

ORDINATION AS BISHOP OF HIS GRACE THEODOROS BABYLONOS

On 18th December 2016, the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, **His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa**, officiated during Orthros, conducted the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy and during it performed the ordination of His Grace Theodoros Bishop of Babylonos at the Holy Patriarchal Church of St Nicholas in Cairo.

Participating at the Eucharistic Gathering and the ordination of His Grace were Their Eminences Metropolitans Nicholas of Ermopolis, Amphilochios of Kissamos and Selinos, Nikodimos of Memphis, Niphon of Pilousion, Kyrillos of Ierapytne and Siteia and Meletios of Carthage. Also present was His Eminence Archbishop Damianos of Sinai, Faran and Raithos.

His Excellency the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece in charge of matters for Hellenes Abroad Mr. Terence Quick, His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece to Egypt Mr. Michael-Christos Diamessis, His Excellency the Ambassador of Cyprus to Egypt Mr. Haris Moritsis, the Honorable Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Cairo Mr. Christos Kavalis were also present, as were other Chairmen of Arabic speaking communities, associations and societies of Hellenic Society, representatives of the Coptic and Anglican Churches. The Church was filled with a group of pilgrims from Crete, who traveled there to be present at the ordination, as were the faithful of the community.

In his emotional address, His Beatitude said:

“Your Grace, elected Bishop Babylonos and beloved brother in the Lord, Theodore, It is a deep conviction of our Holy Church, that the foundation of all spiritual progress, is the exhaustive sense of our poverty. Besides, according to the book of Proverbs in the Old Testament “towards the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he shows favour” (Proverbs 3:34). In other words, he who attempts through the power of logic and by the glorification of philosophy, to approach the humble God of Love, he objectifies God, places Him under a microscope as an object of research and in the end remains empty-handed; while he humbly and quietly serves the image of God, which is man, he receives the abundance of God’s grace in his heart, which he then spreads richly among the people. This same truth, more poetically, is revealed in the troparion of the stichera of the Feast of Theophany, as follows: “by descending, it becomes our rising to God”, in other words, we need to go down into the abyss of humility to rise again into the sphere of the grace of God.

My dear Fr. Theodoros,

I have known you since you were very young, at the Church of the Holy Virgin in Selliani, at our mutual birthplace of Crete, when you were 9 years old. At that time, in your pure child’s eyes, I saw your fervor for dedication to the Church of Christ. And indeed, when time came, you stated you desire to dedicate yourself totally to the Church, to your late Elder, Metropolitan Evgenios of Ierapytne and Siteia, to receive from his hands your Monastic tonsure and your two ordinations, as Deacon and as Priest as well as the office of Archimandrite. My emotion is great my child Theodoros, because we both have the name of our mutual Elder, the late Theodoros Tzedakis, Metropolitan of Rethymnon and Avlopotamos, the distinguished hierarch, with his enormous historic knowledge and theological education, his exuberant personality, the kindness and goodness that made you love him immediately. You also, my child Theodoros, with your kindness and goodness served the church in various positions, both in France next to our brother Metropolitan

Emmanuel of France, as well as in Durban in South Africa. And later, when the All merciful God wished it, you came to me, proving over many years, your dedication and obedience to the Alexandrian Church and its Primates, especially in Cairo, where quietly, with the responsibility that defines you and your obedience, you served the Patriarchate from the position of Great Ecclesiarch, in charge of the ritual and orderliness of our Church.

And now, the grace of the All Merciful God, noting your love-filled heart, inspired the Most Holy Synod of the Alexandrian Church, by proposal of its Primate, to elect you as auxiliary Bishop Babylonos, considering your quiet ministry, your dedication as well as your honesty and to assign to you the ministry of Patriarchal Vicar of Cairo, a position from which, always in cooperation with Metropolitan Niphon of Memphis, you will be in the vanguard of our Patriarchate, "as a light on the stand" (Luke 11:33).

