

HOLY WEEK AND THE RESURRECTION IN ALEXANDRIA

With religious devotion, the Holy Services of Holy Week 2025 were celebrated in all the Holy Churches of Alexandria. His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, presided over the Holy Services, having visited the Parish Communities of the Great City.

In particular, it is noted that, according to tradition, the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts was celebrated by His Beatitude on Holy Monday at the Holy Patriarchal Church of Saint Savvas the Sanctified, the Sacrament of Holy Unction at the Arabic Orthodox Parish Community of the Theotokos of Alexandria and at the Holy Patriarchal Church of Saint Savvas on Holy Wednesday, the Service of the Holy Passion and the Epitaphios Lamentations at the Holy Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Theotokos and the procession of the Holy Epitaph around it, officiated by His Beatitude, who was accompanied by the Very Reverend Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria, Archimandrite Damaskinos and clergy of the Patriarchal Court, led by the Corps of Greek Scouts and the presence of the Honorable Consul General of Greece in Alexandria, Mr. Ioannis Pyrgakis, the Honorable President of the Hellenic Community of Alexandria, Mr. Andreas Vafeiadis and the Members of the Community Committee, the President of the Greek Naval Club of Alexandria and the Association of Greek Scientists "Ptolemy I" Mrs. Irene-Lilika Thliviti, Presidents and members of Hellenic associations, organizations and believers.

During the procession of the holy Epitaphios, His Beatitude the Patriarch offered a prayer for the repose of His venerable Predecessors before the Patriarchal Palace, for the venerable Presidents and Members of the Hellenic Community of the Great City and for the Great National Benefactors. Furthermore, he

ferverently prayed for the reign of peace in the long-suffering regions of the Middle East, in Ukraine, in Africa and wherever peoples are tested by conflicts of war and fratricidal bloodshed.

In conclusion, he expressed his gratitude to the Presidents of the Egyptian, Greek and Cypriot Republics for the unwavering support of the respective states for the ancient Patriarchate, while with emotion he expressed the Church's just praise and paternal love for the venerable Hierarchy and the holy clergy of the Apostolic and Patriarchal Throne of Alexandria for their selfless sacrificial ministry and multilateral missionary work for the peoples of Africa.

On the morning of Great and Holy Friday, the service of the Holy Hours and the Vespers of the Ascension were celebrated at the Holy Monastery of Saint Savvas, while later His Beatitude the Patriarch made a pilgrimage to all the churches and the Greek Cemetery of the city, where he offered a memorial prayer for the repose of the souls of Christians who have fallen asleep over the centuries.

Finally, the Ceremony of the Resurrection and the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy took place in the exquisite Cathedral of the Great City, presided over by His Beatitude and concelebrated by the Hierarchical Head of the Church, His Eminence Panteleimon, Metropolitan of Ptolemais, Chief Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Supreme Patriarchate, who read the following Patriarchal Confirmation on Holy Pascha 2025 of the Venerable Primate of Alexandria:

T H E O D O R O S I I

BY THE MERCY OF GOD

**POPE AND PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA AND ALL AFRICA
TO THE FULLNESS OF OUR**

SUPREME APOSTOLIC and PATRIARCHAL THRONE

GRACE and MERCY and PEACE FROM
OUR LORD and GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST
RISEN FROM THE DEAD

Dear and beloved children in the Lord,

Pascha, *"a feast of feasts and a celebration of celebrations"*! Pascha is the culmination of the Divine plan of our salvation, as *"Christ is risen from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep"* (1 Corinthians 15:20), fulfilling the prophecies: *"I will deliver my soul from death"* (Psalm 85:13). The Son and Word of God became incarnate to restore man to his original fullness, according to Athanasius the Great of Alexandria, and was crucified so that man could form a redemptive relationship of communion with God. *"For he became human, that we might become God,"* (Athanasius the Great of Alexandria, On the Incarnation, 54) and *"... he died for all, that he might give life to all,"* (On the Incarnation, 9).

The Resurrection of our Lord is not a mere historical event, but the definitive victory over death and the beginning of the re-creation of the world. *"Death is swallowed up in victory!"* Jesus, through His Cross and Resurrection, opens the gate of Hades to the eternal glory of the Kingdom, as He promised: *"He who believes in me, even though he dies, yet will he live"* (John 11:25). By His Resurrection, Christ offers people the possibility of participating in eternal life, restoring humanity to its original spiritual innocence. *"I am the resurrection and the life"* (John 11:25). Thus, the Resurrection is not only the overcoming of death, but the complete restoration of man, as *"in the image and likeness of God."*

Orthodox life and tradition are inextricably linked to the reality of the Cross and the Resurrection, as *"through the*

Cross, joy came to the whole world." There is no true Resurrection unless it is preceded by the journey of the cross, as Christ himself taught: *"If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"* (Matt. 16:24). His Resurrection comes as the unshakable proof of His Divinity, but also as an absolute confirmation of the overcoming of every crisis, every decay, every loss in every generation. *"And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is in vain,"* (1 Cor. 15:17). After all, this paradoxical relationship of Cross and Resurrection, of pain and healing, of all kinds of nullification/death and transcendence/resurrection governs our entire life.

