

10/10/2022

## **St. Nicholas Students Welcome Patriarch Theodoros II to Flushing Parish and School**



Students at the Saint Nicholas Shrine Church and School welcomed a special guest on Friday, October 7. From Alexandria, Egypt to Queens, New York, the Apostolic Visit of His Beatitude Patriarch Theodoros II to the United States — the first ever by a Patriarch of Alexandria— included a trip to the beloved Greek day school in Flushing. His Beatitude was accompanied by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, Their Eminences Metropolitans George of Guinea and Nikodimos of Memphis, and Sub-Deacon Moses Kariuki Maina.

After a brief service, the parish's associate priest, Rev. Presbyter Aristidis Garinis expressed his gratitude for the Patriarch's historic visit. "Your presence here today gives us great strength and encouragement to continue our work. We are truly amazed and inspired by the missionary work of the Church of Alexandria. Your God-pleasing example inspires us and gives us great hope for the future," Fr. Garinis said. In a "symbolic gift of love" on behalf of the St. Nicholas community, Parish Council President Peter Valasiadis presented His Beatitude a monetary gift toward the Patriarchate's philanthropic ministries back home.

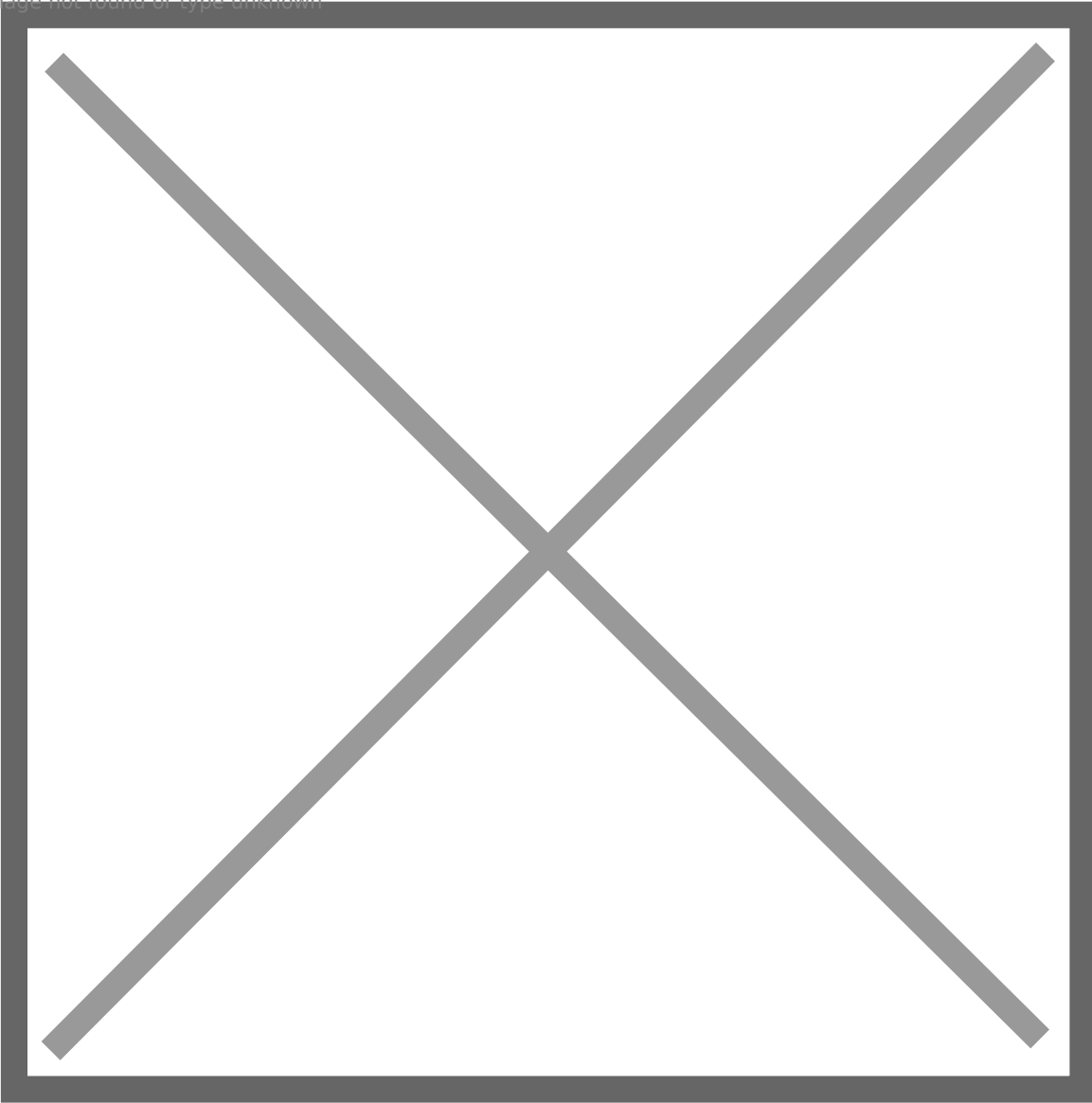
Addressing the students directly, Patriarch Theodoros first introduced himself, but added that when he was their age, he used to be called "Nikolaos," his baptismal name. His Beatitude expressed great joy in meeting them, wishing them success in the school year ahead; he also shared some of his experiences working with other young people during his mission work in Rwanda and Congo, among other places.

His Beatitude presented to Fr. Garinis an icon of the Panagia and Child, crafted in Egypt and adorned with painted flowers, as a gift to the community.

"And for you all," His Beatitude laughed, turning again to the students, "I have also brought two camels from Egypt. They are waiting for you outside!"



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