

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM CELEBRATES THE DIVINE LITURGY IN ZABABDE OF SAMARIA

On Sunday, 19th June/2nd July 2017, the day of the memory of St. Jude the Apostle, brother of the Lord and memory of our Father among the Saints Paissious, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos led the Divine Liturgy at the old Holy Church of St. George in the town Zababde, in Samaria district past Jacob's well.

In this town of the State of Palestine there is a Greek-Orthodox Arab-speaking community of approximately 800 people.

With His Beatitude, co-celebrants were the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, the Archimandrites Meletios and Demetrios, the Head of the Parish Fr. Touma Dawoud and Archdeacon Marc; singing on the right was Archimandrite Demetrios and on the left the Choir of this Community, with the participation in prayer of many of the members of this Community.

His Beatitude preached the Divine word to the congregation as follows:

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 1:20-21), is what the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of St. James the brother of God, Jude, one of the Apostles commands.

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Noble Christians,

The great Apostle of the Lord Jude, who was deemed worthy of the manifestation of God, has gathered us all today in your town Zababde, in order to thank the Lord our God for the good benefits of our Christian congregation and its children.

Indeed, the words of Jude the Apostle – of course not of Judas Iscariot – in his catholic epistle are God-inspired words, by the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. And this is so because Jude was deemed worthy of the vision of God's goodness as the hymn writer says: "The great Apostle of the Lord, deemed worthy of the manifestation of God, was beloved, and he beheld the splendour and beauty of the vision of Him". Jude accomplished this because he hearkened to our Lord Jesus Christ's exhortation, according to which, those who hear and keep the word of God are blessed. "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Luke 11:28).

Moreover, the "servant of Jesus Christ and brother of St. James the brother of God", our exquisite Jude, became eye and ear-witness of our Lord Jesus Christ and of His gospel preaching. For this he was established a teacher of the Orthodox faith of the Lord, as the hymn writer says: "Sprung from a noble root, thou art risen before us, a branch bestowed by God, ever feeding the whole world, upon the fruits of thy words, O eye-witness of God the Lord, O thou brother of our God, and Christ's all-wise herald, who hast taught the Lord's pure Orthodox Faith to all men, initiate of His grace".

Let us hear, my beloved ones, the hierophant Apostle saying: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude, 1:3). And in more detail; I saw the dangers that surround you from the false teachers and I considered it imperative to write in order to urge you to adhere to the faith of our Lord Jesus

Christ and His Holy Church, which has once and for all been delivered to the Christians.

Christ's Saint Jude instructs us to remain steadfast in Christ's faith, because faith, according to St. Paul is the shield of our protection against the works of the devil. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Eph. 6:16). Moreover, according to St. John the Evangelist and Theologian, the faith to Jesus Christ the Son of God is a light dispelling the fallacy of the world, and strength of a new spiritual life which is opposed to the fallacy of this world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5).

It is an undeniable fact, my beloved brothers and sisters, that our faith in Christ the Son of God and Son of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary is being thwarted / fought against by the powers of darkness of this crooked era. For this reason, we are called by St. Jude the Apostle whom we celebrate today, to establish ourselves upon the foundation of our holy faith, through prayer that is guided by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit Who conjoins and constitutes the constitution of our holy Church. "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 1:20-21).

Moreover, through this faith to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prophets, the Apostles and all the Saints, who according to St. Paul compose the "cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews 12:1), who witnessed the truth of the faith, "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the

sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens" (Hebrews 11:33-34).

And faith, my dear ones, is activated and bears its fruit through prayer as St. James the brother of God teaches: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). In other words, the prayer of the righteous man who is a faithful member of the Church has a great power and acts strongly and effectively. For this reason St. Paul urges us saying; let all of you become tireless in prayer. Keep vigil on it and accompany it with thanksgiving to God: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2).

Interpreting St. Paul's words, our Father among the Saints Theophylactos says: "This is the true prayer, the thanksgiving for all things we have suffered or made us sorrowful, for the sake of the common benefit."

We "Give thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"(Eph. 5:20), Who has deemed us worthy of the partaking of His body and blood in communion with you, by the intercessions of St. Jude the Apostle and together with the hymn writer let us say: "O Jude, thy brethren praise thee, as the brother of the Word Who shone forth from the eternal Father before the ages, and in these last times was inexpressibly incarnate of the holy Virgin and became man. Him do thou fervently entreat, O Apostle, that peace be granted unto the world, and the forgiveness of transgressions and great mercy unto us who honour thee." Amen."

For the Sermon in Arabic please follow the link:

<https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2017/07/02/31620>

At the end of the Divine Liturgy His Beatitude honoured with a medal of the Patriarchate and an icon of the Theotokos each

one of the excelled students from the town Zababde, from Primary, Secondary and University Education and addressed them as follows:

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Our Dear Children, Lyceum and University Graduates,

Responding to your noble invitation we have come to Zababde, this beautiful town, in order to become communicants of the Eucharistic body and blood of Christ on the one hand; on the other hand, to participate in the joy of your successful graduation from the educational institutions.

We are especially glad for this important event of you progress, which is determining so much for your personal improvement and development as it is for your scientific training, and even more for your contribution to the social and national fields of your scope.

And we say this because you are the future and at the same time the expectation not only of our blood-related family, but also of our Ecclesiastical Community and of the striving for its independence State of Palestine, under the wise command of our President, His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Abbas.

As the Educational institutions Graduates, you undertake even greater responsibilities, because the path that you are going to choose is your own choice, as St. James the brother of God and first Hierarch of the Jerusalem Church says: “Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom” (James 3:13).

The Roman-Orthodox Jerusalem Patriarchate which constitutes the oldest religious, ecclesiastical and cultural institution

in the Holy Land in general and in Palestine in particular, has never ceased to provide for the cultivation of knowledge and science and the Christian education. This is undeniably witnessed by the historic accounts of the venerable Patriarchate, which up to the present day contributes greatly towards the harmonious co-existence between the religious doctrines and the Christian Communities, through its schools which operate throughout its spiritual jurisdiction.

The Roman-Orthodox Patriarchate achieves this because the education it promotes, aims mainly and primarily to the education of people inspired and dominated by the principles and morals of the love of Christ's gospel, as this is formulated in St. James' letter, which says: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

These words from St. James are those which constitute the knowledge of truth and freedom, which stems from the knowledge of truth for which our Lord Jesus Christ "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philip. 2:8).

With these words, we would like to express our warmest fatherly congratulations, not only to the graduates, but also to their teachers and parents and our community. Moreover, we would like to wish every strength from above and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, so that they are proven worthy of our expectations."

From Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/07q0PKuZ4bU>

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