

PASTORAL VISIT OF THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM TO JORDAN

On Monday, the 18th of June, the beginning of the fast of the holy Apostles/1st July 2013, His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, left Jerusalem accompanied by the Patriarchal Commissioner, the Most Reverend Isychios, Metropolitan of Kapitolias, the Elder Sacristan Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina, and the Hegoumen of Fhes, Archimandrite Ieronymos.

Crossing the Allenby Bridge over the river Jordan, located on its outfall into the Dead Sea, His Beatitude proceeded to Southern Jordan, in the region of Karak city.

In the city of Anter, bordering Karak, and particularly at its refugee housing, His Beatitude distributed humanitarian aid to children and youth, displaced from Syria, but also to impoverished people from Jordan. The aid was offered by the "Refugee Aid" NGO and collected by the Patriarchal Office in Amman, headed by Mrs Wafa Ksous. The aid came in the form of sanitary ware, food, clothes, toys and stationery.

Attending this humanitarian event was the Greek Ambassador to Jordan, Mrs Louiza Marinaki, Mrs Wafa Ksous, father Ioannis, head of the Karak parish, father Antonios, the vicar of Anter, the priest of the town of Hmoud, f. Constantinos, and the Prefect of Karak region Mr Ahmed-il-Asaf, who welcomed His Beatitude to the area of Karak and thanked him for the distribution of gifts.

From the town of Anter His Beatitude left for the city of Karak, where he visited the Holy Church of the Patriarchate dedicated to St George. The church preserves remarkable

elements of antiquity, e.g. a very great monolith baptistery, an inscription with the name of the Metropolitan of Petra, Meletios, the Metropolitan of the Holy Light, evidently because at the time, circa 1853, he imparted the Holy Light in place of the ailing Patriarch. This holy Church will soon be renovated in accordance with its age.

From the Church His Beatitude entered the adjacent hall of events, where he distributed presents to the children of the Karak parish School of Catechism. The children chanted hymns and religious songs to everyone's contentment.

Subsequently, His Beatitude briefly visited Ms Maisou, the well-known Arab teacher of the Guardians of the Holy Sepulcher in Karak and blessed her house.

At noon, His Beatitude, His retinue and the Ambassador to Jordan, Mrs Louiza Marinaki, attended a luncheon held in their honour by MP Mr Fares Ksous at his residence.

After this, His Beatitude extended His condolences to the Shaouareb family on the death of the father, the late Akram-Abu-Moursin.

Arriving from Kara to Amman, Jordan, His Beatitude visited the family of Senator Dr Ziyad Saraiha and extended his condolences over the death of his mother, Euphrosyne.

Later, His Beatitude extended his condolences to the Hmoud family, a member of which died in a car accident. The deceased was a high-ranking employee of the UNRWA NGO managing the humanitarian aid of the Zaatar refugee housing.

Subsequently, His Beatitude arrived at the Metropolis in Amman, where he was received by the Most Reverend Benedict, Metropolitan of Philadelphia.

From the Metropolis His Beatitude left for Jerusalem.

From the Secretariat-General

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