

PATRIARCHAL DIVINE LITURGY AT LAKE VICTORIA

On the occasion of the feast of Saint Catherine the Great Martyr, the Saint of Alexandria, and his 66th birthday, **His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa**, served the Divine Liturgy in the Holy Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos, supported by the Hierarchs accompanying him on his tour and all the Clergy of the Diocese of Kisumu.

Present at the Divine Liturgy were the Deputy Governor of Kisumu, the Senator of Kisumu Province, Members of the Kenyan Parliament from Kisumu Province, the Chief of the local tribe, the Director of Police and many people.

During the Divine Liturgy, His Beatitude ordained Sub-Deacon Joachim , an excellent graduate of the Riruta Patriarchal Seminary, as Deacon, and consecrated to Protopresbyter Fr, Nicodemus appointing him as Hierarchical Vicar General of the Kisumu Province.

All the political leaders present addressed the Patriarch, thanking him for visiting them and thanking him for the great contribution of the Patriarchate to the local community and as a birthday gift they gave him a large area of state land to build Orthodox schools and a Hospital.

Filled with emotion His Beatitude thanked the authorities for their presence and for their valuable gift, emphasizing, among other things, that the Patriarchate of Alexandria not only sympathizes with the trials of its flock but also contributes effectively to its relief and consolation. He introduced His Grace Bishop Marcos to the authorities, saying characteristically that "I love you so much that I sent to you a chosen child of mine, born in Africa, who will represent me here so that the heart of the Church of Alexandria will beat here daily, in the province of Kisumu".

After the Divine Liturgy, the faithful held a festive function in honor of the Patriarch, dancing and singing, offering him traditional African gifts and finally presenting him with a very beautiful birthday cake, where everyone wished him 'Happy Birthday'.

In conclusion, Bishop Markos gave a marble Lion as a gift, telling the Patriarch that 'the lion is the symbol of St. Mark, the Founder of our Church, but you too, Your Beatitude, are strong and determined like the Lion of St. Mark, and so we wish that you will always be so, so that we your children can draw strength from you".