

HOLY THEOPHANY AT THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA

On 5th January 2008, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, accompanied by His Eminence metropolitan Makarios of Kenya and His Grace Gabriel of Mareotis, Patriarchal Vicar of Cairo, officiated at the Service of the Great Hours at the patriarchal Chapel of Ss Theodori, in the Patriarchal Palace .

On the evening of the same day he officiated at Great vespers for Theophany at the Holy Cathedral of the Annunciation in Alexandria .

During the Feast of Theophany His Beatitude conducted the festive Divine Liturgy as well as the Greater Blessing of the Waters, together with the concelebrants His Grace Gabriel of Mareotis and His Grace Spyridon of Kanopos in the Cathedral of the Annunciation, and in the presence of the Consul general of Greece in Alexandria Mr George Diakofotakis, representatives of the Hellenic Community, the Cypriot Brotherhood and Hellenic Associations of the Great City of Alexandria, together with many Christians.

Immediately following the Liturgical prayers, His Beatitude officially received at the Patriarchal See, His Excellency the Governor of Alexandria Mr Adel Abib, who was accompanied by a number of high-ranking officials of local Government, the state Security officials and others.

Addressing his high-ranking visitor, His Beatitude noted the excellent friendship and peaceful co-existence of Christians and Muslims in the Land of the Nile, and underlined the traditionally good co-operation between Egypt and Greece . He also made reference to the opportunities for activities of the Second Throne Church of the African Continent, thanked his

Excellency the President of Egypt Mr Hosni Mubarak for his love and support of the multifaceted general work of the Patriarchate and ended by saying: "May God bless Egypt, its President and the Greek and Egyptian people".

In his reply, Mr Abib expressed his joy and the honour he feels when in the Ancient Patriarchate and beside its venerable Primate, and mentioned his forthcoming visit to the Greek capital, following an official invitation from the Mayor of Athens, Mr Nikitas Kaklamanis.

A reception followed, during which His Beatitude offered gifts to the Governor and his entourage, as well as the beautiful Calendar of the Alexandrian Church. Present at the reception were the Honourable Consul General of Greece Mr George Diakofotakis, officials of the Hellenic Community and many others.

His Beatitude then officiated at the Blessing of the Waters at the Hellenic Naval Club of Alexandria. Five Greek youth dived into the cold waters of the sea to bring out the Precious Cross. His Beatitude gave each of them valuable commemorative gifts. The Chairman of the Naval Club, Mr Edmund Kasimatis, then hosted an official lunch in honour of the Patriarch and the Officials, and again, gifts were exchanged.