

FIRST DAY OF HIS BEATITUDE'S MISSIONARY VISIT TO ZAMBIA

On the morning of 5th May 2009, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, officiated at the Services of Orthros and the Divine Liturgy at the chapel in the Episcopate of Zambia. He was then interviewed by the local newspapers and among other things expressed his joy for the progress and development of the country, as he had noticed a great difference between the Zambia of today and that of 15 years ago, when he had visited as a member of the entourage of the late Patriarch Parthenios. Answering questions of a social nature, he stressed that only through education and the application of the Gospel, the Word of God, can the social problems of the country be solved.

At noon the Alexandrian Primate attended a lunch hosted in his honour by the Apostolic Nuncio and attended also by the diplomatic corps. During the lunch addresses were made and commemorative gifts exchanged.

During the afternoon His Beatitude visited an orphanage and an AIDS clinic. He prayed very emotionally in the terminal patient's wing and spoke words of love. Meeting the little children in the orphanage who all carry the AIDS disease, he hugged and blessed them and gave them food, medication and gifts. He did the same at the clinic which covers the needs of thousands of patients and encouraged the staff. Adults and children then sang and danced in local African rhythm in honour of their guest.

That night His Beatitude visited and blessed the home of George and Olympia Konidaris, benefactors of the Holy Episcopate of Zambia and awarded his host the Cross of St Mark for his contribution to the Church