

# **HIS BEATITUDE ATTENDS IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS AT THE ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY**

On the afternoon of 27<sup>th</sup> November 2008, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, accompanied by His Grace Gabriel, Bishop of Mareotis, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria, went to the Alexandrian Library where the inauguration of the Hellenistic Studies Centre as well as the significant Velimezi-Margariti Icon collection Exhibition took place.

His Beatitude made the following address at the function which is under the aegis of His Excellency the President of Greece Mr Karolos Papoulias and Mrs Susan Mubarak, First Lady of Egypt:

“Alexandria, of art, letters, culture, spiritual research, and man’s ascending to God, famous to the ends of the universe and untouched by the ravages of time once again opens the doors of history here at the Alexandrian Library and welcomes the excellent exhibition of icons from the collection of Velimezi-Margariti.

It is undoubtedly a unique event, because, looking at these brilliant ecclesiastical works, which are the artistic tangible expression of Orthodox faith and teaching, we come to know the historic outcome of their formation, from their beginning, to the technique of Fayum of the ancient Egyptian culture up until their final shaping in the spiritual bosom of Byzantine art.

A meeting, then, of cultures from within the

transforming power of faith! A visible expression of the soul's need to portray high and venerable emotions! A spiritual fragrance, emanating from the finest chords of human substance. Holy artifacts which were respected by the centuries and were preserved by the nations within the changes in the autocracies which prevailed over the ages, so that today, we, the citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century can enjoy them and through them we can remember that even in contemporary times when creation is revered and the Creator God is unknown, man can still adorn the earthly world with unique and inspired works.

We worthily congratulate the organizers of this exhibition which is under the aegis of the President of the Hellenic Republic , Mr. Karolos Papoulias and Mrs. Susan Mubarak, the First Lady of Egypt, the country which surrounded us with so much love, honour and respect and to which we wholeheartedly express our deep and sincere gratitude.

We congratulate Messrs. Emilio and Christos Margaritis, who donated the icons from the Collection of Velimezi-Margaritis to the Benefit Insitute "Alexander Onasis" which, under the Chairmanship of the Hellene from Egypt Mr. Antonios Papademetriou, and his colleagues, are inaugurating in the city of Alexander the Great, this great exhibition.