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LETTERA DEL SANTO PADRE A S.S. TAWADROS II, PAPA DI ALESSANDRIA E PATRIARCA DELLA SEDE DI SAN MARCO

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Si è svolta oggi nella Cattedrale di San Marco al Cairo la cerimonia di insediamento di Sua Santità Papa Tawadros II, 118° Patriarca della Chiesa ortodossa copta, eletto lo scorso 4 novembre.

All'intronizzazione del nuovo Papa copto era presente il Card. Kurt Koch, Presidente del Pontificio Consiglio per la promozione dell'Unità dei Cristiani, autore di una Lettera del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI. Ne riportiamo di seguito il testo:

• LETTERA DEL SANTO PADRE

To His Holiness Tawadros II

Pope of Alexandria Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark

"Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ" (*Gal 1:3*)

It is with fraternal joy that I send greetings to Your Holiness on the happy occasion of your enthronement as Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark. To my Venerable Brother Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, I have entrusted the task of conveying these greetings to you, together with assurances of my closeness in prayer as you assume the high office of chief shepherd of the Coptic Orthodox Church. May the Almighty grant Your Holiness abundant spiritual gifts to strengthen you in your new ministry, as you guide the clergy and laity along the paths of holiness, for the good of your people and the peace and harmony of the whole of society.

My thoughts turn at this time to your venerable predecessor, His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, whose long and devoted service to the Lord will surely continue to inspire you and all the faithful. His concern for improving relations with other Christian Churches reinforces our hope that one day all the followers of Christ will find themselves united in that love and reconciliation which the Lord so earnestly desires (cf. *Jn 17:21*).

Your Holiness, I pray that the Holy Spirit will sustain you in your ministry, so that the flock entrusted to your care

may experience the teaching of the Good Shepherd. May they be blessed with the serenity to offer their valuable contribution to the good of society and the well-being of all their fellow-citizens.

I pray too that relations between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church will continue to grow closer, not only in a fraternal spirit of collaboration, but also through a deepening of the theological dialogue that will enable us to grow in communion and to bear witness before the world to the saving truth of the Gospel.

Conscious of the great challenges which accompany the spiritual and pastoral ministry that Your Holiness is about to undertake, I assure you of my prayers and personal good wishes. With fraternal esteem and affection I implore God's blessings upon you and upon all the faithful entrusted to your care.

From the Vatican, 14 November 2012

BENEDICTUS PP XVI

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