

PASTORAL VISITS BY HIS BEATITUDE TO PARISH COMMUNITIES OF THE METROPOLIS OF KENYA – MEETING WITH HIS EXCELLENCY THE AMBASSADOR OF EGYPT

On the morning of 2nd June 2009, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, continuing his pastoral journey through Kenya, visited the church of St Nicholas in Nairobi. It is a beautiful and imposing church that he expressed his admiration for, congratulating Father Neophytos the Parish Priest, on his work as well as the youth choir of the church, noting that the “the youth are the future of Kenya. The future of the African continent”.

Leaving the church, the Alexandrian Primate laid the foundation stone of the new clinic which will be built on the church grounds to provide medical assistance for those who live in the area.

His Beatitude then went on to visit the church of St Kosmas the Aetolian, a humble church where soon a new church will be built, together with a school and a clinic. His Beatitude therefore laid the foundation stone for this in the presence of many people who openly showed their satisfaction, by singing and dancing.

He also announced that on these grounds a children’s play centre will be built, the costs of which he will bear himself, and he received a round of applause from the residents especially the young Kenyans.

His Beatitude visited the Kiabou area, near Nairobi, where there are 46 parishes communities belonging to the Metropolis of Kenya. His Beatitude’s first stop was the church of St Eleftherios, where, because of the National Day of Kenya, he greeted the Kenyan people and thanked His Eminence Metropolitan Makarios for his efforts.

He then went to the church of the Theotokos in Gunou, where he faced the young people who had come to meet him and told them that Orthodoxy comes to teach them faith in the true God of love, without losing the customs and habits of their country.

He also spoke of the “ Archbishop Makarios III Academy ” saying that its work is dynamic, in common with the corresponding schools belonging to the Patriarchate of Alexandria in Alexandria and in Kinshasa.

On the same evening, His Beatitude was warmly welcomed by His Excellency the Ambassador of Egypt in Kenya, Mr Saher Hamza. Present at the official dinner which he hosted in honour of the Alexandrian Primate, were His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece, His Excellency the Ambassador of Cyprus and His Excellency the Ambassador of Russia as well as His Eminence the Nuncio of the Roman Catholic Church and a representative of the Coptic Church.

The Egyptian Ambassador spoke with great satisfaction about the missionary efforts of the Alexandrian Church both in Kenya and on the entire African continent and offered an icon depicting the Last Supper.

On his behalf, Patriarch Theodoros thanked the President of the Arabic Republic of Egypt Mr Hosni Mubarak, through His Excellency the Ambassador, for his great support of the Church of Alexandria. He also spoke of the wonderful souls of the Egyptian people which are always distinguished by their love and hospitality. He then ended by awarding the emblem of the Patriarchate to the Ambassador.