My dear Fr. Theodoros, At your personal Pentecost, at your ordination as Bishop, together with the love of us all who came to share in your joy, invisibly present are all the choir of the great Saints of our Church of Alexandria, our great Hierarchs and Ecumenical Teachers and the Venerable Abbas of the Thebaid desert. I pray that the All Merciful God will grant you on your hierarchal journey, the forbearance, the wisdom and the merciful heart of these our Holy Hierarchs, the simplicity, patience and gentleness of our Holy Abbas. Know that my paternal love will always be with you, beside you, as will the love and the prayers of those Holy Hierarchs who elected you at every step of your hierarchal journey. In this world that is becoming more and more inhumane, become a herald of hope in the Merciful God. As Christians we have the privilege of being happy people. Our Lord Himself, immediately following His Resurrection, said as His first word "Rejoice". The sad and desperate man is the most unjust towards God. This great truth was simply taught by the recently proclaimed Saint Porphyrios Kausokalyvitis, saying: "As deep as our fall may be and our bitterness because of life's many problems, we must never lose our inner joy which we have, because Christ is alive and present in our lives"!

We have an obligation to move forward with joy always, inspiring our brothers and sisters that God provides solutions where human reason and weakness cease. Only then will we discover the authentic human person, which is never predictable. In finding our differences, we must not be afraid, but should rejoice with the surprise of the possibility of finding potential in each other, our brothers and sisters, on multiple levels, because in the spiritual world there is no monotony and boredom. And unity in Christ is not afraid of diversity, rather it gives it meaning and enriches it. It is this inspiration that is need by contemporary man, and this is our Church's greatest contribution to the harsh reality of our times. So in this new ministry, which our Holy Church has assigned to you, place your hopes in the Head of our salvation, Jesus Christ, who can guide as an able wheelman to the safe harbours of the fulfilling of the Divine will, with the breath of the calming Holy Spirit, which through me, your Spiritual Father. Calls on you now to enter the depths of the Holy Sanctuary. Enter Your Grace blessed brother Fr. Theodoros, into the joy of your Lord".

Curriculum Vitae of His Grace Theodoros Bishop Babylonos

His Grace Theodoros, Bishop of Babylonos was born in Rethymnon, Crete in 1966 where he completed his secondary education. He is a graduate of the 4th Class of the Ecclesiastical School of Athens and holds a degree from the Higher Ecclesiastical Academy of Crete as well as from the Department of Social Theology from the Theological Faculty of the University of Athens. He attended lectures at the Ecole Pratique at the University of Athens IV (formerly the Sorbonne) and at the St Serge

Institute of Orthodox Theology in Paris. He speaks and writes English and French. On 7/8/1988 he was tonsured a monk and ordained Deacon at the Holy Monastery of the All Holy Virgin Akrotirianis (Toplou), in Siteia, by the late Metropolitan Evgenios of Ierapytne and Siteia. He was ordained Priest at the above Monastery on 22/7/2000 by the same Hierarch, who also consecrated him as Archimandrite on 25/3/2002 at the Holy Church of the Annunciation of the Theotokos in the city of Siteia. Apart from the Metropolis of Ierapytne and Siteias, he served at the Metropolis of France in Paris and of Good Hope in Durban South Africa. In September 2012, following an invitation from His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa he went to Cairo where he first took over as Parish Priest of the Holy Patriarchal Church of St Nicholas and then as Dean of the Church of Ss Constantine and Helen in the Hellenic Community of Cairo. On the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross, 23/3/2014, His Beatitude awarded him the Office of Great Ecclesiarch of the Church of Alexandria. On 17th November 2016 by proposal of His Beatitude he was unanimously elected as his Auxiliary Bishop and took over the duties of Patriarchal Vicar of Cairo. He was ordained at the Holy Church of St Nicholas in Cairo, by His Beatitude on 18th December 2016.