

FINAL DAY OF HIS BEATITUDE'S TRIP TO THE HOLY METROPOLIS OF ZIMBABWE

On Saturday 10th October 2015, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa completed his extraordinary four-day pastoral visit to the Holy Metropolis of Zimbabwe.

Prior to his departure for Johannesburg to attend the annual celebrations of the Russian community for St Sergius of Radonezh, together with the local Metropolitan Seraphim and His Eminence George Metropolitan of Guinea, the Exarch of our Patriarchate in Cyprus Fr Athinodoros, and the Vicar General Fr George, the Missionary Centre of St Nektarios in Waterford, a suburb of the capital of the country, near Harare.

At the Missionary Centre of St Nektarios, a Catechism and Missionary School operate for children, youth and adults, as well as a secondary school and lyceum, a clinic and educational centre for the vocational rehabilitation of women.

Our African brothers and sisters welcomed the Alexandrian Primate with great joy and emotion, not only as their spiritual father, but also as the person who began, with his predecessor, the late Patriarch Petros' blessings, the organization of the Missionary Centre when he served in the country as Metropolitan of Zimbabwe in 2002.

The enormous contribution of the family of the Lady of the Churches of our Patriarchate, Mrs. Ariadne Psillos, was the reason for the founding of a model Missionary Centre which the Alexandrian Primate Theodoros calls the Centre of Missionary Activity in Southern Africa.

His Beatitude had the opportunity of meeting the staff of the

Mission, local clergy and graduates of the Patriarchal Academies of St Athanasios in Alexandria and Archbishop Makarios III in Nairobi, as well as the councils of the Youth and the Women and to give them the necessary paternal guidance for better pastoral service of our Orthodox local brothers and sisters, praying that they will see and be concerned for supporting in every manner the poor and orphaned children of the country.

Then the Chairlady of the indigenous women briefed His Beatitude about their initiatives taken to educate mothers to sew clothes and to do various handcrafts to earn a living, especially following the economic crisis in Greece and Cyprus, on whom the proper survival of our Patriarchate's mission relied for financial support, not only in Zimbabwe, but also in all the other African countries.

His Beatitude told them that "it is better to teach someone how to fish, rather than to give them a fish to eat when they are hungry. That is why His Beatitude stressed that good education is a big deal for the progress and the prosperity of the Peoples of Africa". For this he thanked the Missionary Association, "Agios Kosmas the Aetolian", from Thessaloniki and the Secondary School of St John the Merciful in Limassol, who supported the organization and operation of the Secondary School of "St John the Merciful of Limassol", and the "St Kosmas Grigoriatis" College.

With a donation from the Psillos family, food was given to poor families. His Beatitude announced that with his blessing a Missionary Medical Team will be coming out at the end of the month from Cyprus, from the Pan-Cypriot Association for the Combating of the scourge of hunger, headed by their President, His Eminence Chrysostomos of Kition, to offer free medical care and medication to the local population.

Present at the function were the Ambassador of Greece Mr. Leonidas Kontovounisios, the Consul of Cyprus, Mr. Nestor

Nestoros, Mrs. Ariadne Psillos and Members of our community.

The Alexandrian Primate's Missionary journey will continue to the Eastern African countries of Uganda and South Sudan, where for the first time following the creation of the new State of South Sudan, the Orthodox Churches are being returned to our Patriarchate.