

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY ARCHANGELS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday the 8th/21st of November 2013, the feast of the Gathering of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel was celebrated by the Patriarchate.

The feast was firstly celebrated in the city of Joppe, where the Patriarchate maintains a Holy Monastery dedicated to the Archangels by the sea, on the site where the Apostle Peter had the vision of the great sheet descending from the sky, and heard a voice telling him to kill and eat from all clean and unclean animals seen into the sheet: "Kill and eat, what God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy" (Acts, 11, 7). Through this very vision, God declared His will that the church should open its gates to the gentiles, considered unclean.

In this church, which was renovated after having been reduced to ashes in a fire, at the expenses of His Eminence Damaskinos, Archbishop of Joppe, His Beatitude Theophilos, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, led the Divine Liturgy. His Beatitude arrived from Jerusalem with His retinue and was welcomed by the Boy Scouts Association in the square near the Monastery.

Co-officiating with His Beatitude were the Most Reverend Kyriakos, Metropolitan of Nazareth; Bishop Jovan of Ulpiana, visiting from Serbia; His Eminence Damaskinos, Archbishop of Joppe; His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina and Elder Secretary-General; His Eminence Methodios, Archbishop of Tabor; the Patriarchal Commissioner in Bethlehem, Archbishop Theophylaktos of Jordan; His Eminence Nektarios, Archbishop of Anthedon; Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Arab-speaking Presbyters

and Hierodeacons.

The Greek Ambassador in Tel Aviv, Mr Spyridon Lambrides, piously attended the Divine Liturgy in the company of associates of his from the Embassy and a crowd of Orthodox faithful from the city of Joppe and other cities of Israel, whilst, under the direction of the Head Cantor of the All-Holy Church of the Resurrection, Archimandrite Aristovoulos, the choir chanted in Greek, Arabic, Russian and Romanian, the congregation participating piously.

To the faithful, His Beatitude preached the Word of God. This is an excerpt from His speech:

[...] These immaterial Minds, namely the angels, "are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Hebrews 1, 14). The angels' ministry is confirmed by the words of Our Lord Jesus Christ, saying: "there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents", (Luke 15, 10). Besides, the Melodist of our Church declares: "Let us praise the bodiless ministers of God, those who always mediate for our salvation and commend repentance".

[...] The angels, as God's ministering spirits, actively participate in the work of man's salvation, as revealed through the words of Christ: "For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done" (Matthew 16, 27).

The Divine Liturgy was followed by a brief reception, then lunch at the Hegoumen's Quarters, courtesy of His Eminence Damaskinos, Archbishop of Joppe.

The feast of the Archangels was also celebrated at the Monastery dedicated to them in Jerusalem by means of Vespers and a Divine Liturgy, led by His Eminence Demetrios, Archbishop of Lydda, who also preached the Word of God to the

faithful.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/nESo4EydL-g>

