

FRIDAY 9th MAY 2008 – THE INAUGURATION OF THE RENOVATED PATRIARCHAL LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA

A new page in the historic journey of the renovated Patriarchal Library of Alexandria, the costs of which were borne by the national Bank of Greece , begins on Friday 9th May 2008 at 19h00. His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa will conduct the inauguration in the presence of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr Theodoros Kasimis, His Excellency the Governor of Alexandria Mr. Adel Abib, the President of the National bank of Greece Mr. Takis Arapoglou, who was born in Egypt.

The history of the Patriarchal Library begins in 642 AD. However, it received its essential structure during the 10th century from Patriarch Eutychius of Alexandria.

In 1252, the Library was transferred to Cairo , to the suburb of Haret el Rum. Around 1796, the first official list of books, codes and manuscripts was produced, overseen by Patriarch Parthenios II, the Patmian.

In 1830, the Library was transferred to the suburb of Hamzawi in Cairo , on the site where the Patriarchal Vicariate is today. A century later, 1928, Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis transferred the Patriarchal Library to Alexandria .

In 1947 this important lighthouse of Hellenism and Orthodoxy was transferred again, to the Alexandrian suburb of Ibrahimia. Finally in 1971, it was placed in the Patriarchal Mansion in Alexandria .

Many offered their services to the development and maintenance of the Patriarchal Library. Especially significant were the services offered last century by the Librarian N. Philippides and later Th. Moschonas whose work was later continued by Dimitrios Moschonas until 1998. For the immediate future thereafter, the director of the Library was Mr. Panayiotis Tzoumerkas.

Today, the Patriarchal Library which takes up a large part of the entrance and the first floor of the Patriarchal Mansion in Alexandria, contains more than 70,000 titles, volumes, ancient manuscripts, etc., from the 15th to the 19th century, as well as 600 most important ancient manuscripts, dating back to the 5th century onwards.

In the entrance area, there is a reading library, a conference hall, and a meeting area with contemporary visual and audio equipment. On the first floor an archive is maintained together with an archive for the preservation of valuable manuscripts, in a hall which has the latest technology in security.

The inauguration will be attended by His Eminence Elder Paul of Memphis, His Eminence Elder Petros of Aksum, His Eminence Damianos of Sinai, Metropolitans Kallinikos of Pileusion, George of Zimbabwe, Nicholas of Ermopolis and Dimitrios of Irinopolis, Bishops Gabriel of Mareotis, Spyridon of Kanopos, Nikodimos of Nitria and gennadios of Nilopolis . Also present will be Their Excellencies the Ambassadors of Greece and Cyprus, the Honourable Consuls General of Greece in Alexandria and Cairo, the Consul General of Russia, the President of SAE, the General Secretary of Crete, Office-bearers and members of the Order of the Parabalani of the Patriarchal throne, Chairman of the Hellenic Communities of Cairo and Alexandria and other dignitaries.