

# PASCHAL GREETINGS TO THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY FROM H.H.B. THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS III

10 April 2018

*This speech was not delivered in person,  
but is sent to the Armenian community  
via this website*

His Beatitude Theophilos III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

Your Beatitude Patriarch Nourhan,

Your Eminences,

Your Graces,

Beloved Members of our Respective Brotherhoods,

Dear Fathers,

Christ is risen!

We greet you, Your Beatitude, the members of your Brotherhood,  
and the Armenian Community of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and  
wish you the blessings of this Holy and Great Paschal Feast.  
As we sing at this time;

*In your light, O Master, shall we see light,*

*O lover of mankind;*

*for you rose from the dead,  
granting salvation to the human race,  
that all creation may glorify you.*

(From the Resurrection Stichera)

As we keep this holy and most joyful Feast, we cannot forget that the message of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is a universal message to the world. Even as we have been entrusted with the guardianship of the Holy Places, so we have been entrusted, as were the first apostles, with this divine message. For in this Paschal Feast salvation has been granted to the entire human race, and the world looks to Jerusalem in hope in this season of Paschal light.

The glory of the risen Christ lies in the sacrificial humility of his cross. Our Lord Jesus Christ was obedient to the Father in everything, and he humbled himself, even to death on the cross, so that the world might live through Him.

As we read in the Letter to the Philippians,

*Christ humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross (Phil. 2:8).*

So it is for the Church, that in suffering we may come to know the risen life of our Lord, who has given us the promise that he will be with us always, “even to the end of the ages” (Mt. 28:20). When humanity suffers, so the Church suffers with her children, and the burden rests with us to keep the hope of the Resurrection alive. Once again we are experiencing violence in our region, and we face the despair that such disruption of the human community inevitably brings in its wake. We cannot rest from our spiritual mission, for it is only from the Empty Tomb that the world will receive the healing and new life which we long for.

As Saint Paul says,

*We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. (Romans 8:22-23).*

As we keep this Paschal Feast, we wish to express to you, Your Beatitude, our appreciation for our deepening understanding of purpose in the face of the many challenges that the Christian communities of our City and region face. We must continue to stand firm and together not for our sake, but for the sake of the spiritual mission of the Holy Places, which are the inexhaustible wells of hope and spiritual refreshment.

May the Light of the Resurrection guide your steps, Your Beatitude, and may you, your Brotherhood and the Armenian community of the Holy Land, enjoy the Paschal fruits of peace and reconciliation.

Christ is risen!

Thank you.