

PASCHAL GREETINGS TO THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM.

Holy City of Jerusalem, 18 April 2012

Your Eminence Archbishop Nourhan,

Your Eminences, Dear Reverend Fathers,

Christ is risen!

We have come to greet you and rejoice with you in our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The resurrection of Christ is the foundation of our living hope.

For we read in the First Letter of Peter: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable.” (I Peter 1:3)-

By Divine Providence we have been made the guardians and servants of this “imperishable inheritance, for we are the guardians and servants of the Holy Sites, which themselves bear witness to our crucified Lord. This has always been, and continues now to be, our mission, and the Holy Sites are a focus of devotion and attention not only to our fellow Christians, but indeed to the whole world.

“If Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is in vain, and your faith is in vain”. So declares the Apostle Saint Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthian (I Cor. 15:14). Just as we know that if the resurrection has not taken place, our faith is futile, so it is that should Jerusalem

ever be left without our presence here, then the living witness of the resurrection -that is, the Tomb of Christ – would disappear. Jerusalem would lose its vibrant Christian character.

It is, therefore, our moral responsibility to maintain the precious Christian character of Jerusalem, for in so doing Jerusalem remains a sign of hope – a hope that shines brightly from the Tomb of our risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us, then, overcome our shortcomings and weaknesses, and join our efforts in proclaiming the message of hope, consolation, and, above all, new and eternal life.

Your Eminence, Archbishop Nourhan, we assure you that we are ready in the name of our common Lord and in the spirit of the resurrection to heal any wounds that have been caused by human frailty.

Once again, on behalf of our Brotherhood and ourselves personally, we extend to you our prayers for His Beatitude Patriarch Tarkoom. Please accept our Paschal greetings to your Brotherhood and to the whole Armenian community of the Holy Land.

Christ is risen!

Thank you.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem