09/01/2025

The Feast of Epiphany was solemnly celebrated in Alexandria



Every year, the Feast of Epiphany in Alexandria radiates its divine light across the Orthodox Christian faithful.

The unique setting—the azure sky, the historical journey of Hellenism in the land of the Nile—imbues the day with a brilliance that seems to make everything gleam in anticipation. This sacred celebration culminates in the release of pure white doves, symbolising the Holy Spirit, fluttering gracefully as they are freed from the hands of His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria and All Africa.

This moment marks a pinnacle for the Hellenism of Egypt, but its significance extends even further, resonating with the global Greek diaspora, which remains historically intertwined with the Great City, the ancient and quintessential cradle of expatriate Hellenism.

The first part of the day’s celebration was the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Theotokos. Presiding over the service, His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria and All Africa, inspired all attendees with a message of hope and renewal for the new year: a courageous affirmation that all will be well, that hope must never be lost, love must prevail, and faith will yield results.

Concelebrating with the Patriarch were Metropolitan Narcissus of Pelusium, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria; Metropolitan Germanos of Tamiathus, Prior of the Patriarchal Monastery of St. Savvas; Archimandrite and Abbot of the Holy Monastery of St. George, Fr. Damaskinos; and numerous other clerics from the Patriarchal Court, the Arab Orthodox clergy, and seminarians of the Patriarchal School “St. Athanasius the Great.” Their combined presence, under the meticulous supervision of the Master of Ceremonies, Metropolitan Panteleimon of Ptolemais, infused the service with profound solemnity and spiritual renewal.

Among the distinguished attendees of the Divine Liturgy, who had traveled from Greece for this joyous occasion, were Deputy Minister of Defense Mr. Ioannis Achilles Kefalogiannis and the Chief of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff, General Dimitrios Choupi. They were accompanied by their esteemed spouses. Other prominent figures included the Ambassador of Greece to Egypt, Mr. Nikolaos Papageorgiou; the Ambassador of Cyprus, Ms. Polly Ioannou; the Defence Attaché of Greece to Egypt, Mr. Stergios Poulios; the Consul General of Greece in Alexandria, Mr. Ioannis Pyrgakis, and his spouse; and leaders of the Greek Community of Alexandria.

Addressing the congregation from the Patriarchal Throne, the Patriarch warmly welcomed the Deputy Minister and the Chief of the Hellenic Armed Forces, underscoring the historic ties between Greece and Egypt. He expressed his connection to Mr. Kefalogiannis and conveyed heartfelt wishes for his success, highlighting the joy his presence brought to the celebration as a representative of the Hellenic Republic. The Patriarch also reiterated the enduring friendship between the two nations, emphasising the support he receives from Egypt’s esteemed President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

In a heartfelt gesture, the Patriarch honoured Mr. Kefalogiannis with the highest distinction of the ancient Patriarchal Order of St. Savvas the Sanctified. General Choupi was similarly decorated with the Order of the Lion of Alexandria, a prestigious Patriarchal honour for senior military officers. Both dignitaries reciprocated the gesture by presenting meaningful commemorative gifts to the

Patriarch.

The celebration continued with the Throne Room's traditional reception of the Governor of Alexandria, Mr. Ahmed Khalet, who arrived with an esteemed delegation of Egyptian officials. The Patriarch warmly welcomed the Governor, embracing him and exchanging greetings in Greek and Arabic. Together, they entered the Throne Room, where the national anthems of Greece and Egypt were performed, symbolising the strong bonds between the two nations.

The Patriarch spoke highly of the Governor, expressing gratitude for his presence on this significant day and lauding the unwavering support of President Sisi for the Patriarchate and the Greek community in Egypt. The Governor, in his response, praised the Patriarch's spiritual leadership and reaffirmed the enduring friendship between Egypt and Greece.

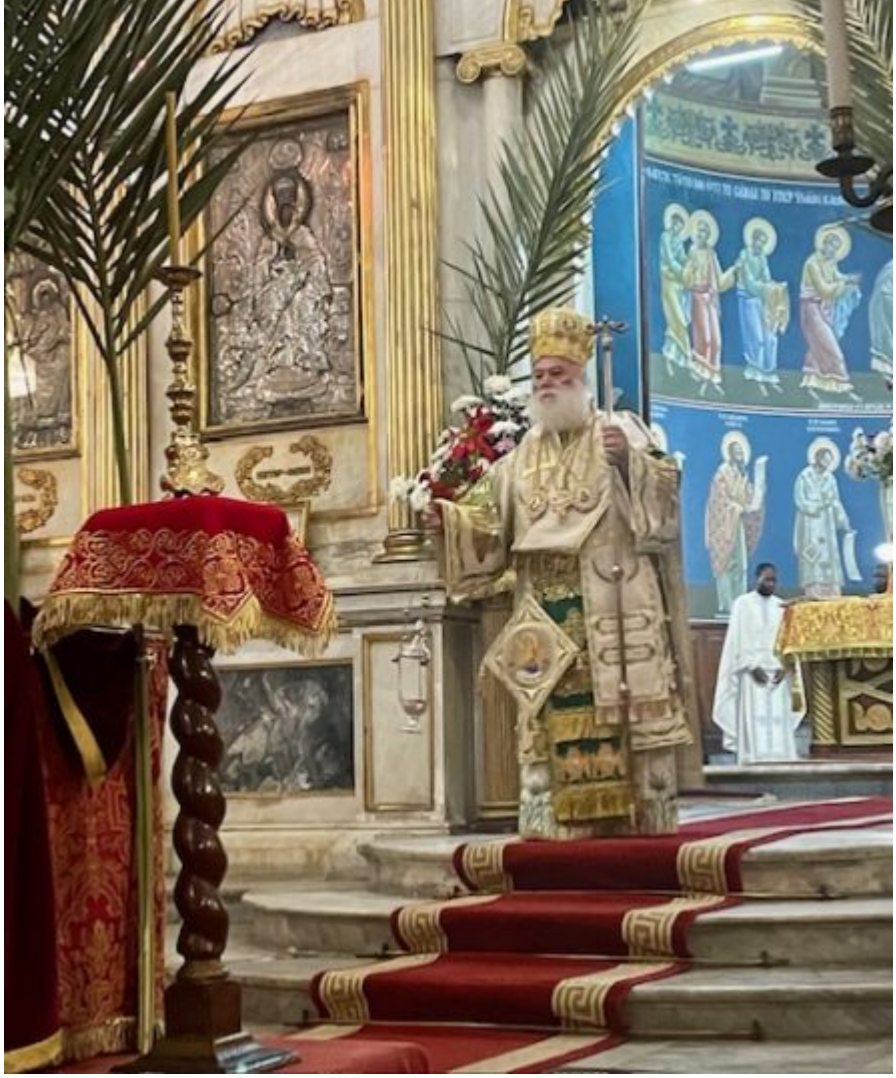
The day's events culminated at the Hellenic Naval Club of Alexandria, where the Patriarch performed the traditional blessing of the waters by casting the Holy Cross into the Mediterranean. Three young men—Adam, Lambros, and Romeos—dove into the sea to retrieve the Cross, each delivering it back to the Patriarch with reverence. The crowd's heartfelt cheers and emotional expressions epitomised the deep spiritual resonance of the moment.

