

## **THE PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA AT THE HOLY METROPOLIS OF ZIMBABWE**

At noon on Saturday the 6th of October 2018, His Beatitude Theodoros the 2nd Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa arrived in Harare for a 5 day pastoral visit to the Holy Metropolis of Zimbabwe, accompanied by His Eminence George, Metropolitan of Guinea.

His Beatitude was welcomed at the International Airport in Harare by the Director of Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a representative of the President of the country, the Ambassador of Greece Mr. George Markantonatos, the Ambassador of Egypt Mr. Mohammed Fahmy, the local Metropolitan of Zimbabwe and Angola His Eminence Seraphim, the Metropolitan of Nairobi Makarios and of Zambia and Malawi Ioannis, the Honorary Consul of Cyprus Mr. Nestoras Nestoros, the Chair-lady of the Federation of Hellenic Communities Mrs. Ellou Koumidou, the Lady of the Churches Mrs. Ariadne Psyllou, Fr. George Saganis, local and community agents.

During the Patriarch's arrival, he was given the honors of a Head of State. It is worth noting that for the first time, the Patriarch was welcomed to the country as an official guest of the President Mr. Emmerson Mnangagwa.

Following this, the official welcoming of the Patriarch took place at the Holy Metropolis where, in the Holy Chapel of the Transfiguration of the Lord, a Doxology was sung for his arrival, in the presence of the above named local clergy, crowds of people, members of the community and African Orthodox Christians.

His Eminence Seraphim welcomed the Alexandrian Primate, thanking God that the Alexandrian Primate is always close to his flock, giving hope for a better tomorrow, at a time when the country is facing enormous economical and social problems and recently, the great problem of Cholera which has infected over 5000 (Officially 40 deaths have been announced) and for this reason, the country is in a state of urgent need.

Deeply moved, the Patriarch expressed his love and concern that the people of Zimbabwe will be protected, particularly children, who usually, when there are crisis, are the innocent victims. He stressed the importance of his visit which will center on three parts: The festivities for the 50 years of the Holy Metropolis of Zimbabwe, the 14th Anniversary of his election to the Patriarchal Throne of the Apostle Mark and the annual celebrations of the venerable person of Mother Efterpi.

In the faces of the representatives of the countries of Zimbabwe, Greece, Egypt and Cyprus, he thanked their Governments for their moral and material support of the missionary efforts of the Patriarchate.

He also thanked the leadership of the community for their support of the local Church and congratulated the local Clergy and catechists for their participation in the witness of Orthodoxy to the local community.

During his stay in Zimbabwe, His Beatitude will have the opportunity of meeting the President of the country, will visit Missionary Centers, will perform group Baptisms and will hand out food and clothing to the local population.