

ADDRESS OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF LOD AT THE FEAST OF SAINT GEORGE.

LOD, 3/16 of November 2015

Your Holiness, the Patriarch of Jerusalem,

Your Excellencies,

members of the diplomatic community,

The Mayor, The V. Mayer Dear friends,

We have gathered today to celebrate the day of St. George – one of the most important and well-known saints in the Christian world, shared by all churches alike.

Today we celebrate George the saint, his courage, his devotion to God and his willingness to sacrifice – even his own life – for the good of others.

Our Christian Community here in Lod is a small one, less than 1,000 strong, but as we know, it is the quality, not the quantity, that matter.

Over 90% of our school graduates pursue academic education, becoming doctors, lawyers, accountants, engineers, Hi-Tech engineers, and more.

However, our community receives very little support from other organizations, aside from the Patriarch's generous contribution. Most of our incomes are from our community members who pay 500 Shekels per-year, to sustain our ongoing activity at the center, including expenses such as electricity, water, insurance, scouts activities and more.

Lately we've been informed that we must pay 500,000 Shekels in taxes in order to get a license to keep our community center going, in addition to making mandatory adjustments and changes in the building, estimated to be up to another 500,000 Shekels.

We welcome the Mayor's promises to assist us in lowering the taxes burden, but we are yet to receive a final answer on this issue. We hope that his final answer, which we still await, will live up to the promises he made to us.

And we would welcome any assistance from any other source, who believes in our Community and realizes the importance of this project for the future of our children.

Your Holiness, I'm standing here humble but also proud, proud to be son of this great city, son of Jesus son of god.

And I will repeat today what I said last year and what I'll continue saying every year:

Your Holiness.... We are the salt of the earth.

In the spirit of St. George, I welcome you to our home, and wish you a happy celebration, and may we see you with us next year again.

Thank you.