

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DIVINE TRANSFIGURATION IN PORT SAID, EGYPT

On 6th August 2017, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, traveled north-eastern Egypt, North of the Suez Canal, to the coastal city of Port Said, See of the Holy Metropolis of Pilousion, to celebrate the feast of the majestic, enormous historic Holy Cathedral of the Transfiguration of the Saviour in the city.

The Holy Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour in Port Said, was inaugurated by the late blessed Fotios, Patriarch of Alexandria, when the Hellenic Community was flourishing in the area, with the origins of most being from the Islands of Kasos and Karpathos, which numbered over fourteen thousand Greeks and hundreds of children attending Greek schools. Among them was also the ever-remembered Patriarch Parthenios III, who came from the area and who Patriarch Fotios urged to study at the famous School of Halki.

During the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy performed by His Beatitude, together with the local Metropolitan of Pilousion, His Eminence Niphon, the Governor of Port Said attended for the very first time, who spoke emotionally of his childhood, when he associated with and visited the homes of Greeks, Also present was the Honorable Coast Guard Consular of the City, Mr. Stavros Evangelides, the Chairmen of the Hellenic and Arabic Communities of Port Said, Mansura, Damietta and Ismailia, together with many pious Christians from these areas and Cairo.

Before the dismissal His Beatitude the Patriarch spoke about the Great Feast of the Divine Transfiguration. He then went on to address His Eminence Niphon, Metropolitan of Pilousion, thanking him for his productive ten-year plus ministry as Abbott of the Holy Monastery of St George in Old Cairo, stressing that he continues minister and contribute to this day with the same zeal the Holy Metropolis of Pilousion. He also mentioned the efforts which are beginning again, under the guidance of Mrs. Athena Spyrantzou, of the teaching of the Greek language. Note that His Eminence Panteleimon Metropolitan of Antinoe, as Metropolitan of Pilousion, had established the "Centre of Greek Language and Culture Learning of the Holy Metropolis of Pilousion", where Greek language and Greek Orthodox Culture was taught to Arabs, Christians and Muslims.

His Beatitude the Patriarch then blessed the fruits of the vine as the Ecclesiastical order of the day sets.

His Eminence Metropolitan Niphon of Pilousion then replied to His Beatitude, expressing his gratitude and that of all the faithful for the presence of the Alexandrian Primate at the celebrations of the Holy Church.

The Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Port Said Mrs. Chrysoula Theocharous then hosted an official lunch in honour of His Beatitude and the entire congregation.

The efforts of His Beatitude continue, that all the Churches in Egypt remain open and that the Divine Eucharist be performed uninterruptedly. As an affectionate Father, "he does not give sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eyelids", but visits all the Holy Churches, giving life and courage to the remaining Greeks, emphasizing and continually enhancing the presence of Orthodoxy and Hellenism in the Land of the Nile.