

CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY MEMORY OF ST KYRILLOS LOUKAREOS IN ALEXANDRIA – CONSECRATION OF AN ARCHIMANDRITE BY HIS BEATITUDE

On 27th June 2011, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, officiated during the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Patriarchal Church of St Savvas the Sanctified in Alexandria on the occasion of the commemoration of St Kyrillos Loukareos, Patriarch of Alexandria (1601-1620) who then became Ecumenical Patriarch.

St Kyrillos Loukareos was born in Handaka (Heraklion) in Crete in 1572, was tonsured a monk in the holy Monastery of Angarathou and was a brilliant student in Venice and in Padua. When he was elected as Patriarch of Alexandria, aged 30, succeeding Meletios Pegas, he already had a significant path in supporting Orthodoxy against proselytising the Jesuits in the East.

As Patriarch of Alexandria he did many works of renovation, collected money from Orthodox countries to pay for the debts of the Patriarchate, established and renovated churches, cured the suffering, and solved problems of the Churches in Sinai and Cyprus, where he travelled personally. With the help of the next Patriarch Gerasimos Spartaliotis, he faced the problems which were caused by the epidemic of 1616 and the persecutions by the Turks.

In 1620, Patriarch Timotheos II of Constantinople fell asleep in the Lord and the Synod elected as Ecumenical Patriarch *"Kyrillos who is known for his virtue and wisdom"*. Loukaris was defrocked five times from the Ecumenical Throne and re-established. In 1627 he bought a printing shop, where, aiming at enlightening the People, he published useful teaching texts as well as anti-papal articles, which intensified envy and enmity. The printing shop was destroyed and the Patriarch was saved by the intervention of the Belgian Ambassador, who hid him in his house.

In 1637 the Jesuits, who could not tolerate him, slandered him to the Sultan saying that he was inciting the Greeks. He was arrested and imprisoned at the Laimokopias fort where he was strangled on 27th June 1638. His body was thrown into the sea where it was found by fishermen who buried it in Nicomedia.

In his work *"History of the Greek Nation"*, K. Papparigopoulos wrote: *"Never was the office of the Patriarch shown brighter than by Kyrillos Loukareos for 12 years of Patriarchal tenure through short intervals"*. Loukaris tried in many ways to elevate the Greek nation. IN his actions we see Hellenism coming into contact with the West. As Pegas did before him, Loukaris preached in the demotic language. He gave the prologue to the New Testament by Maximo Kallipoitis in the demotic language, stressing the importance of the translation of the Gospels for the enlightenment of the flock.

Four centuries later, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria, the ninth Hierarch of Cretan descent and fourth in order of the brotherhood of the Monastery of Angarathou to be elected Primate of the Alexandrian Church (Silvestor I 1569-1590, Meletios I Pegas 1590-1601, Kyrillos II Loukareos 1601-1621 and Theodoros II 2004 -), went ahead in the Synod with the numbering among the Saints of his Hieromartyr predecessor, bringing to Alexandria a piece of the relics of St Kyrillos from those kept at the Monastery of Angarathou.

Also, His Beatitude, prior to the end of the Divine Liturgy, consecrated the newly-ordained Hieromonk Fr Timothy Ntumba to the rank of

Archimandrite.