

REMARKS AT THE FESTAL DOXOLOGY AT THE ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL IN SZENTENDRE, HUNGARY

24 May 2016

Your Eminences,
Your Graces,

Respected Government Officials,

Beloved Monastics,

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Christ is risen!

It is a great honour for us to return to this beautiful country of Hungary for this fraternal visit to our Christian brothers and sisters, and to the Orthodox Church in particular and to have this occasion to participate in this Festal Doxology with our concelebrants in the Lord from all the Orthodox communities here. The joy of this Paschal Feast has brought us together, the Feast of Feasts that has united earth and heaven, and divinity and humanity, in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The roots of Orthodoxy in Hungary go back many centuries, and the Orthodox Church has a long and significant history of contributing to the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic life of

this region. In our own day Orthodox Christians from several different national Churches live together in this country, and we see today the strength that is ours as we live in the truth of our diversity in unity. Today we experience a true Pentecost as we worship together in many tongues and from many lands.

The Orthodox Church is a witness to the uncreated light of the resurrection. This light, which first shone on Mount Tabor, now shines from the Tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a guide to the blind, and a beacon of hope to so many in our world who are plagued with fear, despair, and confusion. Our world is in such need of this spiritual mission, for we know the truth of the words that were spoken by our Lord when he was tempted:

“Man does not live by bread alone, hut by every word that comes from the mouth of God,”

(Matthew, 4:4)

It is the mission of the Church, and therefore our mission, to offer to the world precisely this spiritual food, food for which every soul hungers, and which is the food of eternal life.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Mother of all the Churches, places this spiritual mission at the heart of our life. In this regard we are glad to announce that the spirit of the celebration of the resurrection has indeed inspired the hearts of the three Communities i.e. of our Patriarchate, the Franciscans, and the Armenians, to join our efforts in the task of the renovation of the Sacred Edicule of the Holy Sepulchre. The Sacred Edicule is the holiest of Sites, and Divine Providence has given us the responsibility of ensuring that this site, and all the Holy Sites in the Holy Land, remain places of worship and sources of spiritual refreshment that are accessible to all without distinction. Thousands of people come to worship at these Holy Sites, including many

faithful Christians from Hungary. Here is the place of our common witness.

We cannot but give thanks to our Lord, who through the Holy Spirit has put it into our hearts to gather in the upcoming Holy and Great Synod in Crete and we pray that He will guide us in his own way in order to glorify his Name.

We greet you all, therefore, both the leaders of the Church, as well as the leaders of the

Government, who extended this gracious invitation, with deep gladness as the Church continues to live in the light of the resurrection and the love of Christ. We thank particularly His Excellency Mr. Geza, the Hungarian Representative in Ramallah, for his kind assistance.

May God bless you all in your spiritual pastoral and Church Mission in this region, and may God bless all the peoples of your beloved Hungary.

Christ is risen!

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem