

# THE EXARCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER IN ATHENS VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE WITH PILGRIMS

On Wednesday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of June/9<sup>th</sup> of July 2014, the Exarch of the Holy Sepulcher in Greece, the Most Reverend Archimandrite f. Damianos, heading a group of fifty pilgrims – including priests and faithful from the Dependencies of the Church of Sion in Greece, visited the Patriarchate.

The Exarch and accompanying pilgrims were courteously received by His Beatitude, Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

At the beginning of the visit, the Exarch of the Holy Sepulcher in Greece expressed his profound gratitude to God on their arrival to the Holy Land, where the Holy Shrines have been preserved through the centuries by the Patriarchate and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood. He also reiterated his devotion to Patriarch Theophilos III for the honour bestowed upon them, namely the representation of the Church of Sion in Greece.

In His reply, His Beatitude thanked the Exarch for this initiative of veneration and explained the significance of pilgrimage as an act of spiritual construction, which enhances faith and contributes to salvation.

His Beatitude went on to offer pectoral crosses to the priests and Jerusalemite eulogias to the pilgrims, who carried on their pilgrimage.

Amongst the pilgrims were Mr Photios Kourlamanis, President of the Society of Eurytania Scientists; Mrs Adamantia Oikonomou, Deputy Public Prosecutor at the court of appeals; Mrs Eleni

Papacosta, Magistrate in Agrinion; Mr Eythymios Kordoroumpas, retired Brigadier; Mr Christos Tzoumelekas, retired Major General and others.

As a token of remembrance of this visit, Mr Kourlamanis offered His Beatitude a book entitled "The Contribution of the Church in the 1940s".

**From the Secretariat-General**