24/02/2026

Patriarch of Alexandria: I fogive those who sought to undermine the Patriarchate and sow doubt



On Sunday, 22 February 2026, His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria and All Africa presided at the Vespers of Forgiveness at the Holy Patriarchal Monastery of Saint Sabbas the Sanctified in Alexandria, marking the beginning of the Holy and Great Lent.

His Beatitude was joined by His Eminence Metropolitan Germanos of Tamiathus, Abbot of the Monastery, and His Grace Bishop Damaskinos of Mareotis, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria.

In his address, the Patriarch read the Prayer of Forgiveness ahead of the beginning of the Holy and Great Lent and spoke to the faithful about the meaning of this sacred period.

He noted that this sacred tradition of mutual forgiveness has its roots in Egypt, the birthplace of monasticism, where the Desert Fathers would exchange forgiveness on this day and then depart for the desert, entering the spiritual struggle of the Holy and Great Lent with a clean heart.

Continuing, he said: “On this day of forgiveness, I send my blessing to all our

hierarchs and missionaries in Africa, who serve across the continent with self-sacrifice and dedication, for the glory of the Church and in support of our brothers and sisters who are in need.



I also extend my paternal blessing to all the clergy and to the entire blessed flock of our Patriarchate."

In another part of his address, speaking with a voice that conveyed both pain and a genuinely Orthodox spirit, the Patriarch said: "Today, I forgive those who sought to disrupt the missionary work; I forgive those who attempted to wound the Patriarchate; I forgive those who tried to sow doubt in the hearts of our African brothers and sisters."

The Church of the Apostle and Evangelist Mark, with its two-thousand-year journey marked by the Cross and the Resurrection, will continue its ministry unwaveringly, and will persist in forgiving, supporting, loving, building up, and offering.

He also did not fail to once again warmly welcome the students of the Patriarchal School of Saint Athanasios, who arrived from various African countries, including Benin, Togo, and Burundi, while new students are expected from Tanzania, Madagascar, and Ethiopia. He emphasised that the School is a seedbed of hope and blessing for the African continent.

Finally, he conveyed his patriarchal blessing to two hierarchs of the Patriarchate who had arrived a few days earlier in the dioceses entrusted to them by the Church: Bishop Ioakeim of Kigali and Rwanda, and Bishop Niphon of Majunga and Northern Madagascar, wishing them strength and zeal as they continue the work of Orthodox witness in these countries.



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