

## **HIS BEATITUDE VISITS NORTHERN UGANDA**

On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011 His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, together with His Eminence Jonah Metropolitan of Kampala, the Very Reverend Archimandrite Meletios Kumanis and the Orthodox Parliamentarian Mr. Theodore Ssekikubo, travelled in government cars given by the Presidency of the country, and following a 6 hour journey, arrived in the area of Lira in northern Uganda, near the border with Sudan, where hundreds of refugees from Sudan lived until recently due to the civil clashes.

On arrival he visited the Parish of Saint Athanasios Amutsa which the late Patriarch Nicolas VI (1968-1986) had visited in the past as Metropolitan of Eirinopolis. He met with the priests and the staff of the parish community as well as with the first indigenous Christian Mr. Paul Mpima, who studied Orthodox Theology in Greece in 1963. He also conducted a memorial service at the grave of the first missionary to the area, the late Father Athanasios Atim.

His Beatitude then visited the schools and the Parish of the Archangel Michael Gulu, where he addressed the students and was told of the parish activities, as well as having a private discussion with the mothers of the parish. He was taken on a conducted tour of the school and the orphanage, where he was most moved by the fact that the children slept on the floor and promised the immediate building of dormitories with the help of missionary societies.

Late that night His Beatitude and his entourage returned to Kampala following a long journey.