

HIS BEATITUDE VISITS THE PHILANTHROPIC INSTITUTION 'SIKSEK' IN BETHANY

A nursing home for the elderly and people with special needs with the name 'Four Homes of Mercy' or 'Siksek', has been operating continuously since 1940 in the area of Bethany, not far from the Holy Convent of Martha and Maria, the sisters of Lazarus.

This philanthropic complex of buildings was established by the personal initiative of the Siksek, an Orthodox family, with the blessing of the late Patriarch of Jerusalem Venedictos and land which was donated by King Hussein of Jordan in 1962, and operates due to the initiatives and donations from philanthropic donors, organizations, and individuals.

The residents of this institution live free of charge, and irrespective of dogma or religion, are people such as the elderly, the infirm, adults and mainly children with mental or physical disabilities that are either serious or incurable. The social offering to society of this institution is recognized locally and internationally. The dedicated service of the personnel and the transparency of the management of the Institution provide trust for financial donations which transcend the economic stalemate and continues to operate.

This institution has on its premises an Orthodox Chapel where priests of the Patriarchate are invited to perform the Holy Liturgy and other services.

His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III responded to the invitation of the Institution to perform the ceremony of the Sanctification of the water in occasion of the renovated parts inauguration. The renovation of these parts was possible with the sponsorship of the Welfare Association,

the National Development Centre (NDC), and Liz Mulford with the French Cooperation. His Beatitude was escorted by His Eminence Isychios Metropolitan of Capitolias, the Elder Chief Secretary His Eminence Aristarchos Archbishop of Constantina, Reverend Archimandrite Fr. Ieronymos, deacon Rev.Fr. Athanasios and Dr. Ioannou Tleel who has been a staff member for many years.

Amongst the participants at the ceremony were Mr. Gregor Manzuk , Representative of the IOCC organization, the President of the Pontifical Mission, Mr. Sami el Youssef, and the Vice President of the Wehdat Alquds Organisation, Mr. Ahmad Rowedi.

At the entrance of the institution, His Beatitude was welcomed by the Board of Directors of the Institution and representatives of the Philanthropic Institutions of the Saint Jacob Cathedral of Jerusalem, from whence they escorted Him to the Chapel, where they chanted at the ceremony of the Sanctification of the water. His Beatitude inaugurated the renovated new parts and blessed them. After the ceremony, a modest reception followed where Dr. Eiden, replacement Director of the Institution, addressed His Beatitude and the participants. Dr. Eiden referred to the more than seventy year old social service of the Institution and the improvement of the quality of living conditions and therapy of the patients from its renovated parts, as well as to the honour His Beatitude gives with his presence to the workers and residents.

His Beatitude praised the management, the board and the staff for the dedicated service to the patients, offered a contribution of \$5,000 USD and was then shown the wards of the patients, which He blessed with the Sanctified water.

Chief Secretary's Office

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