church” and is hosted at the College of Saint Spyridon in Sydney, was attended by their Graces Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, Bishop Emilianos of Meloa, Bishop Silouan of Sinope, Bishop Kyriakos of Sozopolis, Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia, Bishop Evmenios of Kerasounta, Bishop Bartholomew of Charioupolis, and the Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Mr Yannis Mallikourtis. The Congress, which will last until Wednesday, 27 September, also sees the participation of Priests, Deacons, Monks and Nuns of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, the Presidents and members of the Boards of Directors, the Charitable Brotherhoods of the Parishes and Communities, the Presidents and representatives

of the holy Foundations of the local Church, as well as the Sub-Dean Assoc. Prof. [Name] [Title] [Institution] [Address] [City] [Country] [Phone] [Email] [Website] [Social Media] [Logo] [Text]





