Patriarch Theodoros II celebrates Divine Liturgy in St Alexander Nevsky monastery



December 6, 2017 – on the commemoration day of St. Alexander Nevsky, Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria and All Africa presided over the Divine Liturgy at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity at the St. Alexander Nevsky Laura.

The Primate of the Orthodox Church of Alexandria was assisted by Metropolitans, Varsonofiy of St. Petersburg and Ladoga, Meletios of Carthage, Archbishops Leonid of Vladikavkaz and Alania, and Ambrose of Petergof, Bishop Nazariy, abbot of the monastery, Bishop Ignatiy of Armavir and Labinsk, and the diocesan clergy.

After the liturgy Metropolitan Varsonofiy greeted the high guest saying in particular, ‘On the day when our Church honours the memory of St. Alexander Nevsky, you have come to our city to preside over today’s celebration. Since the visit of a Patriarch is always a blessing of God, it is a great joy for us that you have come to St. Petersburg. We are aware of the history of the Church of Alexandria as one of the

oldest in Christendom. In her history, there were many great events and ascetics who at the dawn of Christianity asserted the right faith in the Universal Church. We remember Ss Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria, the founders of monasticism, as well as Anthony, Pachomius, Paisius and other saints. We remember that hard times came for the Church of Alexandria when invaders came.

'It is a difficult time today too. One of its problems is terrorism. Two years ago a tragedy happened as a plane was blown up over the Sinai Peninsula, in which people from St. Petersburg were flying. Your life is had there and we pray that the Lord may give you strength and help.

'During the recent meeting with Patriarch Kirill you said that though you serve in Egypt, your heart has remained in Russia, because you once were here as representative of the Patriarch of Alexandria and came to love our people and our Church. We can feel this love every time when we see you. We would like to wish Your Beatitude that you may carry out your apostolic work as successfully as your predecessors did. You have a large continent, a numerous flock and much to do in you pastoral service. We hope that with God's help your work will be crowned with new parishes, clergy and faithful'.

Metropolitan Varsonofiy presented His Beatitude and the hierarch who accompanied him with crosses and pectoral icons.

Patriarch Theodoros said in response, 'Thirty years have passed since I came to your city, still Leningrad at that time. The late Patriarch Alexy II was the Metropolitan of Leningrad at that time, and he invited me to visit with him. And now I am thankful to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for his having invited me to the celebration of the centenary of the restoration of Patriarchate in Russia. I have come to you because I am 'your man'. I live with you as long as ten years, learnt your language and came to know your heart.

'I live in the great city of Alexandria. Nearby is another great city – Antioch and not far away is the holy city of Jerusalem, and dominating all these cities is the majestic city of Constantinople. These are the ancient and oldest Churches with developed theology. Bishops and priest of older Churches came to your country to preach Christ and presented this land with Orthodoxy. I preach the same Orthodoxy in fifty four countries in Africa'.

Patriarch Theodoros awarded Metropolitan Varsonofiy with the Order of St. Sabbas the Sanctified.

After the service at the St. Nicholas cemetery at the monastery, Patriarch Theodoros laid flowers at the grave of Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov).

On the same day, His Holiness visited the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan. He was welcomed by the

cathedral clergy led by the rector, Archpriest Pavel Krasnotsvetov. Father Pavel briefly introduced the guest to the history of the cathedral and the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God and presented him with a miracle-working copy of the icon and books about the cathedral in English, the website of the diocese of St. Petersburg has reported.

DECR Communication Service

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/47885/