## ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE



## GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA Нера Архієпіскопи Аустраліас

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(translation from the original Greek - FSS)

To the Reverend Clergy and the honourable Administrative Committees of the Parish-Communities of our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese

## ENCYCLICAL

Dearly Beloved,

Further to our Encyclical of 28th May 2013, in relation to a law which the State proposes to vote upon with regard to Marriage between persons of the same gender, we write to you once again because the Federal Parliament is expected very soon to deal with the redefinition of the concept of Marriage.

You might appreciate, then, should such an Act be legalized, what destructive consequences this will have on the institution of Marriage, but also on the institution of the Family more generally.

As Orthodox Christians, therefore, we are obliged, once again, to express in the strongest possible terms, our objection to the enactment of such legislation, as this will assail the sacredness of the Sacrament of Marriage and the Family, as has been taught to us through the Ages by our Holy Faith and by the Fathers of the Church.

In the first instance, of course, our reaction must be through prayer to God. That is why the period of the August Fast for the Dormition of our Lady, which is about to commence, is the most appropriate time to beseech the Theotokos, of whom we ask, as "a fervent advocate and invincible battlement, fountain of mercy and sheltering retreat for the world", to protect the People from such an aberration.

QUEENSLAND - NEW GUINEA 36 Browning Street South Brisbane, QLD 4101

We are also called upon to protest by gathering signatures, requesting the defeat of the proposed legislation. Our protest may be expressed by signing the relevant petitions or via the online internet page of the Archdiocese (marriage.greekorthodox.org.au). You shall receive detailed instruction from our Reverend Clergy.

Hopeful that none of us will show indifference to such an important issue, I thank you for your cooperation in this matter and pray that the abundant blessings of God be upon you all during this blessed period of the Sacred August Fast.

Sydney, 17th July 2015

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With fervent fatherly prayers

Archbishop STYLTANOS

Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia

PS – To be read in the Churches at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on the Sundays of 26th July, 2nd August and 9th August.