

## **BRILLIANT CENTENARY OF THE HOLY CHURCH OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS HELIOPOLIS, CAIRO**

On Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th October 2016, the 100th anniversary from the day of the inauguration of the Holy Church of the Most Holy Theotokos in Heliopolis, Cairo, which was inaugurated in 1916 by Nektarios, Metropolitan of Memphis, during the Patriarchal tenure of Patriarch Fotios of Alexandria, was celebrated with great pomp.

His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, officiated during the Great Patriarchal Vespers, which was conducted with great pomp on Saturday evening in the above-named celebrating church, in the presence of many faithful, after the end of which a musical evening followed, including Classical and Arabic music.

On the day of the Feast, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, officiated during Matins and conducted the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy, concelebrated by Their Eminences Nicholas of Ermopolis, Nikodimos of Memphis, Niphon of Pilousion and His Grace Meletios Bishop of Naucratis, the Exarch of the Moscow Patriarchate Protopresbyter Viktor Kulanga, and in the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Cairo Mrs. Lambrini Komini, the charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of Cyprus, the Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Cairo Mr. Christos Kavalis, the Chairman of the Arabic speaking Community of Cairo Mr. Robert Hosny, the Great Benefactress of the Church Mrs. Stella Kyriazi and representatives of the Societies and cultural institutions of the Egyptian capital.

In his inspired address His Beatitude donated to the celebrating Church a pair of silver candle sticks, praying that the light of their candles will never be extinguished, but will spread joy and hope to the souls of the Orthodox Christians and will grant every good thing in their lives. With particular emotion he thanked the local Metropolitan Nikodimos of Memphis for his tireless efforts for the beautification of the Church and the Dean of the Holy Church Archimandrite Michael Zaky for his concern for the youth of Cairo, and gave him a gold-embroidered gnevel (epigonatio).

At the conclusion of his address, His Beatitude awarded His Eminence Nikodimos Metropolitan of Memphis the medal of the Supreme Commander of St Savvas the Sanctified on the completion of ten years since his ordination as Bishop, giving him also a silver pectoral cross. Tearfully addressing His Eminence the Metropolitan of Memphis, His Beatitude showed his hands, the same hands which he placed on his head on the day of his ordination and which, as he said characteristically, "my son, Nikodimos, you did not betray them even, you have never disappointed my paternal heart, you appeared worthy of the confidence I showed you, you showed gratitude and devotion as a son to a father and with your honesty, sincerity and selflessness, you never succumbed to any temptation to betray my trust in the responsible office as Patriarchal Vicar of Cairo to which I appointed you. Which is why today these hands give you the worthy praise of the Church of the Alexandrenes, because you stood as a devoted child beside me, not only as a your Patriarch, but also during the difficult years of our mutual ministry in the Mission in Zimbabwe".

His Eminence Nikodimos Metropolitan of Memphis as well as the Dean of the Church Fr. Michael and the whole congregation emotionally thanked His Beatitude for his warm words and his love, singing the polychronion of the patriarch and praying that God will secure His Church, while the entire Church Council together with the Metropolitan donated to His Beatitude a precious Patriarchal pectoral cross in

commemoration of the significant event.

After the end of the Divine Liturgy a reception was hosted together with an official lunch by the Church Council of the celebrating Church.