

THE ANNIVERSARY OF HIS FIFTH YEAR AS PATRIARCH CELEBRATED

The completion of five years since his elevation to the Apostolic and Patriarchal Throne of St Mark (9 October 2004 – 9 October 2009) was celebrated by His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, the 124th Primate of the Church of Alexandria.

With the participation of the Venerable Members of the Holy Synod, the auxiliary Bishops, the clergy, the Orthodox lay people and groups of pilgrims from Greece, a Patriarchal and Synodal Service was held in the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Theotokos in Alexandria.

The homily was delivered by His Eminence Sergios, who spoke of the productive five-year tenure of His Beatitude and the congratulatory telegram for this auspicious day from His Beatitude Kyril of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch was read.

Before the end of the Eucharistic gathering His Beatitude awarded the office of Archon Ekdikos to the Journalist Mr. Constantinos Tsarouhas, the office of Archon Hartoularios to the Dean of the Law Faculty of the Athens University Professor Michael Alexiades and to the Honourable Mrs. Chloe Balanou from the Cameroon, the office of Great Lady of the Throne.

In the Throne Room of the Patriarchal Mansion His Beatitude honoured His Excellency Mr. John Alexios Zepos, Ambassador of Greece in Egypt with the Great Cross of St Mark for his Ambassadorial tenure in the Land of the Nile, as he is soon to take up his new duties as Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece.

His Beatitude asked His Excellency Mr. Zepos to pass on to His Excellency the Prime Minister Mr. George Papandreou his love and appreciation, as well as the assurance that the Patriarchate and the Greeks in Egypt will continue to preserve national and spiritual "Thermopylae" in Egypt and in the rest of Africa.

Addresses to His Beatitude were made also by: the Honourable Consul General of Russia who also gave him a gold-embroidered copy of a byzantine art breastplate; the Great Archon Logothetis Mr Spyridon Kamalakis who gave His Beatitude a true copy of an historic pectoral cross, bearing the lion of the Apostle Mark, of his eminent predecessor Meletios II, Metaxakis (1926 – 1935); the erudite Professor Theodoros Panagopoulos, Chairman of the Brotherhood of Officebearers "Apostle Mark", who gave him the first gold copy of the quill of the late Prime Minister of Greece Eleftherios Venizelos; the Dean of the Faculty of Law at the university of Athens, Professor Michael Alexiades, the Professor of the University of Thrace Mr. Emmanuel Barbounis, Archon Hartophylax and the Lecturer from the Theological Faculty of the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki Mr. Panayiotis Tzoumerkias, Archon Ypomnimatographos, who officially handed His Beatitude the two Volumes titled "Alexandrinus Amittos", dedicated to the memory of Mr. John Hatzifotis, a Greek from Egypt.

Also, His Beatitude presented and blessed new mosaic presentations which adorn the outside of the Patriarchal Residence, donated by Archon Referendarios Mr Anestis Arnopoulos, a businessman from the Cameroon.

An open official lunch which was hosted by the Primate of the Alexandrian Church was held at the hall in the Hellenic Community of Alexandria.

The liturgical and spiritual functions were attended by His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece in Egypt, Mr. John Alexios Zepos, the new Secretary General of the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Greece, His Excellency the Ambassador of Cyprus in Egypt, Mr. Costas Leontiou, The Consuls General of Greece in Alexandria and Cairo, Messrs Diakofotakis and Vasilokonstantakis, the Honourable Consul General of Russia in Alexandria, the Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Alexandria Mr John Siokas, the Deputy Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Cairo, Mr. Nicholas Badis, the Chairman of the Brotherhood of Office bearers "Apostle Mark" Professor Theodoros Panagopoulos, Great Archon Logotheits Mr Spyridon Kamalakis, office bearers of the Throne, lecturers as well as representatives of Greek and Arab Orthodox societies and organizations.

Also present were representatives of the Hellenic Scouts from Greece, Cairo and Alexandria, headed by the Chairman of the EC of the Hellenic Scouting Body Mr Christos Stathopoulos, as well as officers from the Greek Frigate "SPETSES" and the submarine "POSEIDON" which arrived in the harbour of the Great City in the framework of a multinational naval exercise.