

HIS BEATITUDE CONDUCTED MEMORIAL PRAYERS FOR PATRIARCH PETROS VII

On 11th September 2014, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa officiated during the Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchal Church of St Savvas the Sanctified in Alexandria and conducted the Memorial Prayers for his predecessor of blessed memory, Patriarch Petros VII, the members of his patriarchal entourage and the crew of the helicopter, on the completion of ten years since the fateful accident which occurred near Agion Oros, on 11th September 2004.

Present were the Honorable Consul General of Greece in Alexandria Mr. Christos Kaposdistrias, representatives of Associations and Societies and many faithful from the Greek and Cypriot Communities.

Following the Memorial Prayers His Beatitude addressed the congregation as follows:

“A decade has passed since that sombre day of 11th September 2004. The news was unbelievable. The news was painful for the Church of Alexandria, the martyred Great Island of Cyprus and all of Greek Orthodoxy throughout the world. The military helicopter which was taking Patriarch Petros VII with his venerable entourage to venerate at the Holy Mountain, fell into the sea, before it could land, taking seventeen souls with it.

Patriarch Petros VII, the robust helmsman of the Alexandrian Church on the threshold of the millennium, the dynamic refurbisher of the valuables belonging to the Throne of St Mark, the optimistic visionary of a viable Missionary Church, crossed the path to life beyond. He was followed by three fine Hierarchs of the Alexandrian Throne: Irenaios of Pilousion, the enthusiastic and tireless worker of evangelism

of the souls of the people in West Africa; Chrysostomos of Carthage, the imposing man of the church who left his own mark on the Dependency in Athens; Nektarios of Madagascar, the selfless missionary who constantly equated himself with the suffering Africans. With them was the friend and companion of the Patriarchate, Hegumen Arsenios of the Holy Monastery of Mahairas in Cyprus. And with them valuable workers of the Throne, Clergy and laity. Together with them worthy officers of the Hellenic Military.

Performing a venerable duty to history and to those who left having contributed in many ways to the Apostolic Throne of Alexandria, today we are simply doing that which we ought to do and nothing more: we remember and we pray. And if some believe that silence is the language of eternity, we believe that the language of prayer conquers the oblivion of time. We pray that those with whom we traveled and worked in the struggle for good, will rest in God's love, the treasurer and benefactor of our souls. Amen!"

It is worth noting that within the framework of the total renovations of the Holy Patriarchal Monastery of St George in Old Cairo, His Beatitude took care of the transfer and respectability of the relics of his predecessors in specifically created beautiful reliquaries in the catacombs of the ancient Rotonda.