

H.B. SPEECH ON THE OCCASION OF THE PASCHAL VISIT OF THE ARMENIAN BROTHERHOOD.

Holy City of Jerusalem, 7 May 2013

Your Beatitude,

Your Eminences,

Reverend Fathers,

Dear Members of the Brotherhood of Saint James,

The angels in heaven praise your resurrection, O Christ our Saviour. Make us also here on earth worthy to glorify you with pure hearts, (The Resurrection Service, 2nd Plagai Tone)

With these joyful words from the Resurrection Service, we welcome you to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem during these festive days of Easter, and we greet you and your Brotherhood.

We give glory to our risen Lord Jesus Christ, for again this year we have celebrated his passion, death, and resurrection in Christian harmony in the very places where these events of eternal significance occurred. As we do every year, but especially this year, we have celebrated the Feast of Resurrection not only with our local faithful, but also with a great number of pilgrims from around the world who have come here to the Holy Places seeking peace and spiritual consolation.

By the grace of God, we have showed the world that indeed the

Holy Sepulchre is a place of the true ecumenical spirit where we, the various historical Churches, have prayed together in peace.

We have also shown by doing this that we can overcome family concerns among and by ourselves. We are indeed grateful for this to our Lord, who has given to us in the Holy Land the blessing and the responsibility to bear witness to his passion, death and resurrection, all of which he accomplished for the redemption of our humanity.

We are all of us aware of the spiritual significance of Jerusalem for Christians, especially for our own people, whom we are representing here. As we are confronted by so many challenges today, so we must re-double our efforts to maintain the Holy Places as spiritual oases for our local Christian population as well as for the thousands of pilgrims who come to us from all corners of the world. May we never tire of this duty and this privilege.

We thank you for your greetings to us, and we pray that the light and joy of the resurrection may illumine the path before us all.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III,

Patriarch of Jerusalem