



Gladys Berejiklian

Premier of NSW

Geoff Lee

Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education

Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans

MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, 13 March 2021

**Editor's note: Link to photos below (available Sunday, 14 March)*

SYRIAN PRIEST AWARDED TOP HONOURS BY NSW PREMIER

Syrian Australian priest, Father Fadi Nemme, who has dedicated his life to serving Arabic speaking communities, has been awarded top honours at the 2021 Premier's Harmony Dinner.

This annual event is a celebration of the diverse cultures, languages and religions of all citizens in NSW. A highlight of the evening is the awarding of the Premier's Multicultural Community Medals that recognise outstanding achievements.

This year's recipient of the prestigious Barker Henley Stepan Kerkyasharian AO Community Harmony Medal was awarded to Father Fadi Nemme of the Antiochian Orthodox Church.

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian said all the award winners have made significant contributions to the community, especially over the last year through the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I congratulate all of tonight's medal recipients for their outstanding service and dedication," Ms Berejiklian said.

"I especially want to recognise the sacrifices you have made over the past year, and thank you for the support you have provided to vulnerable members of our community."

Minister for Multiculturalism Geoff Lee congratulated Father Fadi on his outstanding service to the community, particularly in support of newly arrived refugees and migrants.

"Father Fadi is a devoted community leader who has dedicated himself to spiritual and community service since arriving in Australia 25 years ago," Mr Lee said.

"He has worked tirelessly over the decades to promote social cohesion, supporting people of all faiths in the Bankstown area."

Member for Miranda Eleni Petinos praised Father Fadi for his work during the coronavirus pandemic.

“Due to Father Fadi’s leadership, the Church was quick to respond to support the most vulnerable in our community affected by the pandemic with emergency food parcels and relief,” Ms Petinos said.

Father Fadi said he was delighted to be recognised by the NSW Government.

“This medal means a lot to me and my community. This acknowledgement of my service over many years by the NSW Government is amazing,” Fr Fadi said.

“Harmony for me is working across all faiths and backgrounds to promote our common ground and what unites us all as a community. I am honoured to be the recipient of this medal.”

For more information about the Premier’s Multicultural Community Medals and Multicultural Honour Roll see: <http://multicultural.nsw.gov.au>

MEDIA: Harriet Glenn | Premier | 0409 522 869
Sherilee Hemers | Minister Lee | 0437 884 068

***Photos from the event will be available at this link from 9am Sunday, 14 March:**
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/fyg1101v8mnhscn/AABVND6OucrdXZP1i1J0Ijhra?dl=0>

The full list of 2021 Premier’s Multicultural Community Medals recipients include:

- **Australian National Maritime Arts and Culture Medal** - Ghada Daher-Elmowy
- **ADAPS Corporate Business Excellence Medal** - Navitas English
- **Welcoming Cities Local Government Business Excellence Medal** - Tamworth Regional Council
- **B1 Group Not for Profit Business Excellence Medal** - Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS)
- **All Graduates Interpreting and Translating Language Services Medal** - Prof Rifaat Ebied
- **SBS Lifetime Community Service Medal** - Abba Tohamy Kadous
- **Settlement Services International NSW Human Rights Medal** - Dr Roger Gurr
- **Commbank Regional Unity Medal** - Miza Torlakovic
- **Village Plaza Sports Medal** - Bevan Stuart Calvert
- **Stepan Kerkyasharian AO Community Harmony Medal** - Rev Fr Fadi Nemme
Highly commended - International Student Water Safety Video
- **National Rugby League Youth Medal** - Angelica Ojinnaka

Inductees to the Premier’s Multicultural Honour Roll include:

- The late Maria Cheng
- The late John Homeh
- The late Dr Amarjit Singh More OAM