

PATRIARCHAL DIVINE LITURGY IN KENYA

On Sunday 18 October 2014, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa conducted the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Cathedral of Ss Anargyri in Nairobi, Kenya, supported by His Eminence Makarios of Kenya, His Grace Innocent Bishop of Burundi and Rwanda and Fr Athenodoros Papaevripiades, as well as many African priests. During the Divine Liturgy, at which the Patriarchal Academy choir sang, His Beatitude ordained to the Diaconate the second year seminarian Ioannis Karakasia. Present at the Divine Liturgy were the Ambassadors of Greece, Russia and Serbia, and hundreds of African Orthodox faithful who filled the Holy Church and the grounds from early in the morning.

In his address among other things the Patriarch expressed his joy on being given the opportunity to begin his second decade as Patriarch with his pastoral visit to Kenya, stressing the great love and interest he has for the progress of Orthodoxy on the African continent, and passed on to the congregation the blessing of St Mark, the first Bishop of Alexandria. Speaking to the local Media, His Beatitude emphasized that as Spiritual Father he works and prays always for peace, prosperity and continued stability throughout Africa and particularly in hospitable Kenya and said: "this is the centre of our mission in Africa". In conclusion he thanked all responsible for the warm welcome afforded him and underscored that as Patriarch he will work towards combating the scourge of the deadly Ebola virus.

In his reply His Eminence Makarios of Kenya thanked His Beatitude for the joy he gave to all Orthodox Kenyans with his presence and stressed that the first decade had been productive and creative seeing that throughout Africa the expansion and consolidation of Orthodoxy is clear in all areas, thanks to the tireless efforts by the Patriarch, his prayers, his guidance and his advice. In conclusion His Eminence expressed the unlimited gratitude of the clergy and the people of Kenya for the presence of the Alexandrian Primate and his spiritual support of the multifaceted work being done in Kenya.

At noon the Ambassador of Greece hosted a reception in honour of the Patriarch and the entire community was invited.

At dawn on Monday 20 October 2014, His Beatitude departed for his See filled with joy, love and gratitude for his successful and blessed journey to Kenya. Bidding farewell to His Beatitude the seminarians of the Patriarchal Academy were asked what message they would like to pass on to their Patriarch and they replied: "we love him and wait for him to return soon".