

THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THEOTOKOS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

A. In Nazareth

On Monday, the 25th of March/7th of April 2014, the feast of the Annunciation was celebrated in Nazareth, where the Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to announce to the ever virgin Mary that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and of her would be born the Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the human kind.

Nazareth, first cited in the New Testament, has always been one of the largest towns in Galilee. Today it numbers approximately 90.000 inhabitants, of whom 18.000 are Christian Orthodox.

At the center of the old town lies the pilgrimage site, the Orthodox Church of the Annunciation, where the Annunciation took place.

After a three-hour ride, His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem arrived in Nazareth on the aforementioned day and first proceeded to the Metropolis. There, he was received by Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, priests from Nazareth and adjacent towns, as well as the Council of the Rum Orthodox Community of Nazareth.

From the Metropolis, the Patriarchal Retinue, accompanied by Boy Scouts, proceeded to the holy shrine, where they were warmly received by a great crowd.

From there, His Beatitude walked to the area intended for the Divine Liturgy, where he gave blessings and began the Katabasia hymns.

He went on to officiate at the Liturgy. Co-officiating were the Most Reverend Kyriakos, Metropolitan of Nazareth; the Most Reverend Isychios, Metropolitan of Kapitolias; and the Elder Secretary-General, His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina; hieromonks, Hagiotaphite hegoumens at Northern Israel monasteries; Archimandrite Timotheos of the Monastery of the Holy Apostles in Tiberias; monk Irinaios, the hegoumen at the Monastery of the Apostles Peter and Paul in Capernaum; Archimandrite Hilarion of Mount Tabor Monastery; Archimandrite Chrysostomos of the Monastery of St George the Great Martyr in Cana, Galilee; priests from Nazareth and adjacent towns; Archdeacon Evlogios and deacon Markos. Attending the service was the President of the Community Council, Mme Afaf Touma with Council members, the Director of the Israeli Religious Affairs Department, Mr Cesar Margie; and the representative of the Hellenic Embassy to Tel Aviv, in the presence of the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis, and his honourable wife. The Nazareth choir chanted in Arabic while the Accra choir, under Archimandrite Philotheos, chanted in Greek and Arabic alike. A great crowd of Orthodox faithful, including Greek-speaking, Russian-speaking, Arabic-speaking and Romanian-speaking, participated in piety.

To this pious flock, His Beatitude preached the Word of God in Greek, see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/gr/2014/04/07/12871>

And in Arabic, see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2014/04/07/4593>

After Communion and the Apolysis (conclusion), a procession was performed around the holy shrine, led by the Boy Scouts. Fish lunch was then offered to the Patriarchal Retinue and members of the flock by the Metropolitan of Nazareth and the Community Council.

B. In Jerusalem

On the occasion of the feast of the Annunciation, a Divine Liturgy was held at the Tomb of the Mother of God in Gethsemane, led by His Eminence Dorotheos, Archbishop of Avila, with co-officiating Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and deacons.

The Prelatic retinue was hosted to a reception at the Hegoumen's Quarters by Archimandrite Nektarios.

C. In Rafidia

A Divine Liturgy commemorating the Annunciation of Theotokos was also held at the Church of the Annunciation in the Rum Orthodox Community of Rafidia, near Jacob's Well in Neapolis (Nablus). The Liturgy was led by His Eminence Theophanes, Archbishop of Gerassa, and attended by a great crowd from the town's Orthodox flock.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/PYY9u6jEpM4>

<httpv://youtu.be/3AYsEqZs-uM>

<httpv://youtu.be/LFBbb2GgXRU>

