

ANNIVERSARY FUNCTION IN HONOUR OF THE PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA IN JOHANNESBURG

On the occasion of the pastoral visit of His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa to Johannesburg, The Holy Metropolis of Johannesburg and Pretoria organized an anniversary function in his honour for the completion of a successful decade as Patriarch, in the hall of the Cypriot Brotherhood on the evening of 20 January 2015.

Present at this function were their Excellencies the Ambassadors of Greece, Cyprus, Russia, Serbia, Romania and Egypt and all community leaders. Many people had arrived from early on at the Cypriot Brotherhood waiting for the Patriarch to receive his blessing and to wish him many years.

On his arrival, visibly emotional, His Beatitude blessed all the priests who were waiting for him at the entrance and he entered the hall to applause and the cry AXIOS AXIOS, while on the large screen photographs were shown of his Journey of Love over a decade on the African continent and throughout the world.

Archimandrite Petros Parginos welcomed His Beatitude, the Ambassadors, the Chairman of the Federation of Hellenic Communities and Societies and all the faithful on behalf of the Holy Metropolis.

He called His Eminence Damaskinos Metropolitan of Johannesburg and Pretoria to the podium and he, speaking of the great fact of the completion of ten years of Patriarchal tenure, spoke simply of all that His Beatitude managed to complete with the grace of God, not easily and effortlessly, but with continual effort. These are works which highlight the Church of Christ

and its Head, works of loving contribution.

His Beatitude then spoke from the heart spoke initially about his personal life's journey, spoke about the first years following his father's death, the years of his priestly and Hierarchal ministry and finally about the decade of his Patriarchal tenure.

His speech was moving, simple, speaking to the heart of everyone, explaining that, whatever has happened to this day and is to happen in the future at our Patriarchate, all have happened with God's grace, through God's plan and to the glory of God.

He thanked the local Metropolitan for the beautiful function in his honour and wished him a good hierarchal ministry on the occasion of his ten years of Hierarchy too, as he is the first Bishop whom he ordained following his elevation to the Patriarchal Throne. For this reason he gave him the first copy of the anniversary publication "THEODOROS II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, A DECADE OF PATRIARCHAL MINISTRY AND CONTRIBUTION 2004-2014" which was recently published.

On the occasion of this festive functions, he awarded the Cross of St Mark to the Chairman of the Cypriot Brotherhood Mr. Andrea Dimitriou and the Chairman of the HIP ALLIANCE Mr. Steve Nicolaou. A programme of Greek traditional dances followed by the Lady of our Patriarchate, Kyria Mary Vasileiou's dance group. His Beatitude then greeted each and every one individually and gave his Patriarchal blessing.