

## **CELEBRATIONS OF THE 1030 ANNIVERSARY OF THE BAPTISM OF RUS WITH THE PRESENCE OF THE ALEXANDRIAN PRIMATE**

On 26th July 2018, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, accompanied by his Eminence Damaskinos Metropolitan of Johannesburg and Pretoria and the Chief Secretary of the Holy Synod the Very Reverend Archimandrite Daniel Biazis, and following an invitation by His Most Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow, arrived at the Domodedovo Airport in Moscow, where he was welcomed by the Chairman of the Department of External Ecclesiastical Affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate, His Eminence Ilarion Metropolitan of Volokolamsk, His Eminence Metropolitan Arsenios of Istra, the Exarch of the Patriarchate of Alexandria in Moscow His Eminence Athanasios Metropolitan of Cyrene, the Secretary of Orthodox Relations of the Russian Patriarchate, the Very Reverend Igor Yakymchuk and representatives of the Moscow clergy.

Speaking to the reporters, the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Alexandria stated that he has been to Moscow many times and is happy to be back again, following the invitation from His Most Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, to participate in the festivities in honour of the 1030th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus by Prince St Vladimir.

Participation in the festivities he stressed, proves the friendship which has bound Alexandria and the Patriarchate of Moscow for centuries. "My presence here proves that we are together – we are close to His Holiness Kirill and the Russian Orthodox Church... We are all one Orthodox family and with the passing of time it becomes clear that Christianity is becoming stronger, and is able to pass on its message to the world. The Russian Orthodox Church has millions of faithful Christians. Together we form a single Orthodox family and we must remain united," he said.

On the following day, 27th July, His Beatitude the Patriarch and his entourage were welcomed by the Patriarch of Moscow at the Holy Danilov Monastery, where the two Primate had a friendly discussion.

On 28th July, the day of the Feast of the Holy Equal to the Apostles Prince Vladimir and the 1030th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus, following the outdoor Divine Liturgy in the Square of the Cathedral in Moscow, within the Kremlin, a liturgical religious procession took place through the Borovitskie gates, led by His Beatitude Patriarch of Alexandria and the Patriarch of Moscow. Present at the procession in the square of the Cathedral, was also His Excellency the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir Putin, with whom the Patriarch Theodoros, had an extensive conversation.

On the morning of 29th July His Beatitude the Patriarch, attended the service at the Dependency of the Patriarchate of Alexandria in Moscow, where he was welcomed by the Exarch His Eminence Athanasios Metropolitan of Cyrene.

On the afternoon of the same day, His Beatitude returned to the See at the Patriarchate in Alexandria, Egypt, on Egypt Air.

Watch the entire video of the celebrations here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/R3AHMeRdCKQ>