

# THE PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On the 7<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> of January 2014, the day after the feast of Theophany, the President of Romania, His Excellency Mr Traian Basescu, on a visit to the state of Israel, visited the Patriarchate accompanied by members of the Romanian Government and by the Romanian Ambassador to Israel, Mrs Andreea Păstârnac.

The Romanian President and his retinue were received by His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Hagiotaphite Fathers. In His welcoming address to the President, His Beatitude spoke in English, see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2014/01/20/4001>

and decorated him with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher for the enhancement of his pious disposition toward the Holy Sepulcher, also offering him a fine icon of Theotokos Jerusalemite.

Touched, the President offered His Beatitude a beautiful icon of the Nativity of Christ, crafted in an Orthodox Monastery of Romania, thanking Him for the honour bestowed upon him as a representative of the Romanian people, consisting of Orthodox faithful by 90%, and having close ties to the Orthodox Church.

"In the aftermath of the communist regime", Mr Basescu said, "the state of Romania is trying to reestablish its relations with the Church of Romania, which is considered its integral part".

Extending his thanks to His Beatitude over the manner in which He represents Christians in the Holy Land, especially in Jerusalem, the President kindly asked that the Church of Jerusalem look favourably on the as yet unresolved problem

between the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Patriarchate of Romania.

In His response, His Beatitude said that “we have already reached a preparatory agreement, which we expect to be signed by His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of Romania”. He went on to add that “We have decided in favour of establishing closer ties between the two Churches and have therefore sent a Hagiotaphite student, now Archimandrite Dositheos, to study in Romania with a scholarship”.

His Excellency the President, accompanied by His Beatitude and members of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, amid ringing bells, proceeded to venerate at the Church of the Resurrection, the Holy Sepulcher, the Katholikon and Sacristy of the Church of the Resurrection, where he was received by the Hegoumen, the Elder Sacristan of the Holy Sepulcher, His Eminence Isidoros, Archbishop of Hierapolis, in the presence of Templar Fathers. There, he was also offered an icon of the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulcher.

### **From the Secretariat-General**

[http://youtu.be/kPQ0opNl5\\_k](http://youtu.be/kPQ0opNl5_k)

