

## **HB Arch. Hieronymos II of Athens celebrates 11 Years since his election as head of the Greek Orthodox Church**



On 7 February 2019, His Beatitude Hieronymos II, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece celebrates 11 Years since his election as head of the Greek Orthodox Church.

His Beatitude Hieronymos II born Ioannis Liapis in Oinofyta, Boeotia, in 1938, is a graduate of the Faculty of Philosophy and of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Athens and holds degrees in Archaeology, Byzantine Studies and Theology.

Subsequently, thanks to a Scholarship of the Greek State Studentship Foundation, he went on to pursue graduate studies at the University of Graz, the University of Regensburg and the University of Munich.

Following a stint as academic assistant to the great archaeologist Prof. Anastasios

Orlandos at the Athens Archaeological Society, he taught literature at the Lycée Léonin (Leontios School) of Athens, as well as at other high-schools in Athens and Avlonas, and was ordained deacon and then presbyter in 1967. After entering the clergy he abandoned his academic career.

He served as Protosyncellos of the Diocese of Thebes and Levadeia, Hegumen of the Monasteries of the Transfiguration of Sagmata and Hosios Loukas (1971-1981), as Secretary, and then Chief Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece (1978-1981).

In 1981 he was elected Metropolitan Bishop of Thebes and Levadeia, and on February 7, 2008, was elected the new Archbishop of Athens and All Greece by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, receiving 45 out of 74 votes in a two-ballot process. He shall be ceremonially enthroned on February 16, 2008.

In addition to his pastoral ministry, HB the Archbishop has been pursuing his work on Christian Archaeology and has published two major textbooks, *Medieval Monuments of Euboea* (1970, First Prize of the Academy of Athens) and *Christian Boeotia* (2006), and numerous articles, studies and other books on theological, social and historical subjects.

During his term as Metropolitan of Thebes and Levadeia and under his guidance, six monasteries (with a total of 45 monks) and 17 convents (with a total of 110 nuns) were renovated and staffed.

His social work also includes the founding of boarding schools, orphanages and the introduction of the institution of foster families, shelters for the elderly, rehabilitation centres for the mentally challenged, a training centre for the creative occupation of children with special needs in cooperation with prefectural agencies, a drug prevention centre, food kitchens for the poor, including economic immigrants, consulting centres, and a Centre of Historical and Archaeological Studies, while, as a former academic, he developed a special relationship with the teaching community of Boeotia.

Other accomplishments in his Metropolis include a model camping facility on Mt. Parnassus, while the Boeotian History and Culture Research Centre was founded at his initiative and has since collaborated academically with the Universities of Durham and Cambridge, UK.

Furthermore, he helped establish a Population Awareness Centre in his hometown of Oinofyta, on environmental and economic immigrants' issues.

He has also been awarded an honorary PhD from the University of Craiova, Romania, and is Chairman of the Hellenic Cardiological public-benefit Foundation (ELICAR) of Greece.

(Source and Photo courtesy of Basilica.ro)