

ORDINATION OF BISHOP COSMAS OF KONSTANTIANI

The 30th of January was a festive day, a day of joy, full of Light and hope for the future of our Church. At the Holy Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Hamzawi, Cairo, the Most Reverend Bishop Cosmas Thasitis, Auxiliary Bishop of Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa was ordained according to the Alexandrian order, who received the title of Bishop of Konstantiani and will serve in the Diocese of Katanga with the blessing of His Eminence Meletios Metropolitan of Katanga.

The historic Holy Church of St. Nicholas, opened its gates on this brilliant day of the Church and welcomed the Christian flock of Cairo, which with the Hierarchical guidance of Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa experienced the participation and mystagogy of the ordination of His Grace the new Bishop.

His Beatitude the Patriarch of Alexandria presided over the Divine Liturgy together with Archbishop Damianos of Sinai and concelebrating with His Eminence Meletios Metropolitan of Katanga, His Eminence Theodosius Metropolitan of Kinshasa, His Eminence Narcissus Metropolitan of Pelusium, His Eminence Nicodemus Metropolitan of Memphis and Patriarchal Vicar of Cairo and His Grace Bishop Prodromos of Toliara and Southern Madagascar.

The new Bishop, joyful, yet also deeply emotional, with his eye filled with gratitude and trust in the Hierarchs who guided him on the path of the increase of his own Light, gave his soul and body to the mystical energy of the sacred ordination ceremony.

"I am called to follow in the footsteps of the three greatest educators of our Church who celebrate today, St. John Chrysostom, Basil the Great and St. Gregory the Theologian, and to work in a spirit of love, in a spirit of peace and in a spirit of sacrifice for mankind, the image of God". With these words, as an active and deep existential promise of life, His Grace the Bishop began his speech, pointing out to everyone the outline of his own future course.

And continuing, His Grace the Bishop illuminated with the colours of his word the road that opens in front of him, saying with boldness *"I am the least called to follow the example of the hieromartyr and apostle Saint Cosmas the Aetolian whose life and the martyrdom of his life will remind me of my own martyrdom and missionary journey to the ends of Africa, always keeping the torch of faith and love in Christ burning in a world that is disoriented and frightened".*

He thanked by name from the bottom of his heart all those who helped him in the course of his life in the work of his ministry, but also in every decision as he said in his life. Addressing the Patriarch, he raised his gaze, looked at him and said, *"I want to find the courage to turn my eyes to you to meet your own eyes. I am sure that in them I will see the blue waters of our homeland of Greece, the beautiful churches with their high bell towers, but also the green mountains of your birthplace, the island of Crete".*

"My dear Father Cosmas. My son, from the moment a mother brings us into the world, that is when time begins to count. We begin to record dates from our life. We have the date of our birth, we have the date of our baptism. However, for us the clergy and particularly the Hierarchs we will be accompanied through all our years by the Patriarch who ordained us here at the Patriarchate, but also by the date on which we received the Holy Spirit. It is 31 years now that every year on 17th June I serve the Liturgy wherever I am and I remember that before one other Patriarch, Parthenios, I knelt so humbly, so simply and received the Grace of a Hierarch.

Cosmas, from now on you will have with you always this day "30th January. Holy Church of St Nicholas, Cairo". The years will pass and you will remember this day every time.

In a few seconds when you kneel in front of the Holy Altar, this earthly hand filled with God will pass on to you that which I too received. The Holy Spirit". With these warm and tender words, His Beatitude the Patriarch began the ordination of the new Bishop.

AXIOS! Exclaimed His Beatitude the Patriarch to the congregation, smiling and with an open heart, holding the hand of the new Bishop. Another link in the long history of the Missionary Church of Africa was forged with this one word from the lips of the Patriarch. AXIOS was the reply from the congregation.

His Beatitude the Patriarch led His Grace the Bishop of Konstantiani to the Throne and, once again exclaiming AXIOS, urged everyone to receive his blessing. His relatives and friends who traveled from Greece were extremely emotional, with his mother in the front row with tear-filled eyes looking at her child at this majestic moment in the course of his life and humbly taking great pride in him..

"I am living the miracle of my child" With these words the mother of the new Bishop, Mrs. Chrysi Thasiti opened her heart and spoke to NEO FOS and ekkairo.org about today's great day.

The Patriarch then invited everyone to the Throne room to enjoy a treat and wish the new Bishop.

Honouring the enthronement of the new Bishop by their presence were the Consul General of Greece Mrs. Maria Zisi, the Secretary General of the Hellenic Community of Cairo Mrs. Chrysanthe Skoufaridou, the Chairman of the Orthodox Patriarchal Center in Subra Mr. George Zoumboulides, Mrs. Vaso Gazi Deputy Chair of the Philoptochos Sisterhood of Greek Ladies of Cairo, the Director of the Hellenic Cultural Center of Cairo Mr. Christos G. Papadopoulos, Mr. Salem Kasis Chairman of the Church of the Archangels in Daher, Mrs. Arlet Monsef Chairlady of the H.O.C.