

HIS BEATITUDE'S CONTACTS WITH THE DEPUTY MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS K. TSIARAS AND OF DEVELOPMENT N. MITARAKIS

On 12th January 2013 His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa received in the Patriarchal See His Excellency the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs responsible for issues regarding Hellenes Abroad, Mr. Konstantinos Tsiaras and His Excellency the Deputy Minister of Development Mr. Notis Mitarakis, together with their entourages

During the meeting lengthy discussions were held on matters to do with the activities and the witness of the Second Throne Patriarchate of Orthodoxy throughout the African continent. The distinguished members of the Greek Government express the gratitude of the Motherland to the Alexandrian Primate for the coordinated activity of the Metropolises and the Dioceses of the Throne in 47 of the 55 African countries, even in those where there is no Greek diplomatic presence.

His Beatitude, having thanked the entire Greek Government in the persons of the two Deputy Ministers for the unabated understanding of his spiritual struggle, called on each one separately in the area of his jurisdiction to seize the opportunities which are opening up in Africa, particularly now that the Hellenic Communities throughout Africa are once again being filled by Greeks who are seeking a way out of the economic crisis in the national centre.

His Beatitude expressed practically the gratification of the Throne to Their Excellencies the Deputy Ministers by awarding Mr. Tsiaras the Commander of St Savvas the Sanctified and Mr. Mitarakis the First Commander of the Apostle and Evangelist Mark. For Mr. Mitarakis he reserved special mention regarding his Alexandrian origins. Following the exchange of commemorative gifts, His Beatitude showed his elite guests around the Patriarchal Mansion.

On the evening of the same day, His Beatitude blessed the traditional Vasilopita at the home of the Honourable Consul General of Greece in Alexandria, Mr. Christos Kapodistrias, in the presence of the two Deputy Ministers and took the opportunity of introducing the distinguished guests to the Hellenic Community.

On 13th January 2013 the Patriarch officiated at the Divine

Liturgy, together with the two Deputy Ministers at the Cathedral of the Holy Patriarchal Monastery of St Savvas the Sanctified. Preaching the homily, His Beatitude, citing the host of the late Patriarchs, Hierarchs, Clergy as well as Benefactors, helpers and companions of the efforts of the Patriarchate of the Apostle and Evangelist Mark, emphasized that death is not the loss of life, but the loss of memory, oblivion. He called on the visitors and the community to remember the long history of the Throne, a journey of words and works of love, to feed with hope the difficult presence and the uncertain future. The Patriarch even placed this future in Africa, as the most susceptible to the spiritual seed in the field of evangelization of our time.

Following the end of the Divine Liturgy His Beatitude welcomed his guests from Greece at the reception hall of the Holy Monastery, when he conducted the cutting of the traditional Vasilopita of the Lyceum of Greek Women of Alexandria.