

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF ARCHBISHOP-ELECT CHRISTOPHOROS OF KYRIAKOUPOLIS

On Saturday May 6/19, 2018, the Ordination of the Archbishop-Elect Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis took place at the Catholicon of the All-holy Church of the Holy Sepulchre, according to the decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Jerusalem Patriarchate in a recent session.

The Sacrament of the Ordination was held during the Divine Liturgy according to the Order of our Orthodox Church.

This Order commands the reading of the Confessions of faith and the libels against the heretics during the Service of Matins.

The Divine Liturgy began and the Service of the Ordination continued before the readings of the Bible.

Then His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos addressed the Ordained as follows;

Your Grace Archbishop-Elect Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis,

The Grace of God the Father has deemed all of us worthy today to celebrate the Sacrament of the Divine Liturgy, the Eucharistic bloodless sacrifice, in the centre of the earth, in the place where our salvation was accomplished, through the Sacred Cross and the Resurrection from the dead of His Only-Begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this Sacrament, there is an additional one, your ordination to an Archbishop, after the unanimous casting of the votes of the Holy and Sacred Synod members, for your election to

Archbishop of the luminous Archdiocese of Kyriakoupolis of old, undertaking at the same time the Trusteeship of the Orthodox Congregation of Amman in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and its outskirts.

The Holy and Sacred Synod came to this decision having appreciated your studies in the Patriarchal School since your early youth and after that, your joining the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, by which you have been brought up and taught the love for the All-holy Shrines and the respect of the Ecclesiastical principles and the consignment of the Holy Fathers. Inspired by these principles you have worked for many years at the Patriarchal Delegation in Amman and especially at the Holy Monastery of the Life-giving Spring in Dibin. You have founded, built and renovated buildings, but above all you have been a steadfast supporter to young, old and suffering people of our Congregation.

You have cultivated the gifts (talanta) God gave you by the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, and you have increased them twofold. From today onward, you are again called to cultivate these, strengthened by the Grace, the validity and the authority of the Episcopal Office and offer them in the ministry of the Orthodox Congregation in Amman, so that it may remain faithful to the doctrines of our Orthodox faith and devoted and solidly united with its Motherly Church, the Mother of Churches, which is based in Jerusalem, the City of the Great King, remembering that our Orthodox Church of old, acting according to God's orders, has endued all men as the image of God, evangelizing the word according to Apostle Paul's consignment: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:27-28).

Come forth, therefore, Your Grace Archbishop-Elect Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis to the Holy Altar and pray

fervently, so that by the placing of the hands of Our Mediocrity and Our concelebrant Holy Bishops, the Grace of the All-Holy and Ceremonial Spirit which heals all infirmities and replenishes what is incomplete, may come down to you and through the intercessions of our Most Pure Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary may elevate you a chosen vessel, enduring all things with Job's patience, according to the type of St. Job who we celebrate today, and according to the type of your Patron Saint Christophoros the Great Martyr, becoming "Christophoros" (Bearer of Christ), bearing Christ in your soul and conveying Him to the people's souls, for their consolation, strengthening and salvation, for the Glory of our God in One Trinity.

The Ordained replied with the following address in return as follows;

"Your Beatitude Father and Master,

I stand before You at the All-holy Church of the Resurrection, in front of the Holy Altar of the Catholicon, between the Horrendous Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre, between death and life.

"Thy Cross O Christ we venerate and we praise and glorify Thy Holy Resurrection". This message of the joy, love and salvation through the resurrection has its origin in our Church of Jerusalem. "Behold, through the Cross there is joy for the whole world".

As we commemorate righteous Job today, I stand before You, Your Beatitude, the Father of us the Hagiotaphites and Patriarch of Jerusalem and I am called, the least among my brethren, to live my personal Pentecost, by the Grace of the All-graceful God, through Your sacred hands.

I believe that nothing in our lives comes by chance, and this is something that comes from heaven for me. Today I am called to receive the Episcopal Grace, the ultimate degree of

ministry in the Church. According to the Chief-Shepherd, Christ Who said; "He came to minister and not to be ministered" and that "He lays down His life for the sheep", and His words to St. Peter: "Do you love me Peter? Feed my sheep!" I admire the greatness of love, of sacrifice and responsibility!

Christ wants works and sacrifice from us, not words. For this reason, when I look deep inside me and see my weaknesses, my passions and sins, I tremble with fear, and recalling the saints of our Church I see that they fled away from offices of authority! I fear even more, but my soul finds peace when I hear our Christ saying: "my strength is made perfect in weakness".

Pray, Your Beatitude, that I may draw strength and hope from the strength of our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be able to bear the cross of my new ministry.

Moreover, I draw power from You, Your Beatitude, watching you leading the ship of the Church with so much strength and patience, with so much love and self-will, among so many problems and difficulties, in a much tested region with many political, national and religious conflicts.

My memories and thoughts go back to my childhood; I was born in Jerusalem and as a little child I used to serve at the Church of St. George in my village Jifna; I was a member of a small, simple but humble and blessed family.

My father Kamal, was a farmer, he loved the land and looked after it and cared for it in many ways; and what joy would I see in his face when the land brought fruit! My mother Giasemi, loved the education and worked in various governmental and social posts. I remember my only brother Mussa, with whom I went to the same school in Ramallah, until I left them. Now he is married and has four children. They gave me a lot in my life, I love them and I pray that God

keeps them well and grants them the Paradise.

As a child that I was at the time, I didn't know anything about the Orthodox monasticism, but I wanted to become a monk and a Priest. I showed this with most of my works and games, but I don't know how and why. What I know is that I came at the Patriarchal School of Zion at Class A of High School, despite the opposition of my family and especially that of my mother and our social environment.

