

# EVE OF THEOPHANY ON THE RIVER JORDAN (2016)

On Tuesday, the 6<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> of January 2016, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of Theophany in commemoration of the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ by John the Baptist, when a voice from heaven identified Him as the Beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove and anointed Him with oil.

This Despotic feast was celebrated on the Eve and on the very day of the feast.

## A.The Eve of the feast

On the Eve of the feast, Monday the 5<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> of January 2016, after Matins, the Hours of the feast were read, His Beatitude Theophilos officiating. The Hours were followed by Vespers, the divine Liturgy of St Basil and the service of the Small Blessing.

The Blessing was followed by return to the Patriarchates, where His Beatitude waited for blessed water from the divine Liturgy held at St James Cathedral, led by Archbishop Theodosios of Sebaste.

On the arrival of the officiating Primate, the priest at St James and the Church Board members, a supplication was made, after which His Beatitude blessed those present.

Then, accompanied by Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Metropolitan Joachim of Zambia, Archdeacon Evlogios, Hierodeacon Markos and members of the Inter-disciplinary Group of the Metsovion Technical University, working on the restoration of the Holy Aedicula, the Patriarch left for Jericho.

There, His Beatitude visited the Monastery of the Prophet Elisha, where he was welcomed by Archimandrite Philoumenos and the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem and members of the Greek Consulate. From there, Patriarch Theophilos went to the Town Hall of Jericho, where he met with the Mayor and the Prefect.

At the Town Hall, f. Issa Mousleh read His Beatitude's address in Arabic, see link:

<https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2016/01/18/18109>

Patriarch Theophilos then left for the Monastery of John the Baptist on the banks of the Jordan, accompanied by men of the Israeli Army.

His Beatitude was warmly welcomed by Boy Scouts, Hieromonks, and Archimandrite Chrysostomos.

From there, the Patriarchal Entourage walked to the Site of the Lord's Baptismal, accompanied by the Mayor, the Israeli Military Commander of Jericho and the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem.

There, Vespers was performed on a special platform, as the Patriarch went on to dip the Holy Cross thrice into the water, blessing the crowd of faithful that had gathered there for the sanctification of the waters.

On the opposite bank stood the Patriarchal Commissioner in Amman, Metropolitan Benedict of Philadelphia, and Archimandrite Ieronymos, hegoumen in Fhes, waiting to celebrate the feast of Theophany on the eastern bank of the river Jordan, next Friday.

On the conclusion of the ceremony, Archimandrite Chrysostomos hosted the Patriarch, the Primates and several pilgrims to meatless lunch.

**From the Secretariat-General**

[httpv://youtu.be/8kLGbJQ1goE](http://youtu.be/8kLGbJQ1goE)

[httpv://youtu.be/cSXwdVCYN9w](http://youtu.be/cSXwdVCYN9w)

[httpv://youtu.be/7dD1TcLxhUs](http://youtu.be/7dD1TcLxhUs)

