

## THE PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA IN CYPRUS

On 23rd February 2017, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa arrived in Cyprus, following an official invitation from His Beatitude Chrysostomos, Archbishop of Cyprus, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary since his elevation to the rank of Bishop, by his election on 25th February 1978 as Metropolitan of Paphos.

The Alexandrian Primate is accompanied by His Eminence George Metropolitan of Guinea and His Eminence Athanasios of Cyrene, both of whom have their origins in Cyprus, the Very Reverend Daniel Biazis, Chief Secretary of the Holy Synod and the Exarch of the Patriarchate in Cyprus the Reverend Protopresbyter Fr. Athenodoros Papaevripiades.

Immediately after his arrival at the Limassol Airport, the two Primate went to the Palace of the Archdiocese of Cyprus, in Nicosia, where they had a brief meeting.

His Beatitude of Alexandria, as part of his brief visit to Cyprus, then visited in his office, the Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs and Overseas Affairs, Mr. Fotis Fotiou, with whom he discussed in detail the Cypriots who live in Africa, as well as the assistance being organized to be given by the Patriarchate of Alexandria to those returning to the island, in Geri in Nicosia. They also dealt with the implementation of the programme entitled "Alexandria: Nostos – the Return" on matters of the Diaspora, which is the result of cooperation between Cyprus, Greece and Egypt, which aims to gather in Alexandria of Egypt Cypriot and Greek emigrants or their descendants for a return trip to the place where they or their ancestors lived.

On his behalf, the Theodoros, the Primate of Alexandria stressed that the Patriarchate of Alexandria will support with all its strength and voluntarily the whole program, awaiting the reception of the 100 Egyptians, 70 from Greece and 30 from Cyprus. He expressed his great satisfaction that this program is under the auspices of Egyptian President Abdel Fatah Al Sisi and has the unreserved support of both Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and Cypriot President Nikos Anastasiadis. His Beatitude thanked in the person of Mr. Fotiou, His Excellency the President of the Cypriot Republic Mr. Nikos Anastasiadis, for the help and continued support which he gives the ancient Patriarchate of Alexandria.

The Alexandrian Primate then immediately met with the Managing Director of OPAP Cyprus Mr. Dimitri Aletraris, where they discussed ways of the Organization supporting the Humanitarian, Educational and Cultural aims of the Patriarchate.

In the evening His Beatitude the Patriarch officiated at the Service of the 1st Stasis of the Salutations to the Most Holy Theotokos, at the Holy Church of St Savvas in Old Nicosia, a Holy Dependency of the Patriarchate of Alexandria in Cyprus.

There, at the end of the Service, he awarded His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Giannis Kasoulides who was present, the medal of the "Great Cross of the Apostle Mark" of the Throne, so that the Alexandrian Church could honour him for his total contribution to the rights of Cypriot Hellenism and Orthodoxy, expressing his gratitude for his support of the Patriarchate of Alexandria.