

THE PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA ATTENDS THE GRADUATION OF THE STUDENTS OF THE PATRIARCHAL ACADEMY IN KENYA

Saturday 18 October was a day of joy and blessing in Kenya, when His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa blessed the graduation ceremony of the students of the Patriarchal Academy in Nairobi.

Present at the beautiful ceremony which took place in the grounds of the "Archbishop Makarios III" Patriarchal Academy in the Riruta district, were the local Hierarch Makarios, Metropolitan of Kenya, His Eminence George Metropolitan of Guinea, His Grace Innocent Bishop of Burundi and Rwanda, Fr. Athenodoros Papaevripiades, representatives of the Church of Finland, the Apostolic Nuncio, the Ambassadors of Greece, Russia, Serbia and Egypt, representatives of local authorities, African clergy and crowds of people.

The ceremony began with the welcome of the Patriarch and the invited guests. Then the students of the Patriarchal Academy and the choirs of the catechetical schools presented a programme of ecclesiastical hymns and traditional songs. Ecclesiastical hymns were also sung by two famous Kenyan singers who belong to the Orthodox family.

There followed the address by His Eminence Makarios, Metropolitan of Kenya and the reply by the Patriarch. Among other things His Beatitude expressed his great joy that God had deemed him worthy once again to be at a graduation ceremony of the student of the Patriarchal Academy and stressed the enormous importance of education in the creating of a healthy community, congratulated all the teaching staff for their efforts and particularly the local Metropolitan who day and night keeps alight the flame of Orthodoxy in Kenya.

He then went on to hand out the certificates to the graduates of the Educational Academy. The guests then handed out the certificates to the graduates of the Technological Academy and the Academy of Social Studies. The certificates of the Patriarchal Academy are accredited by the Kenyan Ministry of Education and are equal to those of state universities.

The ceremony ended with the singing of the Kenyan National Anthem. His Beatitude congratulated all the graduates and gave gifts to the children of the catechetical schools.

That afternoon the Patriarch met with the Secretary General of the Pan-African Council of Churches, Dr. Karamaga Andre. During the meeting they discussed the organization of an information campaign for the prevention of the deadly Ebola virus and briefed him regarding the humanistic aid which the Patriarchate sends to the affected area of West Africa, coordinated by Metropolitan George of Guinea.