

# THE PATRIARCHATE VISITS WESTERN CHURCHES ON THE OCCASION OF CHRISTMAS

On Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> of December 2015, the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, headed by His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, visited local Western Churches in Jerusalem, celebrating Christmas according to the Gregorian calendar.

A. The Hagiotaphite Brotherhood visited the Franciscan Friars, founded in the Holy Land since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, now settled at a small distance to the northwest of the Patriarchate.

During the visit, Patriarch Theophilos addressed Pierre Battista Pizzaballa, Custodian of the Holy Land, in English, see [link:  
https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2015/12/29/19149](https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2015/12/29/19149)

In his reply speech, the Custodian thanked His Beatitude for setting an example of collaboration for all Churches in Jerusalem, and underlined the beneficial effect of the All-holy Shrines to the souls of visiting pilgrims and the need to have Christian Churches work together towards their preservation.

B. On the conclusion of the first meeting, the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood went on to visit the Latin Patriarchate, headed by the Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem, Monsignor Fouad Twal. Due to illness, the Monsignor was represented at the meeting by his aide, Bishop Somali.

Addressing Bishop Somali, Patriarch Theophilos said that the exchange of visits between the Christian Communities on feast-days are helpful in that they demonstrate the testament of the Lord of peace and justice, Whose grace we seek for Christmas

and the New Year.

Bishop Somali replied that at a time of criminal actions, abductions and displacement, the memory of the Nativity of Christ and the visits between the Churches come as a strong presence and consolation.

C. After the Latin Patriarchate, His Beatitude, accompanied by the Patriarchal Commissioner, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitlias, and the Elder Secretary-General, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, visited the Apostolic Delegate, Nuncio Giuseppe Lazzaroto, representative of the Pope to Jerusalem

D. Finally, His Beatitude, again accompanied by the Patriarchal Commissioner and the Elder Secretary-General, visited the Anglican Bishop to Jerusalem, Mr Suheil Dawani.

**From the Secretariat-General**

[http://youtu.be/PT82dI-r5\\_U](http://youtu.be/PT82dI-r5_U)

