

THE 'RUSSIAN PILGRIM CENTRE' ON THE JORDAN RIVER.

On the websites of the Patriarchate of Russia and of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, articles were posted on the 6th and 8th of July 2011, relating to the construction of the so called "Russian Pilgrim Centre" in the area east of the Baptismal place of the Lord on the Jordan river. (<http://www.rusdm.ru/index.php?item=582> , <http://www.mospat.ru/ru/2011/07/08/news44496>).

This publication reports that this Centre has been erected on land that the Jordanian Government ceded to the Russian Federation in February 2007, on the occasion of the official visit to Jordan of the President of Russia Mr. V. Putin. In March 2008 the foundation stone of the aforementioned Centre was laid and the inauguration of this building is planned for the coming autumn.

As a pretext to this publication, The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, by entitlement as the pastoral Church of the Holy Places, elucidated today that, from the onset of the respective project it stated that; it considers the Russian Pilgrim Centre to be a hostel for pilgrims, without a church or a chapel and not a Metochion (Patvoria), as twice mentioned in the above publication in contrast to the canon, since no arrangement had been made regarding a Metochion. This clarification is made for the sake of safeguarding the Ecclesiastical order and the preservation of the Status Quo of the Holy Places, contributing to the harmonious ecclesiastical cooperation and the unity in Christ within the bond of peace.

Chief Secretary's Office.