

ARCHBISHOP'S ADDRESS
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL DINNER
TO CELEBRATE THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF ST ANDREW'S GREEK ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
28TH FEBRUARY 2016
SYDNEY

Distinguished guests:

Mr Peter King, President of the Sydney College of Divinity, and Mrs King
Professor Diane Speed, Dean and CEO of the Sydney College of Divinity
Consul General for Sydney, Dr Stavros Kyrimis

My assistant bishops:

Bishop Ezekiel of Derbe
Bishop Seraphim of Apollonias
Bishop Iakovos of Miletopolis

Mr Michael Diamond and Mr Stan Palassis,
Great benefactors and friends of the College,
Dr Theo Penklis, President of the St Andrew's Brotherhood, and Mrs Marianne Penklis,
Reverend Fathers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends all.

I extend a very warm welcome to all of you here tonight and I thank you for coming to celebrate together the thirtieth anniversary of our Theological College.

We have received apologies from the Reverend Professor Gerard Kelly, Principal of the Catholic Institute of Sydney, as well as our fellow esteemed member of faculty, Dr Guy Freeland.

The fact that the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia was enabled to establish - virtually out of nothing - its own Theological College, with the moral support of certain honorable men and women of other Christian Churches and Denominations, is literally a miracle of divine providence.

As a consequence, instead of boasting - even if silently - we should rather "confess the grace" while reminding ourselves and fellow Christians that St Andrew's Theological College aims to cultivate the spiritual treasures of the first millennium, on the foundations of which all divided Christians of today are discovering their common roots together with their brotherhood and identity in Christ.

In this task, it would be remiss of us if we did not make special mention of the Sydney College of Divinity whose assistance and direction throughout the years has been invaluable. This has enabled us not only to award students with fully accredited degrees in theology at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, but also created a wonderful spirit of true friendship with other Colleges of other Christian Churches.

St Andrew's is truly grateful.

As we celebrate tonight our thirtieth anniversary, I would also like to express our gratitude to the great benefactors of our Theological College: the late Sir Arthur George and Lady George, together with the family of the late Michael T. Paspalis represented here tonight by Mr Peter and Mrs Helene Coombes.

Indeed, it has been the support of all our faithful, whose contributions, both great and small, have enabled the Church to continue to enjoy the fruits of this institution within our Archdiocese and beyond.

A special thank you also to the restaurant of Mr Nick Manettas, and to Mrs Marianne Penklis for her tireless efforts, and all other members of the Organising Committee chaired by His Grace Bishop Seraphim.

I wish you all an enjoyable evening.

Thank you.