

HIS BEATITUDE IN THE EGYPTIAN CAPITAL

On 20th March 2009, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, traveled to Cairo where he conducted the Service of the Third Salutations and preached the homily at the Holy Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Heliopolis .

On Saturday 21st March 2009, the feast of the Mothers and Families in Egypt, His Beatitude visited the Greek schools of Cairo (Achillopouleios and Ambetios Schools) accompanied by His Grace Nikodimos of Nitria, Patriarchal Vicar of Cairo, and Hieromonk Father Arkadios Razni, Youth Co-ordinator.

His Beatitude was welcomed by the Principals of the respective Schools, Mrs Fani Tssetsilas and Mr Ioannis Stavropoulos, as well as the Chairman of the School Council of Cairo, Mr Nikolaos Vadis. The young pupils of Achillopouleios School (Nursery and primary schools) presented Cretan dances and sang in honour of His Beatitude.

Speaking to the youngsters, His Beatitude emphasized the value of family especially in the contemporary agitated times in which human principles and values are doubted and then he spoke of the Patriarchal efforts for the suffering children of Egypt . He also thanked Father Arkadios for his service towards the youth. The young pupils gave His Beatitude stationery for the children of Africa and a piece of their artwork as a personal gift to him.

He then met with the pupils of the Ambetios School (high school) to whom he gave paternal advice and expressed his ceaseless concern and the love of the Church for them.

During his visits the Venerable Primate of the Throne of St Mark gave all the teachers and pupils of the schools commemorative gifts and encouraged them to participate in the 1st Youth Festival of the Patriarchate which is to take place in the Egyptian capital on 19th May 2009.

At noon on the same day, His Beatitude visited the Greek Old Age Home and attended a lunch which was hosted by the "Venerable Maria of Egypt" Philanthropic Society, for Mothers Day. During the lunch he spoke about the unparalleled importance of a mother's presence in the life of us all. He also congratulated the Executive Committee of the above-named Society on their multifaceted work for the elderly people.

Also, on the 3rd Sunday of Great Lent, 22nd March 2009, he conducted the Divine Liturgy and preached the homily at the Holy Patriarchal Church of St Nicholas in Cairo , in the presence of representatives of the Community and of societies as well as many faithful.