

GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE FIRST AFRICAN STUDENTS OF THE PATRIARCHAL ACADEMY OF ALEXANDRIA “ATHANASIOS THE GREAT”

On 24th May 2009, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, officiated at the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Patriarchal Church of St Savvas the Sanctified in Alexandria , before the end of which the award ceremony of the degrees to the first African graduates of the Patriarchal Academy “Athanasios the Great” took place.

During the ceremony, which was attended by His Excellency Mr. Adel Abib, Governor of Alexandria, His Beatitude spoke about the importance of the Academy, whose graduates are now able to return to their countries and teach their African countrymen about the cultivation of the land, give them immediate medical assistance and to help them develop spiritually. He also expressed the gratitude of the Alexandrian Church to His Excellency the Governor and through him to the hospitable Land of the Nile and its President Mr Hosni Mubarak , without whose help and support such significant efforts for the benefit of the suffering people of the African continent would not be able to take place. He also thanked Mr George Diakofotakis, the Consul General of Greece in Alexandria for his valuable assistance in the correct operation of the Academy and through him to the Greece State which always supports the multifaceted service of the Patriarchal Throne.

Ending his speech, His Beatitude praised the Dean, Archimandrite Savvas Heimonettos, and the teaching staff of

the Patriarchal Academy for all their hard work and fervent zeal with which they taught and gave his paternal advice and blessings to the graduates.

Following the award ceremony, which was done by His Excellency the Governor of the Great City , a festal reception was held and at lunch on the same day the Consul General hosted an official lunch in honour of the graduates at the Hellenic naval Club in Alexandria .

Present at the happy occasion of the graduation ceremony were His Grace Gabrile, Bishop of Mareotis, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria; His Grace Spyridon, Bishop of Kanopos, Hegumen of the Holy Patriarchal Monastery of St Savvas, His Excellency the Ambassador of Cyprus in Egypt Mr Konstantinos Leontiou, Mr. Ioannis Siokas, Chairman of the Hellenic Community, chairmen and representatives of Hellenic Societies and other dignitaries.