

HOLY THEOPHANY AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On 5th January 2010 His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa officiated at the Service of the Great Hours, Great Vespers and the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Patriarchal Church of St Savvas the Sanctified.

During the celebration of Theophany officiated at the festive Divine Liturgy and the Service of the Greater Sanctification of Water, together with His Grace Gabriel, Bishop of Mareotis, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria, in the presence of the His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece in Egypt Mr. Christodoulos Lazaris, the Honourable Consul General of Greece in Alexandria Mr. George Diakofotakis, representatives of the Hellenic Community, the Cyprus Brotherhood, Hellenic Societies and Associations of the Great City and many faithful Christians.

Immediately thereafter, His Beatitude officially received in the Patriarchal See His Excellency Mr. Adel Abib, Governor of Alexandria, accompanied by a large group of high-ranking officials of the local Government, the State Security and other officials of the country.

Addressing his guest His Beatitude emphasized the excellent relations of friendship and peaceful coexistence of Christians and Muslims in the Land of the Nile, stressed especially that the recent terror attack is a distressing event which cannot destroy the country's image nor can it create feelings of insecurity, and also spoke of the traditionally great cooperation between Egypt and Greece. Ending, he thanked His Excellency the President of Egypt Mr. Hosni Mubarak via the Governor for his love and support of the multifaceted work of the Alexandrian Church.

He also thanked the Governor himself for his immediate response on issues regarding the general operation of the Patriarchate.

In his reply, His Excellency the Governor thanked the Venerable Primate for the warm welcome, as well as the Greeks for all that they gave historically to Egypt. Speaking of the distressing events of New Year he expressed his sadness for the deaths of the 23 victims of the bloody attacks. He went on to guarantee the security of the Patriarchate and of all of the Holy Churches and Diplomatic Missions through strict security measures which have already been taken in Alexandria. He then also mentioned the excellent relations between the religious communities of the Great City.

His Beatitude then met with His Excellency the Governor, the Ambassador of Greece, the Consul General and the Egyptian Officials in his Private Patriarchal Office.

In the afternoon His Beatitude officiated at the ceremony of the Blessing of the Water at the Hellenic Naval Club of Alexandria. Eight Greek youths jumped into the freezing cold waters of the sea to bring out the Precious Cross. His Beatitude gave them valuable commemorative gifts. The Chairman of the Naval Club Mr. Edmond Kasimatis hosted an official lunch in honour of the Patriarch and the Community.