

Historic Consecration of the Holy Church of Ss Constantine and Helen in the heart of Cairo

With solemnity and Byzantine splendour the Consecration of the renovated historic and beautiful Holy Church of Saints Constantine and Helen in the heart of Cairo took place on Saturday, September 28th, 2019.

His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa conducted the Festive Divine Liturgy, concelebrating with His Eminence Nicholas Metropolitan of Lavreotikis and Mesogaias, representative of His Beatitude Irenaios Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Grace Christophoros Bishop of Karpasia representative of His Beatitude Chrysostomos, Archbishop of New Justinia and All Cyprus, as well as the Metropolitans of the Alexandrian Throne.

In his address, the Alexandrian Primate expressed his emotion, welcomed and thanked the Minister of Antiquities who represented the President of Egypt Mr. Abdul Fatah al Sisi, saying:

'Mr Minister, through you, I would like to say a big thank you to our Egypt, which together with Greece and Cyprus are three peaceful countries in the Mediterranean area. But also a big thank you for your love for the Patriarchate, for Hellenism, so that for two thousand years now we are dear brothers and sisters.'

Patriarch Theodoros also gave a gift on behalf of all to the Minister with the wish Rabena Halik, which means: May God keep you well.

On his behalf the Minister emphasized that it is a particular honour for him to be representing the President on this on this important Day of the Consecration of the Historical Church, while conveying the special wishes of the President of Egypt for the event.

'This Church has a history of more than 100 years and is a sign of the relations between our two countries' – the Egyptian Minister stressed.

'As Minister of Antiquities, I feel great joy when I see church maintenance works in the country that hosted the Holy Family when it came to Egypt' – added the Minister of Antiquities.

In closing, the Minister wished all Christians in Egypt to always perform their religious ceremonies in safety and in peace.

'15 years ago I came up to this church here to start a humble Patriarchate. I looked at this temple for the first time here and then my eyes filled with tears, and I said, 'O Lord, how manifold are Your works; where we stand and cry out, preserve this house, O Lord'' – the Patriarch of Alexandria added to his address.

The Patriarch then turned to the Chairman of the Community of Cairo Mr. Christos Kavalis, visibly moved and expressed a great thank you and addressing through him all his spiritual children, naming them all ***"Nestors of Hellenism"***, from Nestor Tsanaklis.

"Here we maintain Thermopylae and proudly Leonidas and Alexander the Macedonian, stand tall and proclaim: Hellenism lives! Because today, this Church is renovated", – added the Primate of the Alexandrian Church.

His Beatitude then thanked Greece, through the Deputy Minister of Education and Religions Mrs. Sophia Zaharaki, saying she is always at his side.

The Alexandrian Primate then honoured Mrs. Katerina Sofianou-Belefanti naming her

Ambassador of Hellenes Abroad" and gave her a pastoral staff which was made for her by the children of Africa.

Another emotional moment came when the Patriarch awarded the Chairman of the Hellenic Community Mr. Christos Kavalis "***the Supreme Commander of the Apostle and Evangelist Mark***", and gave him the historic Gospel of Nestoras Tsanaklis which was miraculously found under a slab of marble.

Addresses were also made by His Grace Bishop Christoforos of Karpasia representing the Church of Cyprus, as well as by His Eminence Nicholas Metropolitan of Mesogaia, representing the Church of Greece.