

## **Patriarch of Alexandria led Third Stanza of the Salutations at the Church of the Virgin Mary in Heliopolis**



The Greek Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary in Heliopolis was filled to capacity on Friday, 5 April 2024, as a large congregation of believers gathered to participate in the Service of the Third Stanza of the Salutations to the Most Holy Theotokos. His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodore II of Alexandria and All Africa presided over the Compline Service. He was accompanied by the local Shepherd, His Eminence Metropolitan Nikodimos of Memphis and Patriarchal Vicar of Cairo, His Grace Bishop Stefanos of Hippo, along with other clergymen.

After the dismissal of the Salutations Service, the Patriarch spoke passionately about the emotional days he experienced alongside his African brothers. He shared both the challenges and the joys he encountered on his journey, expressing the profound satisfaction he felt when inaugurating schools for African children who

had been deprived of a mother's embrace.

His Beatitude also directed our attention and prayers towards the ongoing war in Gaza, highlighting the grave injustices faced by the Palestinian people. Finally, gazing deeply into the eyes of all the faithful, he expressed heartfelt gratitude for their unwavering faith and the tangible love they demonstrate towards their Church.

The service was attended by, among others, the Ambassador of Greece to Egypt, His Excellency Mr. Nikolaos Papageorgiou, the Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of Cyprus, Mr. Onoufrios Oikonomidis, the Vice-President of the Greek Community of Cairo, Mr. Michalis Grunstein, the President of the Charity Association "Mary of Egypt", Ms. Evangelia Thiraiou, Mr. Claude Nakas, President of the Arab-speaking Orthodox, and Ms. Arlette Monsef, President of the H.O.C.



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