

25th ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BEATITUDE'S ELECTION AND ORDINATION AS BISHOP OF CYRENE

On 14th June 2015, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, conducted the Divine Liturgy alone, as he does on this day, at the Patriarchal Church of St Savvas the Sanctified in Alexandria, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of his election and ordination as Bishop of Cyrene (14th and 17th June respectively).

During the Great Entrance of the Precious Gifts, as well as during his homily, with great emotion he commemorated his late Predecessor, spiritual father, teacher and benefactor, Patriarch Parthenios III, by whose hand he received hierarchy, as well as his con-celebrants at the time, the late Hierarchs Barnabas of Pilousion, Chrysostomos of Zimbabwe, Irenaios of Carthage, Nektarios of Leros and Solomon of the Thebaid, saying that the warmth he felt on his head during his ordination, from the hand of the late Patriarch Parthenios, 25 years ago, has not left him ever!

The Venerable Primate of the Throne of St Mark was addressed by the Very Reverend Archimandrite Agathonikos Nikolaides, Dean of the Patriarchal Academy of St Athanasios, who said: "...Perhaps on that day no one had realized that Patriarch Parthenios was ordaining his future Successor. However the powerful breath of the Paraclete which breathed that day, made you a sacred and most capacitive vessel for the Church of Alexandria, "to carry the name of the Lord before Gentiles and kings" (Acts 9:15). Just like that, on that day 25 years ago, your brilliant journey began; the journey of Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, Theodoros II, from Cyrene, Cameroon and Zimbabwe. And in these 25 years, in which as Bishop and thereafter as Patriarch you have served the Church, your many contributory efforts are beyond the capability of the speaker to number them and are perhaps outside of the present purpose of the speech".

At another point in the address, the speaker said "...I believe that the inexhaustible source from which you draw inspiration and energy, apart from prayer, is your humility. You, the Pope and Patriarch, thirteenth of the Apostles and Judge of the Universe, have so much humility that you surprise those who hear you. It is not only once that I have heard you say of yourself that you are clay! Or, when you are praying to your beloved Virgin, to entreat and to say "I want nothing, just a little corner in Paradise where we can all be together!", indicating in those simple words the high level of experiential Theology, which you have acquired over so many years through divine enlightenment, that "there is no individual salvation, for in the Church we are all one!"

After the end of the Divine Liturgy a festive reception was held in the guest hall of the Holy Monastery in honour of His Beatitude, by the Lyceum of Greek Ladies of Alexandria.

Present at the worship gathering were His Grace Meletios Bishop of Naukratis, Hegumen of the Patriarchal Holy Monastery of St Savvas of Alexandria, the representative of the Consul General of Greece in Alexandria Mr. Nikolaos Nanis, the Chairman of the Naval Club of the Great City Mr. Edmond Kasimatis, the Chairlady of the Scientific Society "Ptolemy I" Dr Lilika Thlivitou and faithful Greeks of the community.