12/03/2025

Sunday of Orthodoxy in the Metropolis of Nigeria



Undoubtedly, every missionary work in the African continent is both an invitation and a challenge at the same time. It is an invitation because one is called to explore new places and new cultures and to transmit the joyful message of the Resurrection of Christ to the most distant point on the world. At the same time, however, it is also a challenge, as the one who will undertake such a task must be ready to leave behind all daily comforts and luxuries and to throw himself into the several unpredictable challenges, to fight, to overcome obstacles, and to endure adversities, keeping the torch of hope and faith unextinguished for the sake of his brothers.

In his long journey to the state of Anabra in Nigeria, the steps of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicodemus of Nigeria were guided by his pastoral love and care for the flock of his Holy Metropolis. A spiritual journey, which required careful planning and months of preparation in order to be able to take place, like all journeys to the

vast and unpredictable continent of Africa. The main purpose of his journey was to be with his flock and meet most of the priests who serve there, far away from Lagos, where the Metropolis is based, in order to unite with them by giving them his support and brotherly love and to strengthen their spiritual work.

During his five-day visit, Metropolitan Nicodemus was warmly welcomed by the King of Nanka in a manner befitting the tradition, customs, and practices of the local place.

Metropolitan Nicodemus celebrated Sunday of Orthodoxy, a feast day that resonates with the Restoration of the Holy Icons by the 7th Ecumenical Council. He presided over the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary in the city of Nanka, which was attended by hundreds of faithful people, including the King, the local authorities, all the presidents of the municipal communities of the region, as well as all the councils of the Orthodox parishes, with whom he had the opportunity to meet at the end of the service.

During the Divine Liturgy, he proceeded to the ordination of the Hierodeacon Fr. Anton to the priesthood. Fr. Anton is a very promising local clergyman, married and father of four children. In his paternal address, His Eminence started by conveying the patriarchal blessings of His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodoros of Alexandria and All Africa, to the entire Christian congregation, and then he admonished the new priest with words of love and support for the new role he is called to take on as a minister of the Holy Sacraments. He pointed out to him the way of the cross of the priesthood, the supreme responsibility, and the discreet love that he should embrace every suffering soul with.

After the Divine Liturgy, a reception was extended to all participants present with abundant food and drinks led by the parish priest, who, after welcoming the Metropolitan warmly, presented a new project regarding the renovation and upgrading of local schools. Here, It should be noted that under the jurisdiction of the Holy Metropolis of Nigeria there are two Orthodox schools with two hundred and eighty students, who despite the difficult circumstances, with the support of the local Church continue their journey of knowledge, while the salaries of the teachers are fully covered by the Holy Metropolis. It is worth mentioning that Metropolitan Nicodemus has a particular sensitivity to the issue of youth, and that clearly was shown from the first moment of his arrival in Nigeria with the way he tried to give joy to the youth and to show full support in their struggles and their endeavours, emphasising that they are the future and the hope of the world.

Finally, in the festive traditional program that followed, local products were offered

as gifts of love to Metropolitan Nicodemus. The greatest and most beautiful gift, however, was the presence of all those people who surrounded him and rejoiced with him, especially the children who offered their love and spiritually edified all those present with their songs and smiles. These moments, after all, are the moments of joy for being a member of the church of Christ, which strengthen us all to our difficult and often lonely journey in the African continent that is so demanding in terms of living conditions but so hospitable in terms of its people.

Opportunities like this teaches everyone how to appreciate simple things in life, like a smile amid hardship or a small gesture of love even in our darkest moments. The burdens of the mission can be heavy, but it comes to remind us that love knows no borders or boundaries. This affirmation, this deep connection with people, is a precious gift that Africa gives to those who live and love this land.








MARY COLLEGE











vema.com.au