

# **VISIT OF THE ARMENIANS TO THE ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE, H.E. METROPOLITAN NOURHAN SPEECH.**

On Monday the 2nd of May 2011, during the visit of the Armenians to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, on the occasion of the feast of Easter, His Eminence Metropolitan Nourhan has addressed His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem with the following words:

“Your Beatitude and dear Brothers,

When on that first Sunday of Easter, the Oil Bearing Women went to the tomb of the Lord, they were worried about who would roll away the rock that served as the door of the tomb. But when they got there, they found it had already been rolled away.

For the past few years the rock of misunderstanding, distrust and intolerance acted as a rock that divided two religious institutions that worshipped the same Lord, and separated brothers from seeing and communicating with each other. We created for ourselves an unhealthy atmosphere of distrust. I am very glad that after a few years of sad incidents we have made the right decision to emerge from the dark tunnel of mutual suspicion and self-humiliation. I think we are perfectly capable of minimizing and marginalizing details and only by doing so we will be able to uphold the spirit and the true meaning of our feasts.

Last week, when Armenians marked the 96<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of their Genocide, our thoughts naturally went also to our Greek brothers and sisters who were martyred in Pontus and Smyrna. Christianity until today feels the immense loss of the Byzantine Empire and consequently thousands of our sanctuaries

and holy places that are in ruins in Turkey today. Our pain is common, and only Greeks and Armenians realize what it means to lose a huge part of their spiritual as well as historical heritage. Our two nations, who have experienced martyrdom and live daily with the pain of loss, have the responsibility to collaborate closely to be a witness to other churches. We can do this best in Jerusalem and this should be our main task and guiding spirit. We are One Body and One entity, when one is weakened the rest will start caving in.

Your Beatitude, on behalf of our Patriarch, Abp. Torkom Manoogian and members of the St. James Brotherhood, please accept our sincerest wishes for a Happy Easter to you and to the members of your brotherhood. We wish you well, a long and healthy life.

Christos Anesty!"

**Chief Secretary's Office**