

THE FEAST OF HOSIOS SAVVAS THE SANCTIFIED

On Wednesday the 5th/18th of December 2013, the feast of our Father, hosios Savvas the Sanctified, was observed.

In accordance with the order of the Church of Jerusalem, the feast was celebrated at the monastery founded by him and named after him, built on the west bank of Cedars stream which flows from Jerusalem at some distant to the Dead sea.

It is a three-day feast which begins with the commemoration of our Father, hosios John Damascene.

In memory of the aforementioned hosios and on the day of the commemoration of St Barbara the Great-Martyr, the Vespers and divine Liturgy were held in the chapel of St Savvas Monastery, wherein also lies his abode and grave.

His Eminence Theophanes, Archbishop of Gerassa, led the Vespers in the previous evening and also the Matins and the divine Liturgy on the day of the feast.

His Beatitude Theophilos, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, arrived for the commemoration of Hosios Savvas on the eve of the feast.

His Beatitude was warmly received by the Fathers of the Monastery at the entrance, where he wore a mantle and descended the steps to the grave of the hosios, before entering the Katholikon.

There, a brief address was made by the Monastery's spiritual father and renovator, Archimandrite f. Evdokimos, followed by His Beatitude's blessing.

Reception followed at the Hegoumen's quarters, and brief

repose.

At around 8:00 pm, the vigil began of the Small Compline, the Salutations of the Saint and the Great Vespers, with Opening Psalms and Bread Breaking, led by His Beatitude. Repose followed for those unable to endure the toil of sleeplessness.

At around 2:00 am, His Beatitude led the Matins and the divine Liturgy. Co-officiating were the Most Reverend Platon, Metropolitan of Theodosioupolis of the Russian Church; His Eminence Theophanes, Archbishop of Gerassa; the Elder Secretary Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina; the Patriarchal Commissioner in Bethlehem, His Eminence Theophylaktos, Archbishop of Jordan; the Very Reverend Archimandrite Evdokimos; Hagiotaphite Fathers, i.e. Archimandrites Paisios, Ieronymos, Ignatios; Sinai Fathers Paisios, Simon and Philotheos; the recently appointed Archdeacon f. Evlogios and others. The choir chanted under the direction of the head cantor of the Church of the Resurrection, Archimandrite f. Aristovoulos, in Greek and Russian, and the Hegoumen of Accra, Archimandrite f. Philotheos, in the company of Arab-speaking attendants and assistants. A great crowd of monks and Arab-speaking Orthodox faithful from Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Shepherds Village and Bet-Jala participated with piety.

During the Koinonikon, His Beatitude preached the Word of God referring to hosios Savvas the Sanctified as having offered the gifts of his virtue to the incarnate Lord, as an example for us, to offer the gifts of our piety to the Lord during the feast of Christmas. F. Joseph Hodalis translated into Arabic.

Many among the faithful, having duly prepared themselves, received the holy Communion and consecrated bread from the hands of His Beatitude, along with His blessings.

Lunch followed, during which His Beatitude wished everyone a joyful and peaceful feast by the mediation of hosios Savvas

and all the Saints.

Subsequently, His Beatitude left His Eminence Theophanes, Archbishop of Gerassa at the Holy Monastery for the feast of St Nikolas, and passing by the Holy Monastery of Abba Theodosios for veneration, arrived in Jerusalem, praising God for this glorious feast.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/JJj0I5JjBxE>

