

ORDINATION OF THE NEW BISHOP NECTARIOS OF GULU AND NORTHERN UGANDA

On Sunday 13 February and in a particularly devout atmosphere, at the Holy Patriarchal Church of St Nicholas in Hamzawi Cairo, **the ordination of the elected Bishop Nectarios of Gulu and Northern Uganda took place**, with the spiritual and the ritual guidance of the helmsman of the Alexandrian Church, Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, who served at the Divine Liturgy together with Archbishop Damianos of Sinai and concelebrating with His Eminence George Metropolitan of Guinea, His Eminence Nicodemus Metropolitan of Memphis and Patriarchal Vicar of Cairo, His Eminence Gabriel Metropolitan of Nea Ionia, His Eminence Symeon Metropolitan of Phthiotida, His Eminence Ieronymos of Kampala, His Eminence Innocent Metropolitan of Burundi and Rwanda, His Grace Sylvester Bishop of Jinja and Eastern Uganda and His Grace Prodromos Bishop of Toliara and South Madagascar and His Grace Themistocles Bishop of Nicopolis who serves in Sierra Leone.

His Grace Nectarios – born Nicholas Kambouye, saw the first light of day in Uganda in 1952, where he spent his childhood and adolescence. The path of his education is long and multileveled.

After completing his school studies in his hometown, he began his theological education at the Rizarios Ecclesiastical School in Athens. The next stop of his course was the Department of Theology of the Theological Faculty of Athens, from where he obtained, in addition to his degree, a postgraduate specialization in "Canon Law".

His restless spirit that loved learning seeking a wider fulfillment of his spiritual needs beyond his theological field, pushed him to the City University of Seattle, from where he obtained a degree in "Business Administration".

On 1st November 2013 His Beatitude the Primate of the Church of Greece Archbishop Ieronymos II, tonsured him a Monk, starting out with the name Nectarios on his journey to the Light of the Priesthood. On 9th February 2014 he was ordained Deacon and on the 6th December 2015 at the celebrating Church of St Nicholas on Acharnon Street he was ordained as a Priest by the venerable Primate of the Church of Greece.

On 17th October 2021, while in Africa he received the rank of Archimandrite from His Beatitude Theodoros II, Patriarch of Alexandria.

The last stop of his journey thus far was 12th January 2022, when by proposal of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa he was elected by the Holy Synod of the Alexandrian Patriarchate as "Bishop of Gulu and Northern Uganda".

During his ordination speech His Grace Bishop Nectarios guided His Beatitude and all those present through his words, to the country where he was born and took his first steps and speaking from his heart said: "I am a child of a fifteen member family formerly Roman Catholics. God enlightened me, counting me worthy to embrace our Most Holy Orthodoxy during my student years and then, by the Grace of God, I contributed to the baptism of all members of my family in the name of the Lord the Blessed One". He also referred with affectionate remembrance to the deep imprint on his soul from his acquaintance with the Blessed Elder Jonah, a great philhellene and Greek scholar as he characterized him, who helped him spiritually and materially to spread his wings for his long journey to Greece.

He also spoke about the gratitude that his heart feels towards the Almighty God and about the great blessing and honor that he said he could not have imagined in his life as he said "I was a poor village boy from the afflicted Africa, where many houses are deprived of electricity and running water".

He also referred to his entire career through the ranks of the Priesthood and gratefully mentioned the Primate of the Church of Greece, Archbishop Ieronymos II, for the trust and love he showed to his person.

In closing, he gave a heartfelt promise to His Beatitude the Patriarch that he would do his utmost to serve Christ in practice and in his likeness, Mankind for whom he died.

In his address, the Blessed Patriarch, addressing the His Grace Bishop Nectarios, said with a lively look and words full of joy and love that "I have known you since you were a child and I saw in your face from the beginning the love for Orthodoxy, but also your devotion to the traditions of our Missionary Patriarchate and your respect for each of your respective Bishops" and went on to say that "with great love I have personally watched your progress in Christ for many years and I rejoice for you, not only for your childish enthusiasm, but also for the flame of your faith that grew daily and burned your inner being with zeal".

Continuing his speech, the tone of His Beatitude's voice suddenly changed and looking him in the eyes with emotion and paternal affection he said that Africa the Continent of the future as he described it, where the grace of God required us to serve, needs a "vision" and needs "faith", illuminating with these two strong and heartfelt words the path that he must follow in his Hierarchical course.

He set before him the difficulties but also the possible temptations that he may encounter from the whispers of the false brothers as he called them, who for "30 silver coins" will try to distract him from the Mother Church which, for all of Africa, as His Beatitude said, is the Patriarchate of Alexandria.

He also spoke with heartache about the coveted unity of the Church and the faithful, following with his speech the example of the sacrifice of the Godbearer Saint Ignatius, while being led to sacrifice, as prey for the lions, was writing letters addressed to the Churches of Ephesus, Smyrna and Philadelphia pleading as a genuine imitator of Christ for just one thing, Unity

AXIOS, His Beatitude the Patriarch shouted loudly and his voice echoed from end to end of the Church with the multitude of laity and clergy responding AXIOS with joy for the new Bishop, who emotionally received many wishes and hugs full of faith and hope for his difficult but fruitful missionary work.

Present and the sacrament of the ordination and honouring the newly-ordained Bishop Nectarios, were Mrs. Mari Kehri Charge d' Affaires of the Greek Embassy, the Ambassador of Uganda to Egypt, Mrs. Billy Politi-Zoue representing the Hellenic Community of Cairo, the Representative of the Hellenic Community of Cairo Mr. Mihalis Grunstein, the Chairman of the Cypriot Brotherhood of Cairo Mr. Alexandros Kazamias, Mr. George Zouboulides Chairman of the Orthodox Spiritual Centre in Subra, the Deputy Chairlady of the Philoptochos Sisterhood of Greek Ladies in Cairo Mrs. Vaso Gazi, the Representative of S.A.E. Mr. Vasilis Zoues, the Director of the Hellenic Cultural Center of Cairo Mr. Christos G. Papadopoulos, Mr. Salem Kasis from the Arabic speaking Orthodox Community.