

SUNDAY OF THE ADORATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS AT THE PATRIARCHATE (2017)

On the 3rd Sunday of Great Lent, 6th/19th March 2017, the feast of the Adoration of the Precious and Life-giving Cross was celebrated by the Patriarchate, as established by the Church, so that by the Sacred Cross of Christ, through which we have been saved and deified, the faithful are strengthened in their struggle of fasting, in order to reach the Holy Easter, meaning the participation in the Cross and Resurrection of the Lord.

The celebration was observed according to the rules of the Typikon of the Church.

1. In the Evening

The Service began with the reading of the 9th Hour at the Monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen, led by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos at 1:45pm on Saturday. At 2:00pm, bells tolling, the descend to the Most Holy Church of the Resurrection followed. Upon arrival, the veneration of the Deposition Shrine and the Holy Sepulchre took place, by His Beatitude, the Archbishops and Hieromonks.

Once His Beatitude put on His mantle, went to the Catholicon and gave the blessing, the bells started tolling, while the Archbishops and the members of the Synod venerated the Horrendous Golgotha and the deacons performed the incense procedure around the shrines.

Great Vespers began immediately, with the Great Entrance and the Blessing of Bread, at the singing of the Choir Leader of

the Most Holy Church of the Resurrection Archimandrite Aristovoulos on the right, and Mr. Alvanos on the left, at the presence of many contrite and pious faithful people.

At the end of Vespers, the Patriarchal Entourage headed for the Patriarchate.

2. On the Day of the Feast

At 7:00am on Sunday, the Patriarchal Entourage left the Patriarchate and reaching the Church of the Resurrection, venerated the Holy Deposition and the Holy Sepulchre. His Beatitude then blessed everybody at the Catholicon and the bells started tolling while the Priests received the blessing by His Beatitude. His Beatitude also prayed to receive the blessing and entering the Holy Altar the brotherly osculation among the Archbishops followed. Having ended this procedure, the Divine Liturgy began at the Holy Sepulchre, led by His Beatitude. Concelebrants were the Most Reverend Metropolitan Isychios of Capitolias, the Most Reverend Archbishops, Theophanis of Gerassa, Aristarchos of Constantina, Theodosios of Sebastia, Demetrios of Lydda, Nectarios of Anthedon, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis and the visiting Bishop Innocent of the Moscow Patriarchate, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos. Singing were the Choir Leader of the Most Holy Church of the Resurrection Archimandrite Aristovoulos on the right, and Mr. Alvanos on the left, at the presence of a big crowd of praying faithful from Greece, Russia, Romania and Cyprus.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, the procession around the Holy Sepulchre and the Shrines began, led by the Sacred Cross with the Sacred Wood, with the singing of the festal troparia of the day.

Upon ending the procession, the Patriarchal Entourage returned to the Patriarchate where His Beatitude gave the following

address:

“In Paradise of old the tree stripped me bare; for by giving me its fruit to eat, the enemy brought in death. But now the Tree of the Cross that clothes men with the garment of life has been set up on earth, and the whole world is filled with boundless joy. Beholding it venerated, O ye people, let us with one accord raise in faith our cry to God: His house is full of glory.”

Your Excellency Consul General of Greece Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos,

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brothers,

Noble Christians and pilgrims,

Today the Holy Church of Christ and all the world with it, are filled with joy because the image of the life-giving Cross of our Saviour Jesus Christ has been seen to be venerated.

Today, the hymn writer says, “The Church is revealed as a second Paradise, having a tree of life, as the first Paradise of old: by touching Your Cross, O Lord, we share in immortality!”

The significance of the Sacred Cross in the salvific mystery of Divine Providence has been vividly expressed by the former prosecutor of the Cross, the Great Apostle Paul who says: “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. 6:14).

Interpreting these words, St. Chrysostom says: “And what is the boasting for the Cross? That Christ took upon Himself the form of a slave, and suffered so much, for me the slave, the enemy, the ungrateful; but so much He loved me, that He even gave up Himself for me.”

In other words, the crucified passion of our Lord Jesus Christ

is precisely what made the world enter into the infinite love of God, peace, righteousness, reconciliation, but also condemnation, according to the witness of St. John the Theologian: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). And the light that has come into the world is no other but the word of the Cross, for which St. Paul says: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18).

To this power of the Sacred Cross we become partakers my dear brothers and sisters, through the veneration of the Wood of Life, in this very place where our Saviour Christ was Crucified and Resurrected.

Spiritually embracing the power of the Live-giving Cross today, we are called to continue the good striving of abstinence. Let us therefore say together with the hymn writer: "What shall we offer You, Christ, for You have given us Your precious Cross to venerate: where Your holy blood was shed, and Your flesh was fixed by nails: we kiss it with love, giving thanks to You!" Amen.

Wishing you many happy returns and a happy Easter."

All the above mentioned services were broadcast live by the Jerusalem Patriarchate radio station.

From Secretariat-General

http://youtu.be/0kn10_5NbLg

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