

HIS BEATITUDE'S PASTORAL VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA

From today, 16th May 2008, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa is in Johannesburg, on a pastoral visit for the 80th Anniversary of the Holy Metropolis of Johannesburg and Pretoria, the 100th Anniversary of the Hellenic Communities of Johannesburg and Pretoria, as well as the inauguration of two churches: St Nicholas in Durban and the Dormition of the Theotokos in Port Elizabeth.

During the arrival of the Alexandrian Primate in Johannesburg he received a warm welcome from His Eminence Seraphim, Metropolitan of Johannesburg and Pretoria, His Excellency Mr. Aristidis Sandis Ambassador of Greece, His Excellency the High Commissioner of Cyprus Mr Argyros Antoniou, Her Excellency Mrs Mona Omar Ambassador of Egypt and the Honourable Consul General of Greece Mr Panayiotis Sarris.

His Beatitude went immediately to the Holy Metropolis of Johannesburg where he was welcomed by all the clergy and staff of the local church and a doxology was held in the Holy Metropolitan chapel.

In thanking everyone for their fervent welcome, His Beatitude expressed his joy on being with his clergy in Johannesburg, as he is in South Africa for significant events, such as the celebrations for the creation of the Holy Metropolis of Johannesburg by a great Patriarch from Crete, Meletios Metaxakis. He also spoke to them of his recent official visits to the Churches of Cyprus and Madagascar and made special mention of the historic inauguration of the Patriarchal Library in Alexandria which took place on 9th MAY 2008.

Making mention of the future plans of the Second Throne Patriarchate, His Beatitude Theodoros II fervently thanked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Hellenic Parliament who are contributing to the creation of the Holy Sacristy which will be housed in the basement of the renovated Patriarchal Mansion. It will be divided into Pharaonic, Ptolemaic, Hellenic Byzantine, modern Hellenic history and Africa.

He then had a meeting with the Elder Metropolitan Paul of Memphis who had recently arrived in Johannesburg and who is to be honoured next Sunday for his 40 year service and contribution to the Metropolis of Johannesburg.