

PATRIARCHAL DIVINE LITURGY IN CASABLANCA AND DOXOLOGY FOR NATIONAL REGENERATION

On the 4th Sunday of Great Lent, the feast of St John of the Ladder, a Patriarchal Divine Liturgy was conducted at the Holy Church of the Annunciation of the Theotokos in Casablanca by His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, together with the local Metropolitan Alexios of Carthage, the Mega Ecclesiarch of the Throne, the Very Reverend Archimandrite Theodoros Dridakis and the Parish Priests of Casablanca and Rabat Fr. Ioannis Gatzioras and Fr. Maximos Massalatin. The choirs were attended also by the Very reverend Archimandrite Alexios Petrides, the visiting Dean of the Holy Church of the transfiguration in Halandri as well as many Romanian faithful who sang the hymns and parts of the Liturgy.

In his inspirational homily His Beatitude stressed the importance of unity within the Church and particularly in our Patriarchate, where all the faithful, irrespective of colour, language and race, are united in the name of the Lord, and praised the fact of the synchronized and multi-languaged diversity during the Eucharistic gathering, in the holy Church of the Annunciation, where Greeks, Russians, Romanians, Bulgarians and Serbs gather, sing and praising God in their own languages.

His Beatitude was addressed by His Eminence Alexios Metropolitan of Carthage, who emphasized the significance of the Patriarchal presence in Morocco and the great blessing and message of unity and love, which occurs in this choice Orthodox part of North Africa.

The official Doxology of the National Day of 25th March followed, as next Wednesday will be a working day in Morocco. The wish and prayer of everyone today, he stressed, is for the difficulties to pass for our beloved homeland and together with peace and the love of Christ that prosperity will return to our country. The Patriarch thanked the Authorities and the large congregation, as well as His Majesty King Mohamed VI for the honour afforded the Primate of the Orthodox Church on the African Continent. The gathering concluded with the singing of our National Anthem.

Present were His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece Mr. Plato Alexios Hatzimihalis and the entire diplomatic corps of Greece in Morocco, Her Excellency the Ambassador of Romania Mrs Simona Mariana Ioan, Her Excellency the Ambassador of Bulgaria Mrs. Boryana Simeonova, the Consul of Egypt Mr. Nagui Ghaba and the Attaché of the Serbian Embassy Mr. Ivan Samardzic, as well as the former Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Morocco under King Hasan, Mr. Abderahman Yusufi, who is married to a Greek lady.

A reception followed in honour of His Beatitude at the hall of the Hellenic Community and awards were given to the Chairman of the Hellenic Community Mr. Constantinos Pistikos, and the members of the community Mr. Petros Katrakazos, honorary Chairman and creator of the Institution HORIZON DES HANDICAPES in Ouarzazate, Mrs. Aikaterini Androulaki and Mrs. Maria Zurdanet, valuable colleagues of the local Church and Community.

In conclusion His Beatitude visited and venerated at the chapel of the Dormition of the Theotokos in the Russian speaking community of Casablanca.