

# **H.H.B. BLESSES THE REOPENING OF THE JIFNA COMMUNITY CHURCH**

On Friday evening, 16th/26th May 2017, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos officiated a Doxology and the Blessing of water and blessed the reopening of the Holy Church of St. George the Great Martyr and Trophy bearer in the Orthodox Arab-speaking Community of Jifna (Biblical name Gofna), located near the town Ramalla. This Holy Church which bears the signs of its antiquity – the embossed depictions of the Nativity of Christ above the entrance door, dated back to the time of the memorable Cyril Patriarch of Jerusalem in 1854, and a big very old Baptistery by the entrance – had undergone quite an important damage due to an electric power supply fire a few months ago. Since then, the Hall next to it had been used as a Church.

To this ceremony of the reopening of the Church, His Beatitude was escorted by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, the Master of Ceremonies Archimandrite Bartholomew, Archimandrite Ieronymos, Fr. Ayssa Mouleh and Archdeacon Mark. His Beatitude was most warmly received by the Scouts of the town who led the way until the Church entrance.

After this ceremony, Mr. Hanna Amire, President of the Christian Affairs of the State of Palestine gave an address in the adjacent Hall, thanking everybody on behalf of the President of the State of Palestine Mr. Mahmoud Abbas Abu Mazen , and underlining the imperative necessity of a peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims, especially after the sad and unpleasant event of the murder of 28 Copt students in Egypt at noon of that day.

An address was also given by the Mayor of the town, the Head of the Community and Dean Priest George Awad, the Chairman of the Community Board Mr. Anton Maher, also thanking His Beatitude for His moral and material support in the building of the Church as well as all those who helped in its restoration.

The ceremony was concluded by His Beatitude's address, read by Fr. Issa Mousleh in Arabic (to view, visit the Arabic version of the site).

His Beatitude offered the Community a Holy Chalice, Holy Tray and other Holy Vessels for their use in the restored after the fire Holy Church.

**From Secretariat-General**