

## **HIS BEATITUDE PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE POET OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDER**

On 29th April 2004, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, went to the Cemetery of the Hellenic Community of Alexandria and conducted memorial prayers at the tomb of the poet Constantine Cavafis, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of his birth and the 70th anniversary of the passing of the great Alexandrian.

During his brief address, His Beatitude made mention of the genius Alexandrian wayfarer who expressed as no one else could, the soul of the city; the poet who turned his poetry into a time machine and took us to the Alexandria of timelessness and synchrony. He spoke also of the pervasive observer of life who masterfully rotated the reflectors of his poetic kaleidoscope in order to contemplatively and eloquently imprint the phenomenon of human life in all its dimensions. In conclusion His Beatitude then recited the following poem:

In Church

I love the church; its banners  
Its silver vessels, its candelabra,  
The lights, the icons, the pulpit.  
Whenever I go there, into a church of the Greeks,  
With its scent of incense,  
Its liturgical chanting and harmony,  
The majestic presence of the priests,  
Dazzling in their ornate vestments,  
The solemn rhythm of their gestures –  
My thoughts turn to the great glories of our race,  
To the splendor of our Byzantine heritage.

Present at this memorial veneration, were the Honourable Consul General of Greece, Mr. Ch. Kapodistriasis, the Deputy Chairman of the HCA Mr. N. Kopelos, the Director of the Institute of Hellenic Culture Mr. M. Maragoulis as well as members of the Greek community.