

NEW YEAR'S DAY AT THE PATRIARCHATE OF ALEXANDRIA

Joy was reflected on everyone's faces at the Patriarchal Mansion on New Year's Eve, 2023. After the submission of festive wishes and the traditional carols by the Members of the Patriarchal Court, the African students of the Patriarchal Academy of Alexandria and the staff of the Patriarchate to His Beatitude Theodoros II Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa at the Private Patriarchal Office, Great Vespers followed, for the Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord and St Basil the Great, officiated by His Beatitude, in the Patriarchal Chapel of Saints Theodori, crowded with parishioners and visitors from Greece.

Assisting were His Eminence Panteleimon, Metropolitan of Naucratis, Chief Secretary and Member of the Holy Synod, and His Eminence Narcissus Metropolitan of Pelusium, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria. Present were His Eminence Germanos Metropolitan of Tamiathus, Abbot of the Holy Monastery of St Savvas in Alexandria, the Dean of the "St Athanasios" Patriarchal Academy the Very Reverend Archimandrite Isaac Tsapoglou and the rest of the Greek and Arab clergy of the Holy Archdiocese of the Great City.

Also present were His Excellency the Consul General in Alexandria Mr. Athanasios Kotsionis with his wife, the Vice Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Alexandria Mr. Andreas Vafiades, the Captain and Liaison of the Hellenic Navy Mr. Konstantinos Varouxis together with his wife who is also an officer of the Hellenic Navy, the President of the Naval Club of Alexandria and of the Association of Greek Scientists "Ptolemy I" Mrs. Lilica Thlivitou.

Afterwards, in the Throne Room, His Beatitude blessed the St Basil Cakes, cut the first piece and then invited the official institutional representatives to take turns cutting pieces from the St Basil Cakes, an act that, in addition to being a Christian custom, also symbolizes the unity of all people from Egypt in the City of Alexander. The lucky coin fell to His Eminence Panteleimon, Metropolitan of Naukratis, to whom everyone wished that luck would always be with him in his life.

On the first day of the New Year 2023 in Alexandria a Divine Liturgy was served and a Doxology was chanted in the Holy Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Theotokos. The Divine Liturgy was served by His Eminence Panteleimon Metropolitan of Naucratis, Hierarchical Dean of the very beautiful church, officiated by His Beatitude Patriarch Theodoros II, accompanied by Their Eminences the Metropolitans Narcissus of Pelusium and Germanos of Tamiathus.

This was followed by the Doxology for the beginning of the new year, attended by the Captain and Liaison of the Navy, Mr. Konstantinos Varouxis and his wife his wife, the 1st Vice Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Alexandria Mr. Andreas Vafiades, the President of the Naval Club of Alexandria and of the Association of Greek Scientists "Ptolemy I" Mrs. Lilica Thlivitou, the Chairlady of the Lyceum of Greek Ladies Mrs. Aliki Antoniou and many friends and members of the community, while the presence of several Greek excursionists who attended the Holy Church of the Annunciation on the first day of the year was a pleasure.

Speaking, His Beatitude wished everyone love, peace and health. He also did not forget, once again, to refer to the Christian brothers of Ukraine who are suffering from the war of aggression from Russia, expressing his love for the suffering Ukrainian people and praying for the end of this unbrotherly crime. He also expressed the hope that our Russian Orthodox brothers will quickly find their inner peace, since war only destroys people's lives. Especially if it is among orthodox peoples, then the pain becomes more painful because of its absurdity.

The cutting of the St Basil's Cakes then took place in the Cathedral. The Patriarch

extended wishes to everyone, while congratulating His Eminence Metropolitan Panteleimon for the hospitality of Abraham. The coin fell to the Archdeacon of the Holy Archdiocese of Alexandria, Fr Theodoros Mutombo, of Congolese origin.

Finally, His Beatitude, accompanied by His Eminence Narcissus of Pelusium, went to the "MANNA" Aged Home of the Greek Community of Alexandria, where he visited the boarders and had a meal with them. With him were the Consul General in Alexandria – recently promoted to the rank of Ambassador – Mr. Athanasios Kotsionis and the First Vice President of the Greek Community of Alexandria, Mr. Andreas Vafiadis.

(Excerpt republished from the website of the Hellenic Community of Alexandria)