

HIS BEATITUDE IN THE HOLY METROPOLIS OF JOHANNESBURG AND PRETORIA

On the afternoon of Monday 21st May 2012, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa arrived in Johannesburg, the See of the Holy Metropolis of Johannesburg and Pretoria. At the airport, His Beatitude and his entourage were met by the local Metropolitan His Eminence Damaskinos, His Excellency the Ambassador of Cyprus Mr Petros Nakouzis, the Honourable Consul General of Greece in Johannesburg Mrs Evangelia Grammatika, the Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of Egypt, the Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Greek Communities Mr. John Baladakis, the clergy and other community dignitaries.

In the evening His Beatitude went to the "New Pan-Hellenic Voice" Radio Station, met with the Executive Committee and then gave a live interview.

On the morning of Tuesday 22nd May 2012, Hi Beatitude met with the Executive Committee of the "Panathinaiki" Women's Association and was told by the Chairlady of the Executive Committee about the progress of its philanthropic work.

Later, accompanied by His Eminence Damaskinos of Johannesburg he went to the Holy Patriarchal Church of the Holy Un-mercenaries and following brief prayers, he visited the adjacent "STEGI AGAPIS", a benevolent institute of the Holy Metropolis, which provides free board and lodging to destitute members of the Hellenic Community. His Beatitude congratulated the great benefactor of the STEGI AGAPIS, Mr. Eleftherios Athanasiou and the Parish Priest of the Church of the Holy Un-mercenaries the Very Reverend Archimandrite Chrysostomos Polyzos for the valuable work they do together with the support of the ladies of the Parish towards the care of suffering Greeks.

At noon on the same day His Beatitude went to the Patriarchal Church of St Nektarios, where he was met by the Parish Priest Fr. Stylianos Nathanael, and then went on to the "Nomikeios" Old Age Home – St Nektarios, spoke with the elderly people of whom many come from Alexandria. Once again His Beatitude was moved when he met the originator and founder of the Old Age Home Mrs Danae Papaphotis from Alexandria, who together with the late Eleni Christellis founded the Old Age Home in 1950, when they realized that on the streets of Johannesburg there were destitute Greeks. Before leaving the Old Age Home, His Beatitude congratulated the Executive Committee, those that work and the lady volunteers for their efforts in helping the aged.

In the evening His Beatitude met with the youth and with distinguished businessmen who established the NGO "Filiki – Friends of Greece" with the aim of uniting Greeks and Philhellenes in the Diaspora, starting with South Africa, with Greece and to offer an essential way of communication with various organizations and to strengthen, hasten and support the financial development of Greece.

That night he went to Pretoria and attended the dinner hosted in his honour by His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece in South Africa Mr. Spyridon Theocharopoulos. Among those present were Advocate George Bizos, the personal lawyer and friend of the fighter for human rights of Africans in South Africa, Mr. Nelson Mandela.