

THE FEAST OF ST. SAVVAS THE SANCTIFIED AT THE PATRIARCHATE

1. At the His Holy Lavra in the desert of Judea

The feast of our Father among the Saints Savvas the Sanctified was celebrated by the Patriarchate on Monday December 5/18, 2017, at the Monastery founded by him around the end of the 5th century, which is located on the right bank of Brook Kidron, and is directed towards the Dead Sea.

St. Savvas founded this Monastery after a fifteen-year apprenticeship by St. Euthymios and after five years of ascetic striving opposite the Monastery, where his hermitage is preserved to this day.

The Monastery served as a Lavra, meaning that only the advanced monks from organized Monasteries were accepted. It became a great monastic centre throughout the centuries, with saints, martyrs, writers, theologians, musicians and copy writers. Some of the great poets and hymn writers of the Church that lived there were St. John of Damascus and St. Cosmas the melodist.

With the actions of St. Savvas and his contemporary compatriot St. Theodosios the Cenobiarch from Cappadocia, the Monastery played a significant role for the establishment of the Orthodox doctrine against Monophysitism, regarding the one hypostasis and the two natures of Christ in the 4th Ecumenical Synod of Chalkidon in 451A.D.

Nowadays, twenty monks live in the Monastery, following the Typikon of worship and monastic life founded by St. Savvas, which has been disseminated to all Orthodox Churches.

According to this Typikon, the monks begin their monastic life with their morning rule of prayer at 1.00 a.m., followed by the Church service until 5.00 a.m. After that there is a small rest, followed by the daily tasks, and the reception of the pilgrims except on Wednesdays and Fridays. There is one main meal on weekdays, and two meals on Weekends and Feast days. After Vespers and the Compline the evening rest follows until 1.00 a.m.

For St. Savvas' feast, the all-night Vigil was officiated by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, with co-celebrants Archbishops, among whom the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Hieromonks and Arab-speaking Priests. The choir leader of the All-holy Church of the Resurrection Archimandrite Aristovoulos sang in Greek, with the participation in prayer of Greek pilgrims and Arab-speaking locals from Bethlehem, Beit Sahour and Beit Jalla.

The Divine Liturgy was followed by a reception with the boiled wheat and the blessed bread and then a monastic meal._

2. At his chapel in the H. Monastery of the Archangels in the Old City of Jerusalem

There, Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy in the morning were officiated by the Hegoumen Most Reverend Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda, who has renovated the Monastery. A faithful congregation attended the Services.

From Secretariat-General

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