

CHRISTMAS PATRIARCHAL MESSAGE

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THEODOROS II

BY THE GRACE OF GOD POPE AND PATRIARCH
OF ALEXANDRIA, ALL EGYPT AND ALL AFRICA
TO THE ENTIRE FULLNESS
OF THE APOSTOLIC AND PATRIARCHAL THRONE OF ALEXANDRIA
GRACE AND MERCY AND PEACE BY OUR LORD AND GOD AND SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST, BORN IN BETHLEHEM

“You transformed my poverty through Your condescension,
You humbled Yourself and elevated my race”

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

Two thousand years ago, the Son and Word of God came out of Himself, while remaining who He was, in order to recruit and therapeutically transform deluded and weak Adam. He left the blessedness of the internal triune community, departed from the heavens and came to live on earth in order to restore the unity of mankind with God.

God was not content to order and it would be done but humbled Himself and became man Himself to teach a new way of life. A touchstone tool of verification to measure the authenticity of a life according to Christ is none other than love, which accepts and forgives everyone and everything and reaches even the sacrifice on the Cross. This love cannot be perceived as an unspecified emotional expression, not even as a conventional acceptance and hospitality of family and friends. It is perceived mainly as an acceptance and a transformation of others and of the unknown, on the standards of acceptance and transformation of mankind by Jesus Christ.

And if the Only-begotten Son of God came out of love to give meaning to our existence, today, thousands of our African brothers and sisters, oppressed by servile necessity are forced to change the place and the manner. Oppressed by situations, they travel the road of the refugee and immigration, their only luggage being hope for a better tomorrow. Some do not manage to reach the Promised Land and they lose their lives stateless. Yet even those who manage to enter the land of expectation, often experience worthlessness, rejection, rebuke, exploitation.

My dear brothers and sisters,

I am well aware that the phenomenon of immigration has taken on the nature of a flood tide, the extent of which frightens the receiving communities. It is time for these communities to change their attitude and to comprehend that human suffering will sooner or later break down whichever walls are built to deter the desperate immigrant. It is time to grasp that only if the problems of societies which trigger immigration are faced, only then will the stream of immigration be reversed.

Till then, though, and especially on this eve of the Nativity of the God-Man, let us not forget the words of the poet:

“I open the door tonight,
I hold aloft the lamp,
So that the distressed on earth can see
and come to find companionship...
Christ will come as a companion too.

Many years!

† THEODOROS II
Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa

In the Great City
of Alexandria
Christmas 2013