

HIS BEATITUDES INAUGURATES THE RENOVATED HOLY CHURCH OF ST. SPYRIDON IN KANDARA

In the presence of many pilgrims who gathered from various places in Egypt and Greece in an atmosphere of holy splendour, and deep emotion, His beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, inaugurated on Friday 10th December 2010 the fully restored grand Holy Church of St Spyridon in Kandara of the Holy Metropolis of Pilousion, with his concelebrants His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Kallinikos of Pilousion and His Eminence Nicholas of Ermopolis, as well as His Grace Gabriel of mareotis, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria.

The Holy Church of St Spyridon was built on the Asian shore of the Suez Canal in 1925 in the Patriarchal tenure of Patriarch Fotios II of Alexandria and Metropolitan Polefktos of Pilousion, for the liturgical needs of the Orthodox Christians of Kandara, most of whom were employed as navigators at the Canal Company.

Following the population drain of 1952 and the combining of the Kandara Community with that of Port Said, the church was neglected and the Arab-Israeli war of 1967 caused extensive damage.

Forty years later, with the blessing of His Beatitude, His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Kallinikos of Pilousion brought about the almost complete renovation and restoration of the church.

During the rite of the inauguration, the Alexandrian Primate expressed wholehearted thanks to all who contributed morally and materially to the completion of the renovation of the holy church, especially to the President of the Republic of Egypt, Mr Hosni Mubarak, as well as to the political and military governors of the area. Gratitude was also expressed to His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece Mr Christodoulos Lazaris, for his presence as both he and his predecessors contributed to the realization of this pastoral vision.

His Beatitude expressed grateful thanks to His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Kallinikos of Pilousion, as it was under his tireless supervision that this work was completed, putting an end to a wait of over forty years and realizing the dream of returning the Orthodox presence to Kandara. As a gift of honour, gratitude and love, His Beatitude gave him a pectoral cross.

In his reply, Elder Metropolitan Kallinikos of Pilousion, after mentioning all the difficulties faced, and stressed the fact that the Holy Church is now given over to future generations for sanctification and support in the Orthodox faith. In turn he thanked the Venerable Primate for his ceaseless interest, as well as the contributors to this enormous renovation work.

Also honoured by His Beatitude were the great benefactors of the renovation, Dr Nahed George Zarifa, supervising civil engineer and Mr. Yosef Khamis el Hosary, a businessman. For their contribution all honoured we Mr. Meshreki Labib Zaki, a civil engineer, the interpreter Irene Philippou and the secretary of the Holy Metropolis of Pilousion, Mr. Waguhi Francis Attala.