

THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THEOTOKOS IN THE TOWN OF BEIT JALA

The feast of the Nativity of Theotokos was celebrated, due to pastoral reasons, at a day's delay, on Sunday the 9th/22nd of September 2013, in the Church dedicated to the Nativity of Theotokos in the town of Beit Jala.

The town, on the West Bank of the Jordan river, lies at a short distance from Rachel's Tomb, on the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. It numbers approximately 15.000 Christians and Muslims, about 5.000 Orthodox, one church of whom is dedicated to St Nicholas, and the other to the Nativity of Theotokos.

To this holy church, which commemorates 150 years since its foundation, His Beatitude Theophilos, Our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, arrived from Jerusalem to lead the Divine Liturgy. His Beatitude was received at the Hegoumen's Quarters by the Hegoumen, Archimandrite Narkissos. Co-officiating were His Eminence Aristarchos, Elder Secretary-General and Archbishop of Constantina; His Eminence Theophylaktos, Patriarchal Commissioner in Bethlehem and Archbishop of Jordan; His Eminence Philoumenos, Patriarchal Commissioner in Irbet and Archbishop of Pella; the Hegoumen of Beit-Jala, Archimandrite Narkissos; the vicars of the Greek Orthodox Community of Beit-Jala, fathers Nikolaos, Georgios, Yusef and Pavlos; the Hegoumen of the Monastery of St George Beit-Jala, Archimandrite Ananios and other priests; Archdeacon Athanasios and deacon f. Eulogios. The choir of Beit-Jala sang under the direction of Mr Ibrahim Karkar and Mr Nindal Samaan, in the presence of a great crowd of pious participants from the Orthodox congregation in Beit-Jala.

During the Koinonikon of the Divine Liturgy, His Beatitude

preached the Word of God to the faithful.

The ceremony was attended by the honourable Consul-General of Greece in Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis and the town's Municipal Authorities, Acting Mayor Mr Abu-Yusef and others.

At the end of the ceremony, a litany took place which had as participants a great crowd of faithful. Leading the litany were members of the Boy Scouts. A reception followed in the Parish Hall, with lunch offered at the hall of the Beit-Zala group.

From the Secretariat-General

http://youtu.be/Q4W5W0_UsyQ

