

Monday of Pascha Service in the parish of Alexandretta



In the context of his patriarchal visit, His Beatitude Patriarch John X arrived at the parish of Alexandretta, which was damaged by the devastating earthquake. The parishioners greeted him with olive branches and white roses, and thus the square of St. George's Church appeared to be a painting full of life and hope.

After the reception, His Beatitude presided over the Monday of Pascha prayers with the participation of Their Eminences, Bishops Constantine Kayal and Arsenios Dahdal, Rev. Archimandrites George Yacoub and Yacoub Khalil, and the priests: Father Nikolaos Papasoglu, parish of Alexandretta, Father Demian Yacoub, parish of Samandag, John Papasoglu, parish priest of Sarilar. The Catholic Archbishop of Anatolia, Paul Bezati was present, together with the heads of the associations in the parishes of Antioch, the delegation accompanying His Beatitude, and a large crowd of believers.

At the end of service, the president of the association in the parish of Alexandretta, Mr. Jan Timur, delivered a speech and said:

Your presence among us, Your Beatitude, gives great strength and comfort in all

the areas hit by the earthquake. You communicated with us from the first moment of the earthquake and provided us with support on various levels. The Church of St. Nicolas was destroyed, and the Church of St. George was severely cracked, but what makes us happy is that you, Your Beatitude, will help in the reconstruction.”

Then he presented to His Beatitude a souvenir in the name of the parish of Alexandretta.

His Beatitude, he replied by recalling the first days of the earthquake and its negative effects on the lives of the children of the church. He mentioned the human and material destruction which it caused, and said:

“My beloved ones, we recite on the glorious day of Pascha “Christ is risen” and when we recite the hymn of Resurrection, we turn towards each other and speak in the language of brotherhood. You have clearly expressed this language and made it show during the days of the earthquake, as a result of the firm faith in your hearts. I would like you to know that we express the resurrection and love of Christ in our lives through our actions and actions.

He concluded: “We thank His Eminence Bishop Paul Bezati, Metropolitan of the Catholic Church in Anatolia, for his distinguished presence, which confirms the brotherhood between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches and the mutual love that binds them.”

His Beatitude addressed the parishioners by saying: “We are not afraid of death and we refuse to live in injustice, because we are children of life.”

After that, the Bishop of the Catholic Church in Anatolia, HE Paul Bezati, thanked Patriarch John for his courageous visit in these difficult circumstances, commending the virtues of His Beatitude.

After the Liturgy, the Patriarch inaugurated the church hall and listened to the concerns of the parishioners. During this visit, His Beatitude and the accompanying delegation inspected the destroyed St. Nicolas Church, promising to rebuild it.

It should be noted that the church dates back to 500 years and is known as the cemetery church. It can accommodate about 200 believers, both male and female, and is surrounded by olive trees that symbolise joy.

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