The memorable Patriarch Diodoros "ever-lasting His remembrance" received me with much love in Christ and fatherly care. I used to hear Him from the Patriarchal Throne at St. Constantine's Church to say to me when I read the Apostle with my little Greek as a 12-year-old; "Bravo, Hanna – bravo John" He encouraged me in such a way that He made me love not only Him, but everything around me, the Congregation, the All-holy Shrines, the Church, Greece, even Jordan before I ever went there.

He gave me the monastic cassock at the Monastery of Prophet Elijah in 1984 and send me to serve at the Horrendous Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre under the obedience of the memorable Geronda Sacristan Daniel, ever-lasting his remembrance! With him I learned solemnity and responsibility. I learned how the genuine Hagiotaphite should be: he should divide the night between prayer and the Holy Services, the Divine Liturgy and rest, so that the day would be devoted to the ministry of the Shrines. He taught me what the genuine monk should be like; peaceful, humble and patient in order to receive the pilgrims with such distinction that would make Christ's Grace and presence noticeable. This is what I tried to do and how I have been during my ministry in Jordan for 28 years.

I was tonsured a monk by His hands, and He gave me the name of His Spiritual Father from Chios, "Christophoros" who had sent Him at the Shrines. On that same day, the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba was tonsured a monk with me.

And the Church calls us to minister in Jordan together again. It seems that nothing is at random. God's Grace and providence provide for everything.

I remember the words of His Eminence Basil of Caesarea (ever-lasting his remembrance) on the day of my ordination to Deacon at the Horrendous Golgotha in 1988: "My child, keep your soul clean, so that it will shine with holiness". And today I confess before You: I didn't keep it clean! I sinned! I sinned, I ask for forgiveness, the mercy and long-suffering of God.

With the memorable Patriarch Diodoros' blessing I went to Jordan in 1989, but I also followed the council of His Eminence Timotheos of Bostra. He told me that I had to choose between Jerusalem with all its advantages and my education.

In the first year I studied the Arabic language at the University of Amman in Jordan and then I studied Law and Sociology.

On Christmas Eve, January 6, 199, I was ordained a Priest at the Cathedral of the Annunciation by the memorable Archbishop Constantinos of Kyriakoupolis "ever-lasting his remembrance"!

This marked a new era in my life, new horizons opened. I got to know the congregation and share with the faithful their worries, needs, queries, their thirst for Orthodoxy. I was watching our congregation threatened by "wolves", the heresy was tearing apart their souls, their Orthodox identity, their Romiosyne. I was watching their Liturgical and Spiritual senses deteriorate and the waves of Islamic fanaticism made their spiritual reality more painful. Along with the young people we started praying, I taught them to say the Jesus Prayer with a praying rope. I started celebrating the Divine Liturgy, I was hearing confessions, and gave speeches. Our goal was to introduce the Orthodox icons in every house, to bring the books of our Holy Fathers translated in Arabic.

So we founded the monastery of the Life-giving Spring in Dibin, with the blessing of the memorable Patriarch Diodoros. And it was completed with Your blessing, and with the prayers and the hard toil of Gerondissa Eirinaia and the nuns Katherine and Thecla and the novice nuns along with the toils of the whole congregation.

I cannot omit His Eminence Benedict of Philadelphia. He accomplished an important mission in Jordan in various areas and his presence and pastorate are everywhere visible. May God give him health and strength.

The hour has come, Your Beatitude. Allow me to thank the Almighty God, the Most Holy Theotokos, St. Christophoros and righteous Job, who we commemorate today and all the saints, for all things they gave me in my life.

Your Beatitude, I would like to thank You too, from the depths of my heart, and all the Archbishops of the Holy and Sacred Synod of our Patriarchate who honour me with their presence. I thank my brothers the Hagiotaphite Fathers, who are with me today. I thank the clergy and the people who are with me at this hour. I have enclosed in my heart the whole congregation and I thank them for their love.

Finally, I would like to assure you that I will be a genuine Hagiotaphite until my last breath and I will work under Your guidance for the unity of the faithful and their salvation, within the unity of our Church of Jerusalem, because, as You always say reasonably, our Patriarchate is the security and guarantee for the continuing presence of Christianity in our region.

May God preserve and keep under His protection His Majesty the King Abdullah II Bin Al-Husein and Jordan, Palestine and the whole world. May God give peace and security in our region. Amen. So be it.

It is time to work for the Lord,

Holy Master, give Thy blessing.”

After the addresses the Ordained was led three times around the Holy Table in the Altar under the Ordination Hymns, followed by the placing of the hands on the head of the Ordained and the prayer for the coming down of the Divine Grace by His Beatitude and His concelebrant Archbishops; the Most Reverend Metropolitans Kyriakos of Nazareth, Timotheos of Bostra, Benedict of Philadelphia, and the Most Reverend Archbishops; Damascene of Joppa, Aristarchos of Constantina, Methodios of Tabor, Demetrios of Lydda, Makarios of Qatar, Isidoros of Hierapolis and the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis. At the exclamation of “Axios” there was great cheerful approval by the congregation of the Hagiotaphite Fathers, relatives, friends and spiritual children of the Ordained from Jordan.

Before the end of the Divine Liturgy His Beatitude gave the Ordained the Episcopal Staff saying “ Receive this Staff...”.

Upon dismissal the Ordained Most Reverend Archbishop of Kyriakoupolis distributed the blessed bread and accepted the congratulations from all those who came to kiss his hand.

At the meeting in the Patriarchate a while later, His Beatitude addressed the Ordained congratulating him for his promotion and wishing him the grace of the Holy Spirit the Comforter, while the new Archbishop thanked His Beatitude and assured Him that he will minister the Orthodox Congregation in His co-operation and unity with the Mother Church of Jerusalem.

From Secretariat-General

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