

## **THE ALEXANDRIAN PRIMATE INVITED TO THE 80th BIRTHDAY OF METROPOLITAN AGATHANGELOS OF ODESSA**

On 27th September 2018, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, responding to an invitation from His Eminence Metropolitan Agathangelos of Odessa and Ismael, arrived in the city of Odessa, to participate in the festivities for the 80th birthday of the Metropolitan.

The Alexandrian Primate and his entourage were welcomed at the airport in Odessa by the local Metropolitan His Eminence Agathangelos, together with the Metropolitans Ilarion of Doyetsk and Maropolis, Mitrophan of Gorlovkas and Slviansk, the Bishops Diodoros of Iouzensk and Viktor of Artsiz.

Immediately on his arrival they went to the Holy Monastery of the Dormition of the Theotokos Uspensky, See of Metropolitan Agathangelos.

In the afternoon His Beatitude visited the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, where he was warmly welcomed with unprecedented enthusiasm by thousands of people who were waiting to receive his blessing. There was a formal Doxology and a prayer for the peace and unity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

His Eminence Agathangelos Metropolitan of Odessa and Ismael spoke warmly of the Alexandrian Primate, thanking him for accepting the invitation, making mention of their friendship since his ten-year ministry in the city of Odessa as Exarch of the Alexandrian Throne.

The Alexandrian Primate in his speech thanked Metropolitan Agathangelos for the invitation to celebrate his 80th birthday with him, speaking also of their many years of friendship which unites them since his ten years of ministry in Odessa (1985-1995) as Exarch of the Patriarchate of Alexandria. He urged the crowd of believers gathered inside and outside the Church to have love, peace and unity for the canonical Church of Ukraine.

His Beatitude then immediately venerated the Sacred relics of St Innocent Metropolitan of Odessa and the miraculous icon of the Most Holy Virgin of "Kasperovskaya" in the Old Cathedral.

They then made their way to the Metropolitan's residence where a dinner was hosted by His Eminence Agathangelos, in the presence of the head of the Greek Consulate in Odessa, Mr. Spyridon Moka.

The Patriarch expressed his gratitude to the acolytes who served him when he ministered in Odessa, most of whom today are Metropolitans, Bishops, Priests, Parliamentarians of the Ukrainian Parliament and dignitaries.

Watch a taped extract here: <https://youtu.be/A4aPYjnjTPI>