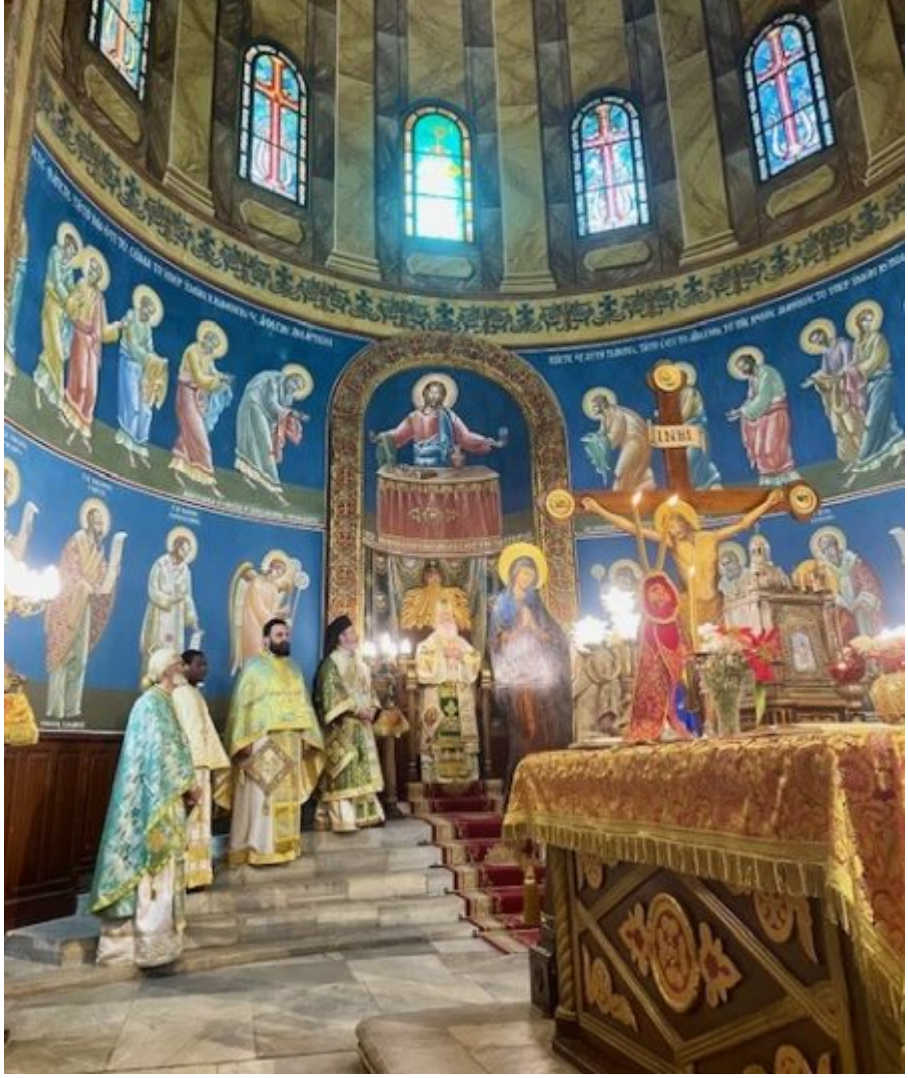
As the ceremony concluded, the Patriarch released a white dove, symbolising peace and divine grace. In a poignant gesture, the dove alighted on Deputy Minister Kefalogiannis' shoulder, an auspicious moment that added to the day's significance.

The celebrations concluded with a reception in the Naval Club's "White and Blue" hall, featuring speeches from the Patriarch, local dignitaries, and Greek representatives, including the President of the Hellenic Naval Club, Ms. Lilika Thlivitou. The exchange of gifts, the cutting of the New Year's Vasilopita, and heartfelt interactions among attendees underscored the unity and shared heritage of Hellenism in Egypt.






















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Photographs: Grigorios Chaliakopoulos

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