

PATRIARCHAL DIVINE LITURGY IN JOHANNESBURG — FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS FOR THE NATIONAL ANNIVERSARY

On 21st march 2010 His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, conducted the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of Ss Constantine and Helen in Johannesburg, together with the local Metropolitan Seraphim, and officiated at the Doxology for the National Day of 25th March (which for local reasons was celebrated on this day).

Before the end of the Divine Liturgy His Eminence Seraphim and His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece Mr.Spyridon Theoharopoulos, addressed His Beatitude, mentioning the great significance and also blessing of his visit.

In his reply, His Beatitude spoke to the congregation both about the life and spiritual struggles of St Mary of Egypt as an example of repentance, as well as about the significance of the Greek Revolution and the current struggles of the South African people, under the leading figure of Nelson Mandela. Following this, the Hellenic Community of Johannesburg hosted a reception in honour of His Beatitude.

His Beatitude then went on to the Greek Sporting Club where the function of the Federation of Hellenic Communities took place in collaboration with the Holy Metropolis of Johannesburg and Pretoria and the Diplomatic authorities. The functions were declared open by His Beatitude who lit the flame on the altar of Freedom and addressed the crowds expressing his love and emphasizing the importance of

maintaining the Greek language, culture and love for our homeland, Greece!

The parade then took place with the participation of all communities, societies, brotherhoods and schools, headed by SAHETI School.

Present at the Liturgical and festive functions were representatives of the Hellenic Parliament, Messrs. Meimarakis and Moschopoulos, His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece in South Africa Mr Spyridon Theoharopoulos, the Consul General of Greece in Johannesburg Mrs Vasiliki Gounaris, the Consul General of Cyprus Ms E. Haralambous, the Educational Attaché of Sub-Saharan Africa Mrs Plakidou, Chairmen of the Hellenic and Cypriot communities, brotherhoods, societies and associations, staff of the Hellenic Schools, state officials and others.