

## **ORTHODOXY IN TANZANIA IS GROWING AND BEARING FRUIT**

On Thursday, June 2, the sixth day of His Pastoral visit to the Holy Diocese of Arusha and Central Tanzania, His Beatitude Theodoros II Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, officiated at Orthros and the Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Ascension of the Savior at the Holy Church of the Annunciation of the Theotokos in Arusha.

After the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, His Beatitude, accompanied by His Eminence Daniel Metropolitan of Aksum and the local Bishop of Arusha and Central Tanzania, His Grace Agathonikos, performed group baptisms of 25 catechumens in the open-air baptistery of the aforementioned Holy Church. The Patriarch, visibly moved, welcomed the newly-illuminated ones to the great family of the Orthodox Church and presented them each with a small pectoral cross, urging them to love the Church and to preserve the treasure of the Grace of the Holy Spirit which they received through the sacrament of Chrismation, throughout their lives.

On the same day, he visited a central orphanage of the Church in the city of Arusha, where he was warmly welcomed by the administrative staff, the employees and the children. He had the opportunity to talk to them, listen to their problems and assure them that the Orthodox Church in Tanzania will always be by their side, for whatever they need. In fact, for the current needs of the Foundation, it offered a large amount of long-life foodstuff, sweets and toys, a fact that made the children living there very happy.

His Beatitude completed his pastoral visit to East Africa, in the country of Tanzania, and returned to the City of the Evangelist Mark, Alexandria. The Vineyard of Christ, the Tanzanian Orthodox Church, bears fruit and grows. The Missionary Patriarch of Love sowed His Gospel. May the Lord of the Church bless!