

THE SERVICE OF THE GREAT CANON AND TONSURE OF A MONK BY THE ALEXANDRIAN PRIMATE

On the evening of the 14th April, 5th week of Lent, during the Service of Small Compline the Great Canon was chanted at the Holy Patriarchal Monastery of St Savvas the Sanctified in Alexandria, conducted by His Beatitude Theodoros II Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, together with the Alexandrian Hierarchs, His Eminence Narcissus Metropolitan of Nafkratis, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria and His Grace Germanos Bishop of Tamiathus.

Prior to the Dismissal, His Beatitude the Patriarch, filled with emotion, tenured Deacon Kevin Madahana Luyali as a monk, giving him the name Joachim. Thereby honouring St Joachim I Panis, Patriarch of Alexandria and a virtuous and wise man of the church.

Fr Joachim was born and baptised in Kisumu, in Kenya. He completed his studies in his homeland and with great love and modesty he studied at the "Archbishop of Cyprus Makarios III" Patriarchal Academy in Nairobi, Kenya. He is defined by his modesty of character, but also the spirit of learning and above all obedience to the Father of all Africa, the Primate of the Church of Alexandria.

At the end of the monastic tonsure, a visibly moved Pope and Patriarch spoke to Fr Joachim, emphasizing the following: *"I welcome you today, my child, Fr. Joachim, to the fraternity of the blessed Holy Fathers of St Savvas. From the 4th century, thousands, hundreds of monks, whose tears and sweat watered this floor here and that is why the blessing of Saint Sava, and especially of the Apostle Mark, will always accompany you"*.

"You are a blessed child from Kenya, you are a child of ours who will glorify the Church with your life. I remember you with a lot of love from the time you were studying at the School in Nairobi and with a lot of love and joy I met you in Kisumu. From today you are an angel of God and all of us who hear the service remember our own moment, when as young people we dedicated ourselves to Christ ".

"Father Joachim, do not forget these moments ever, up until you present yourself to the Throne of Christ. You will not show wealth and glory, but tears, humility and patience, so that you may hear the words of Christ "Come! Come to the Kingdom of God."

"My prayer will accompany you always. The prayers of the Holy Hierarchs, the prayers of the fathers and always teach Christ especially in Africa, the Continent of the Future".

Refreshments were served in the Throne Room of the Patriarchal Monastery.