

## **THE NAME DAY OF THEODOROS II, PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA**

On 17th February, the day on which our Church commemorates the memory of St Theodore of Tyre, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa has his name day which he chose to celebrate in Cyprus.

Festive Vespers was served on the eve of the feast at the Holy Church of St Savvas in Nicosia, conducted by the celebrating Theodoros II, Patriarch of Alexandria, together with His Grace Gregory Bishop of Mesaoria who represented Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus, His Eminence Timothy Metropolitan of Vostros, Exarch of the Most Holy Sepulchre in Cyprus, Their Eminences Metropolitans Chrysostomos of Kyrenia, Athanasios of Limassol, Makarios of Kenya, George of Guinea, Emmanuel of Ptolemaid, Nikodemos of Memphis and His Grace Nicholas Bishop of Amathos.

On the day of the feast, a wonderful con-celebration was served in the above-named Church by the Alexandrian Primate together with Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus and many Hierarchs and Priests, and after the Divine Liturgy His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus welcomed His Beatitude the Patriarch of Alexandria and his delegation to Cyprus and briefed the congregation that a decision has been taken to cede the Holy Church of St Savvas in Nicosia to the Patriarchate of Alexandria.

His Beatitude continued, saying that the times we live in are difficult, particularly in the Middle East, that is why close contact, good cooperation and a harmony between Churches that is pleasing to God, is necessary. Only in this way can we be strong and able to assert the rights of the Patriarchates and of Christians. We have the conviction and the faith that God will not allow further decline of Christianity and Orthodoxy in the Middle East. We need all to be aware, especially Europe, that Christianity was born in the Middle East and it needs to remain here. We all must strive towards this.

His Beatitude the Archbishop assured Patriarch Theodoros that the Church of Cyprus will stand by the patriarchate of Alexandria, just as it stands by the 3 Patriarchates of the Middle East. He concluded by wishing "Many Years Your Beatitude. We are thrilled that this year you are celebrating your name day here among us".

His Beatitude Theodoros II, Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, expressed his gratitude to Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus for the hospitality. "As you know, Your Beatitude, Primates celebrate their name day at the See. Every 17th February I would celebrate in one of the African countries. T

oday I am in the sea of the love of the Church of Cyprus. I feel that I am being fondly embraced by St Savvas the Sanctified, whom we commemorate in Alexandria too". "Your Beatitude, I recently admired you at the Synod of Primates on hearing your concern for the future of Orthodoxy and Christianity, expressing your love which you always show to the ancient Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. Perhaps that is what the Great Patriarch Kyrillos of Alexandria also felt and at the 3rd Ecumenical Council gave Autocephaly to the Church of Cyprus. Today Your Beatitude, you have given us a home, an altar. The Patriarchate was always in dire straits. The Patriarchs had to travel to the countries of the Danube and to Russia to get some help to cope with the demands of the Sultans and to keep the Monasteries and Churches open".

In conclusion His Beatitude the Patriarch once again expressed his gratitude and that of the entire Patriarchate of Alexandria to His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos for all the assistance and support which he showed and awarded him the

medal of the Apostle Mark as a token of recognition as a Great Benefactor of the Church of Alexandria.

At midday His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus hosted a lunch in honour of Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa. Among others, present also were Hierarchs of the Church of Cyprus, the Patriarch's delegation, the Minister of education and Culture, the Mayor of Nicosia, the Chargés d' Affaires of the Greek Embassy, the deputy head of the Police, the head of the National Guard and the Commander of the Hellenic Forces of Cyprus.

On the same day the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Nikos Anastasiades had a meeting at the Presidential Palace with the Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, Theodoros II, who was accompanied by His Beatitude Chrysostomos Archbishop of Cyprus. Once again at the meeting the good cooperation and relations between the three countries of Greece, Cyprus and Egypt was expressed as well as the great solidarity of the Ancient Patriarchates of Alexandria and Cyprus.