My brothers and sisters,

Already in the 21st Christian century, war and ongoing hostilities in various parts of the world, such as the Middle East and Ukraine, are still causing huge humanitarian crises, unbearable suffering and devastation. Africa is facing bloody hostilities, which affect the achievement of political stability, peace and progress, since more than 35 generalized conflicts are ongoing in its long-suffering lands. In Sudan, armed conflicts between the army and paramilitary groups have led to thousands of deaths and displacement. Ethiopia and other countries such as Somalia, Nigeria, Niger, Libya continue to experience bloody ethnic conflicts and attacks by extremist groups. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the number of displaced people from ongoing internal conflicts have reached 7 million. Poverty and hunger affect most of the population of Epirus, enhancing social inequalities and creating a vicious cycle of misery, poverty and injustice. **In short, our beloved Africa is the modern "Place of the Skull", the martyred and bloodthirsty Golgotha of the 21st century,** the contradictory century between the between the promised costly colonization of other planets in the vast expanse of the sky and the deprivation of essential food items *"in two (2) out of three (3) households in West and Central African*

countries, which do not have the financial ability to follow a healthy diet”, according to the regional food security analysis, which was released in December 2023 by the World Food Programme (WFP) and other humanitarian organizations. One in four of our African brothers and sisters is malnourished and starving in 2025!

Our Most Holy Church, as the Body of Christ, unceasingly calls the world to repentance, that is, to the recognition of its mistakes, failures and sins, to a change of mentality and to spiritual rebirth through Divine Grace. A valuable fruit of this experiential struggle in the Holy Spirit is certainly the conquest of inner peace by each person, so that the generalized prevalence of peace and progress may ultimately be achieved, as a comprehensively conscious and harmonious attitude and action of the ecclesiastical Body, which does not identify with the secular mentality, but follows the Will of God, which always remains good and perfect.

My dear spiritual children,

Golgotha ☩ experienced the landmark day, “the evening of the first day of the week,” on which our Lord trampled death underfoot through His death and Resurrection, offering humanity the gift of the immortality of our soul: *“By his stripes we are healed”* (Isa. 53:5). Although everyday life for millions of our fellow human beings in Africa and other regions of the world is filled with the destruction and devastation of hostilities, as well as the scourge of hunger and poverty, from this pain can emerge the hope of a new life, the prospect of rebirth, salvation and restoration of the human person and humanity. And this is achieved through the spiritual struggle, **when each person wants to replace the “I” with the “We”**, when they decide to seek truth, love and justice for the good of our world, the irreversibly common home of all of us.

May the Peace of Christ, “which surpasses all understanding”

(Phil. 4:7), fill the hearts of all with the Unfailing Light of His Resurrection and bring reconciliation to the world, awakening the deadened consciences of those who act as "*man is a wolf to man*" "*Homo homini lupus*", Comedy Asinaria, Titus Maccius Plautus, c. 254-184 BC). May it enlighten the powerful of the earth, guiding them to Truth, Justice and the Love of God. By the Grace of the Risen Lord, let us become bearers of love and hope, so that His peace may reign "in the whole world" and His light may shine in our daily efforts, leading us on the path of our salvation, (Ps. 118:105).

So be of good cheer, my children! "All of you, enjoy the banquet of faith; all of you, enjoy the wealth of righteousness. Let no one bewail his poverty; for the universal Kingdom has appeared.... Let no one fear death; for the death of the Savior has set us free... Christ is risen and the Angels rejoice, Christ is risen and life reigns!" (Catechetical Discourse of St. John Chrysostom).

Christ is Risen! Indeed the Lord is Risen!

With Resurrectional prayers and boundless paternal love

† T H E O D O R O S II

Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa

In the Great City
of Alexandria Holy
Holy Pascha 2025

The Most Reverend Consul General of Greece in Alexandria, Mr. Ioannis Pyrgakis, the Honorable President of the Greek Community of Alexandria, Mr. Andreas Vafeiadis and the Members of the Community Committee, the Honorary President of the Greek Nautical Club of Alexandria and the Association of Greek Scientists "Ptolemy I" Mrs. Irene-Lilika Thliviti, Presidents and members of Greek associations and organizations and Alexandrian Greeks and Russian believers participated in the

Easter Divine Liturgy.

*Photos: His Eminence Panteleimon of Ptolemais, and
Mr. Grigory Chaliakopoulos*