

# **JOINT PROGRAMME FOR THE YOUTH OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES OF THE MIDDLE EAST – ARRIVAL OF THEIR BEATITUDES THE PATRIARCHS OF ALEXANDRIA THEODOROS AND JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS IN CYPRUS – CONCELEBRATION BY THE PRIMATES**

Within the framework of a joint action of the Orthodox Churches in the Middle East, twenty young people from the Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem arrived in Cyprus to participate in a joint program with young people from the Church of Cyprus.

The above programme took place from the 29<sup>th</sup> August to the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012, at the Agios Nikolaos Camp site of the Holy Archdiocese of Cyprus in Kakopetria. This programme was decided on by the Primates of the Orthodox Churches of the Middle East, Their Beatitudes Theodoros of Alexandria, Ignatios of Antioch, Theophilos of Jerusalem and by His Beatitude Chrysostomos Archbishop of Cyprus, at the Meeting of the Primates of Orthodox Churches which took place in Cyprus on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012, and is in essence the first joint activity of the “Orthodox Initiative”, of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches of the Middle East which is being implemented.

The “Orthodox Initiative” aims to further strengthen ties between the Churches, better cooperation between them, closer relations with all Christians of the Middle East as well as the development of harmonious and friendly relations between Abrahamic Religions. In addition through the “Orthodox Initiative” Representatives of the Orthodox Churches of the Middle East will be able to hold meetings and discussions, to search for answers to many important issues related to the Christian presence in the Middle East

In this context, then, the first such joint action of the Orthodox Primates, His Beatitude Theodoros of Alexandria and His Beatitude Theophilos of Jerusalem arrived in Cyprus on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012.

His Beatitude Theodoros II Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa was welcomed at Larnaca Airport by His Beatitude Chrysostomos Archbishop of Cyprus, as well as Their Eminences Metropolitan George of Accra and Metropolitan Seraphim of Zimbabwe and Angola, and Protopresbyter Athinodoros Papaevripiades, Patriarchal representative in Cyprus.

**On Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2012**, the three Primates concelebrated at the Holy Church of St Panteleimon in Kakopetria. Following the end of the Divine Liturgy the Primates visited the camp site of St Nikolaos in Kakopetria where the youth that are participating in the programme are being hosted. There they attended a festive programme organized by the young people and later had the opportunity of speaking with them and exchanging views.