

Archbishop Makarios of Australia: “Let us never close our hearts to those who need us”



On Tuesday evening, 2 January 2024, in the joyful atmosphere of the Holy Twelve days of Christmas, the official service of the cutting the Vasilopita of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia was held at the Cathedral of the Annunciation of Our Lady in Sydney.

His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia blessed and cut the traditional Vasilopita, in the presence of His Eminence Metropolitan Seraphim of Sevasteia, Their Graces, Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia and Bishop Bartholomew of Charioupolis, clergy of the Holy Archdiocese and members of the Archdiocesan Council, the Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Mr. Yannis Mallikourtis, and many more lay people.

At the beginning of the service, following the Archbishop's request, Metropolitan Seraphim and Consul General Mr. Yannis Mallikourtis addressed short greetings, offering their wishes for the new year and messages about the challenges that accompany it.

Then, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, performing and describing step by step the traditional custom of cutting the Vasilopita, referred more extensively to the

pieces dedicated to the Church and the poor. “When we say Church, we don’t only mean the spiritual relationship,” he emphasised while cutting the fourth piece of the Vasilopita, and explained: “In Orthodox Canon Law there is no Orthodox Church without an administrative body.

Therefore, if you hear some people talking about a Church, which has no Patriarch, no Archbishop, no Bishops, no priests, nor having all these administrative structures which the Fathers of our Church have defined spiritually and synodically, then this is another Church and another Orthodoxy.

But when we refer to the Orthodox Church, we begin from our Patriarch who is the most sacred and all-respected person and the first of the Orthodox priesthood. When we say Church, we bring to mind our Ecumenical Patriarchate... And of course, within the Church we definitely include our Holy Archdiocese, which is the God-founded organisation that unites us all here in Australia, it blesses and sanctifies us”.



As he took out the portion for the poor from the Vasilopita, the Archbishop clarified that, although with this specific word we usually mean our fellow human beings who are deprived of money and material goods, it nevertheless also involves a spiritual dimension. He focused on the phenomenon of loneliness, noting among other things: “Poor is the person who lives alone, without any companionship. Poor is the person who seeks a smile. Poor is the person who wants to say something but has no one to listen to them.” His Eminence pointed out that there are many forms of poverty, material and spiritual, and concluded with the paternal exhortation: “We must never close our hearts to those who need us.”

The distribution of the pieces of Vasilopita followed, while the coin was found by Mr. Nicholas Psychogios. His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia wished to all
owed with









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