

## THE PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA HONOURS THE HEAD OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF CYPRUS

On Thursday 4th April 2019, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, welcomed with all honour to the See of the Patriarchate in Alexandria, the Chief of the National Guard of the Republic of Cyprus, Lieutenant-General Ilias Leontaris, as part of his official visit to Egypt.

Chief Elias Leontaris was accompanied by his wife Mrs. Sonia Leontari, Major General Mohamed El Keshky, on behalf of the Egyptian Armed Forces with his wife, the Defense Attaché of the Embassy of the Republic of Cyprus in Egypt, Lieutenant Colonel Mr. Konstantinos Fotiou and officers from the Headquarters of the National Guard of Cyprus and Egypt.

In his address, the Alexandrian Primate welcomed his high-ranking guest to the Patriarchal Hall of the Throne, expressing his deep emotion for the visit of the Chief to the See of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria.

*«My Chief, you come to Alexandria today as the Head of the Armed Forces of Cyprus, to bring a message of Peace and Hope.*

*Two thousand years have passed, yet Thermopylae are still maintained in the hospitable and blessed land of Egypt. Christ as a refugee found protection in Egypt. Egypt also hosts our Patriarchate.*

*Chief, I wish to express my warm thanks to the Egyptian Army and the President of the Republic of Egypt, Abdul Fatah al Sisi, the man who, with much love, protects me».*

In conclusion, addressing Chief Elias Leontaris, His Beatitude referred to the multifaceted religious and humanistic efforts done by the ancient Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa, throughout the African Continent.

The Alexandrian Primate then awarded the Chief of the National Guard of the Republic of Cyprus, Lieutenant-General Elias Leontaris, with the Gold Lion of the Alexandrian Patriarchal Throne.

In his reply, Chief Elias Leontaris praised the contribution of the Patriarchate, admiring what is happening on the black African continent and how today it is becoming a partaker of and witness to this blessed work.

Afterwards, visitors had the opportunity to go on a conducted tour of the premises of the Archaeological Museum, the Patriarchal Library and the Patriarchal sacristy.