

HIS ALL HOLINESS THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH VISITS THE EXARCHY OF THE ALEXANDRIAN PATRIARCHATE IN MOSCOW

His All Holiness Bartholomaios the Ecumenical Patriarch visited the Holy Church of All Saints of the Alexandrian Patriarchate in Moscow, on the afternoon of Sunday 23rd May 2010 accompanied by Their Eminences Metropolitan Michael of Austria, Irenaios of Myriofytou and Emmanuel of France.

The Ecumenical Patriarch was met by His Eminence Metropolitan Athanasios of Cyrene, Exarch of the Patriarchate of Alexandria in Moscow, who hosted an official lunch in honour of His All Holiness which was attended by Their Eminences Metropolitan Ilarion of Volokolamsk and Niphon Metropolitan of Philippoupolis (Antiochian Patriarchate) Archimandrite Stephanos (Jerusalem Patriarchate), Protopresbyter Nicholas Balasov and His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece in Russia Mr. Spinellis.

Addressing His All Holiness His Eminence Athanasios expressed the joy generated by the visit of His All Holiness to the Exarchy of the Church of Alexandria, and passed on the heartfelt greetings of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa.

His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch in his reply, stressed: "The ties between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the ancient Alexandrian Patriarchate are ancient, strong and enduring because they are ties of the same faith, tradition, liturgy, spirituality, ecclesiastical ethos, divine experience, and confession of the same God as well as common culture. These bind us together without any division, even though we both maintain our own administration. Two Holy Patriarchs of Alexandria have sat on the Apostolic and Ecumenical Throne". Referring to the Venerable Primate of the Alexandrian Church, he emphasized: "The current incumbent of the Alexandrian Throne, His Beatitude Theodoros II, is an old friend of ours, literally flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, having been ordained in Crete as a Cretan and having served there for many years. We came to know him as a youth and we love him, appreciating his kindness, his love for the Church and his missionary zeal. We feel him with us tonight in spirit, sharing in our joy and gladness".

His All Holiness asked of His Eminence to pass on to His Beatitude the Alexandrian Patriarch his heartfelt greetings. "Your Eminence, please pass on to His Beatitude our love and our embrace in the Lord and our heartfelt greeting. We look forward to the joy of our next meeting and concelebrating in Cappadocia". He ended by saying: "The presence in Moscow of the Exarchy of the Alexandrian Throne is a constant underscoring of the pure fraternal ties with the Holy Church of Russia. We pray that this Exarchy will always be a bright lighthouse of the great traditions of the Throne of the Evangelist Mark and a place of holy work of both Churches in Christ, for the good of the whole Orthodox Church"