

THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS OF KOLWEZI WISHED THE MISSIONARY PATRIARCH FOR HIS NAMEDAY

On Friday 17th February 2016, the feast of the Saint and Great Martyr Theodore of Tyre, the day on which His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa celebrates his name day, a festive Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Holy Church of St Nicholas, within the Missionary Centre of Kolwezi, conducted by the Alexandrian Primate, together with Their Eminences Nicephorus, Metropolitan of Kinshasa, Innocent, Metropolitan of Burundi and Rwanda, and the local Metropolitan Meletios of Katanga, accompanied by the Clergy of the Holy Metropolis. The Members of the Metropolis choir sang during the Liturgy. During the Divine Liturgy, His Beatitude ordained to the Priesthood Fr. Ioannis, who for many years was Archdeacon of the Holy Metropolis of Katanga. Present at the above Sacred Services were the Consul General of Greece in Kinshasa Mr. Gerasimos Dounis, the Governor of the Katanga Region, the Minister of Health of the People's Republic of the Congo, the Attorney General of the region, representatives of local Authorities, government officials and representatives of other doctrines. His Beatitude the Patriarch, visibly moved, spoke during his homily about the Great Martyr St Theodoros, emphasizing the his confession of martyrdom before the persecutors of faith and his love for Jesus Christ. He thanked His Eminence Meletios and all who contributed during all the days of his missionary journey to the excellent organization as well as for the heartfelt wishes for his name day. At the end of the Divine Liturgy the Primate of the Alexandrian Throne, performed the consecration of the Abbot of the Holy Monastery of the Holy Apostles in Kolwezi, Fr Barnabas Gregoriatis to Archimandrite of the Patriarchal Throne and of the Hierarchal Vicar General of the Holy Metropolis of Katanga Fr. Theophilos to Protopresbyter of the Patriarchal Throne. He also consecrated the Catechist elder Theano, one of the first members of the Missionary staff in Kolwezi, to "Deaconess of the Missions" of the Holy Metropolis of Katanga and read the prayer for one entering the "ecclesiastic ministry" for three Nuns and two Catechists, in order for them to assist the missionary effort of the Holy Metropolis, particularly in the Sacraments of Baptisms of adults and marriages, as well as in the Catechetical department of the local Church. Note that it is the first time in the history of Missions in Africa that these consecrations have been done. After the Dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, festive functions took place in the church yard, in honour of the Patriarch's name day, during which crowds of Orthodox Christians offered him gifts to honour him, while the philharmonic band of the Holy Metropolis of Katanga played the Greek and Congolese National Anthems. After the ceremony the Patriarch hosted an agape meal attended by all present and "no one left hungry". A missionary journey has ended, a ray of light and hope has risen in the African sky. Humble servants of Jesus Christ, conveying His message to the ends of the vast African continent. The Lord shows mercy, the Lord sustains, the Lord increases. This is what He preached on earth, the journey towards the nations.