

ADDRESS OF H.B. PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM TO H.E. LEO ARCHBISHOP OF KARELIA AND ALL FINLAND AT THE ALL HOLY AND LIFE GIVING TOMB.

May 3, 2014

*Your Eminence Archbishop Leo of Karelia and all Finland,
beloved brother and concelebrant in Christ,*

At this holy place, Fearful Golgotha, i.e. the place of the skull, the people led the incarnated Son and Word of God Jesus Christ the Nazarene to be crucified under Pontius Pilate, according to the Gospel narratives.

At this All-Holy and life-giving Tomb, God in His infinite wisdom and ineffable love for His creation, erased their transgressions, by raising His Only-Begotten Son from the dead after three days and in doing so also raised and saved His creation from their ancestral curse of sin, disobedience and exile.

The message of the resurrection of the crucified Jesus Christ the Nazarene was received by His Apostles and disciples and was spread to Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, until the ends of the earth.

This message, along with the divine teachings of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, concerning reconciliation, forgiveness and love for our enemies, resonates and is applied in the Church, which is the body of Christ. He, as the crucified and risen Lord

through His Holy Spirit, who ascended into the heavens, was sent from God the Father to His holy disciples and apostles.

This changed people's manner of life, ethics and customs, their history and their culture. This change brought upon a new ratified and sealed creation, beginning from the great Emperor St. Constantine, who built this most venerable Church of the Anastasis, as an unfeigned witness to the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

This Church, and the life-emanating all-holy shrines of the Holy Land, have safe-guarded the ancient Patriarchate of Jerusalem, like the daughter of their eye, throughout the centuries, especially by its established Brotherhood of the All-Holy Tomb through struggles, sacrifice, war, financial expenses, offerings of blood and lives.

In this Church and indeed in the empty and life-giving Tomb of the Lord, we are made worthy tonight to concelebrate and arrive at the pinnacle of Your most beloved and profound Eminence's official visit to the Mother of all Churches, the Church of Jerusalem, i.e., our full, undisputed and unbreakable Christian communion and our unity in the blood and common Eucharistic chalice.

This experience of the completion of the Divine Liturgy at the All-Holy Tomb, with the food of the Body and the drink of the Blood of Christ will become the strong motive and life-giving power of cooperation between our Churches, so that we may give a testimony to our pious flocks and to the entire world that the problems of the entire world: war, terrorism, violence, exploitation, injustice, hunger, poverty, economic crisis, as well as other problems have solutions that are found in the face and teachings of the founder of our Church, our Savior Jesus Christ, who accepted poverty as He had nowhere to lay His head. For the Lord said, "He who has two cloaks, let him share with him who has none" (Luke 3:11). The Lord even taught love for our enemies, and as a living being without cause He

gave Himself as a ransom for us by His salvific sacrifice on the Cross. Therefore, in His name with the Father and the Holy Spirit, come and let us again continue our current blessed mission so that the Lord, through His unfeigned promise, will always be with us through His word, "And lo, I am with you always, even until the end of time" (Matthew 28:20). Amen.

HIS BEATITUDE

THEOPHILOS III

PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM