

FIRST DAY OF THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE HOLY SYNOD OF THE ALEXANDRIAN PATRIARCHATE

Today, the appointed meeting of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria met under the presidency of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch, in the Conference Hall of the Holy Synod.

Prior to the meeting, a Divine Liturgy was conducted in the Patriarchal Chapel of Ss Theodoroi. Around 9.30 am the Synodal deliberations began. His Beatitude declared the Synod open greeting all the Members of the Synod.

His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Paul of Memphis, the first in order of the Hierarchs of the Holy Synod, replied on behalf of the Metropolitan and Bishops.

His Beatitude then gave the Synod a lengthy briefing regarding the works undertaken over the past year over all departments of the ecclesiastical service of the Patriarchate (Conciliatory and official visits, missionary journeys, administrative and official issues, renovation works with special mention of the creation of the patriarchal Museum and Sacristy, the maintenance of historical manuscripts and ancient documents of the Patriarchal Library, the Patriarchal publications, the complete renovation of the historical Holy Monastery of St George in old Cairo, the structure and operation of the N.G.O. and others).

In expressing the pleasure of the Church of the Apostle Mark on the completion of ten fruitful years of hierarchy, His Beatitude awarded the honourable distinction of the Cross of the Order of St Savvas with a Star to their Eminences Theophylaktos of Tripoli, Sergios of Good Hope, Alexios of Carthage, Ieronymos of Mwanza, Kallinikos of Pelousion and to His Grace Athansios of Cyrene, Exarch of the Ancient Patriarchate in the Church of Russia.

The Holy Synod then went on to the elevation of the Dioceses of Zambia to a Metropolis with its local Bishop Ioakeim now bearing the title of His Eminence Ioakeim, Metropolitan of Zambia, Exarch of Central Africa, Ghana to the Metropolis of Accra, with its local Bishop now bearing the title of His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos of Accra, Exarch of West Africa, and Cyrene to an active Metropolis in the figure of Bishop Athanasios now bearing the title of Metropolitan of Cyrene, Exarch of the Libyan Peninsula. He also accepted the resignation from his duties on health grounds of His Grace Theodoros of Mozambique, who received the title of Titular metropolitan of Heliopolis.

His Beatitude, in honouring the many years of ecclesiastical service by His Eminence Kallinikos of Pelousion, proposed and in Synod awarded him the title of Elder Metropolitan.

A new Diocese, that of the Holy Diocese of Burundi and Rwanda, was then established, together with the election of two new Bishops, Archimandrite Savvas Heimonettos, Dean of the "Athanasios the Great" Patriarchal Academy of Alexandria to Provincial Bishop of Burundi and Rwanda and Archimandrite Niphon Tsavaris, Hegumen of the ancient Holy Patriarchal Monastery of St George Old Cairo to Assistant Bishop Babylonos, by Patriarchal and Synodal decree

Finally, the Holy Synod went on to the sanctification of the Hieromartyr Kyrillos Loukaris, Patriarch of Alexandria (1601-1620), later Ecumenical Patriarch.

The work of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria will continue in the evening with the of the Proposals of the Hierarchs and the Ceremony of the Great Message of the newly elected Bishops.

Biographies of the Elected Bishops

His Grace the Elected Bishop of Burundi and Rwanda, Archimandrite Savvas (known in the world as Basilios Heimionettos) was born in in 1971.

He holds a degree from the Seminary of Patmos and of the Department of Social Theology from the Theological Faculty in Athens. He speaks Greek, English and Arabic.

In 1990 he was tonsured a monk at the Holy Monastery of the Archangel Michael in Tharris, Rhodes by the then Hegumen of the Monastery, and now His Eminence Amphilochios of New Zealand. He was ordained to the Diaconate in 1991 and to the Priesthood in 1993 by His Eminence Apostolos, formerly of Rhodes, receiving also the rank of Archimandrite. During his eight years of service there. He served as Hierarchal Vicar of Halki and as Parish Priest in Parishes of Rhodes.

Following an invitation by the late Patriarch Petros VII, he was included in the clergy of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and appointed as Parish Priest of the Patriarchal Church of St Savvas the Sanctified in Alexandria, undertaking also the Press Office and the Public Relations of the Patriarchate. In 2001, he served as Patriarchal Vicar in , responsible for the Finances of the Patriarchate.

Following the re-establishment and operation of the Patriarchal Academy "Athanasios the Great", and with the personal care of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria, he was appointed as Dean of the Academy as well as a Member of the Synodal Council on Education.

On 6th October 2009, after being proposed By His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, he was unanimously elected by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria as Bishop of the newly-established Diocese of Burundi and Rwanda.

His Grace the Elected Bishop Babylonos, Archimandrite Niphon (known in the world as Nikitas Tsavaris) was born in Nicaea Attikis in 1959. He holds a degree from the Sivitanidion College of Engineering. He graduated from the Athoniada Seminary on Mount Athos and the Teacher's Training Academy in Heraclion, crete. He also holds a degree from the Theological faculty of .

As a seminarian, he worked in the Private office of the former Metropolitan Kallinikos of Pireaus and was tonsured a monk in 1982 at the Holy Monastery of Angarathos in Crete by the late Archbishop Timothy of Crete. He was ordained to the Priesthood in 1984 at the Holy Communal Monastery of the Forerunner in Bali Rethymis by the late Metropolitan Titus.

For twenty (20) years he worked at the Holy Metropolis of Peristeri as the Hierarchal Vicar and Parish Priest of the holy Churches of the Annunciation of the Theotokos, Ss Constantine and Helen which he renovated from scratch and built an orphanage and the Holy Church of St Marina in Anthoupolis.

He was elevated to Archimandrite By His Eminence Chrysostomos of Peristeri.

He was seconded to the Patriarchate of Alexandria in 2005 and since then he has been serving at the Holy Patriarchal Monastery of St George in Old Cairo as the Hegumen of the monastery. Following a proposal by His Beatitude, he was elected Bishop with the title of Bishop Babylonos, while still maintaining his duties as Hegumen at the Monastery.