

## **HIS BEATITUDE VISITS KANANGA IN THE HOLY METROPOLIS OF CENTRAL AFRICA, THE “MOTHER” OF MISSIONS IN**

**On 19th October 2012 His Beatitude Theodoros II Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and all Africa, accompanied by the Very Reverend Archimandrite Narkissos Gammo, Principal of the “St Athanasios” Patriarchal Academy of Alexandria, arrived at the airport in the city of Kananga, where he was met by His Eminence Nikiphoros of Central Africa and His Eminence Ignatios of Pentapolis.**

An official welcome followed at the “Agios Andreas” Missionary Centre as well as Doxology prayers, during which the local Metropolitan, His Eminence Nikiphoros of Central Africa said, among other things: “...in a five-year period you have twice come to listen to the beat of our hearts, to the pain and the joy of your children and to bless them with your right hand”.

His Eminence Metropolitan Ignatios of Pentapolis noted: “...it is certain that your presence will constitute a rekindling of the zeal of the faithful and a further sprading of our Orthodox Church, in which the pious Congolese show a particular and fervent interest.

During his reply His Beatitude thanked everyone for the warm welcome and expressed his amazement at the progress of the mission in the Western Congo area, making special mention of the pioneers of mission and of the ladies of the “Sotir” brotherhood which for many years sacrificially minister together with His Eminence Ignatios of Pentapolis.

It is to be noted that the “Agios Andreas” Missionary Centre in Kananga is the first missionary centre in Central Africa, its initiators being the late Fathers Chrysostomos Papasarantopoulos and Hariton Pnevmatikakis, who began the missionary effort in 1972 with 30 faithful Christians and today, by God’s Grace, there are more than 50,000 in twenty Parish Communities.

In the afternoon His Beatitude visited the Parish of the Life-Giving Spring in Tshilumba, where there is also a Primary School. The welcome for the Venerable Primate of the Alexandrian Church was spontaneous and emotional, and particularly emotional was the reference made by His Eminence Ignatios of Pentapolis to the history of the Church, which is a dedication by the Palamiotis family to the memory of their departed son Konstantinos Palamiotis, a flying flirefighter.