

SECOND DAY OF THE FORMAL VISIT OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM IN ROMANIA

On Friday, November 17/30, 2018, the Patriarchal co-celebration of the Divine Liturgy on the commemoration of the Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called (new cal.) took place at his magnificent newly-built Cathedral at the centre of the city of Bucharest, which was completed with the inspiration and under the initiative, guidance and custody of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel and by the contribution of the Romanian people.

This co-celebration was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, and the Most Reverend Archbishops, Aristarchos of Constantina and Geronda Secretary-General, Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis and Patriarchal Commissioner in Amman of Jordan, hundreds of Priests and Deacons, under the chanting of the choir of the Holy Cathedral. The service was attended by a large congregation which stood in much reverence and patience despite the very cold weather due to the snowfall earlier in the day.

After the reading of the Gospel, His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon;

“Again the next day after John [the Baptist] stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!... One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We

have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:35-37, 40-41).

Your Beatitude Patriarch of Romania Daniel,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

From the city of the Passion on the Cross and of the Resurrection of the King of kings, and the city of Saint James the Brother of God and its First Hierarch, we have come to the blessed land of the evangelic preaching of the Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called. The first reason for this is to thank and glorify the Holy Trinitarian God on this God-pleasing event of the consecration of this magnificently-built Cathedral in honour of Apostle Andrew; on the other hand, along with St. Paul we may proclaim that: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:5-6).

It is precisely this "light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" what the commemorated Apostle Andrew preached by saying to his brother Simon Peter "we have found the Messiah", namely Christ. This way, our Apostle Andrew becomes the reason for the first meeting of the Lord with Peter, who became the chief of the Apostles, as well as [for His meeting] with Philip, his fellow citizen. And the calling of Andrew and Peter was made by the Sea of Galilee, when He found them and said to them: "And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him" (Matt. 4:19-20).

Apostle Andrew's zeal for God for his Master Christ, made him imitator of the martyr's passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as his hymn writer says; "Thou didst desire the Master

and didst pursue Him, guided in His footsteps unto life, O supremely honourable Andrew, and thou didst truly emulate His sufferings even unto death.”

The blood of the martyr’s passion of Apostle James the Brother of God and of Andrew the First-called as well as that of all the Apostles are the seal of our healthy Orthodox faith, and also the strong foundation on which the Church of Christ has been built, as Apostle Paul preaches;

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:20-21).

And the holy temple in the Lord are the faithful members of the mystical body of Christ, namely the Church, as St. Paul preaches: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Cor. 3:16). Interpreting these words, Origen says; “We become a temple of God, if we make ourselves a dwelling place for the Spirit of God”. While Theodoritos Kyrou says; “It is befitting to point out that he named temples of God those who are the dwelling places of the grace of the Spirit; and the word witnesses that the All-holy Spirit [is] God”.

We should also point out that each earthly temple as a place of “the logical worship of God” (Romans 12:1), depicts the temple of the spiritual city of the living God, that is the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22). And the earthly Jerusalem is named “the dwelling place of God” – according to St. John of Damascus – because our Lord Jesus Christ walked on it, “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven” (Col. 1:19-20 / Col. 2:9).

The Patron Saint of your blessed country, Apostle Andrew, as well as that of Jerusalem, the First Hierarch James the Brother of God, have gathered all of us in this Holy Cathedral in order to confess that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). And this is so because "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (1 John 4:2).

This witness of the "Incarnate and God-made-man, God the Word, through the pure blood of the Ever-Virgin Mary the Theotokos and Mother of God, our Lord Jesus Christ", of the light, the truth and the righteousness of the world we also confess, the ones who minister and safeguard the All-holy Shrines, which are the irrefutable and historical witnesses of our faith in the Crucified and Resurrected Christ, but also the guarantee of the unity of our salvific faith, which has been preached by the Holy Apostles and secured by the Holy Ecumenical Synods. "By keeping a steadfast faith you will reach the safe path, the much loved harbour in security", St. Ioannis the New Hozevite, the fruit of the Romanian land, says in his poetic verses.

Today's double festal participation of ours in the consecration of this beautiful Cathedral and in the Eucharistic Synaxis along with our dear Brother and Pastor, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, on the sacred commemoration of the Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called, calls us to hear the advice of St. Paul who says; "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ... that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Philip. 1:27-29); to Who belongs the glory and the might unto the ages of ages.

May the grace of the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb be with you all. Amen.”

At the end of the Divine Liturgy and during the exchange of gifts, which were an icon of the Nativity of Theotokos by the Patriarch of Jerusalem and a mosaic icon of the Apostle Andrew by the Patriarch of Romania, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem said the following few words;

«Your Beatitude, dear Patriarch Daniel,

Your Eminences,

Your Graces,

Respected Governmental and Civil Leaders,

Honoured Guests,

Reverend Fathers,

As we celebrate the consecration and inauguration of the great National Cathedral with you, dear Patriarch Daniel, the Church of Jerusalem, which is the Mother of all the Churches rejoices with our Sister Church of Romania and all the people of this land. We are happy to be here again at your kind and fraternal invitation.

Our greatest joy is to bring with us the blessings of the Holy City of Jerusalem and of the Holy Land, and to assure you, Your Beatitude, of the prayers of the Christians of the Holy Land. May the blessings of the Holy Places, which are the tangible signs of our sacred history, be an encouragement to you and to the Romanian People.

The Romanian Church is the spiritual guardian of the Romanian people, and the new National Cathedral which is appropriately known as “The People’s Salvation Cathedral” is a visible expression of this important and providential role of the Church. You have brought to fruition at last a long-held dream

for a national cathedral, which was first expressed after Romania gained its independence in 1877, and the presence of the cathedral in the heart of the capital city, near the Parliament, is a testimony to the fact that the Church must be at the heart of the nation.

We hope and pray that the Church in this land may continue to fulfil its spiritual mission to the Romanian people, and be a sign of hope and inspiration at this critical time of human history.

We take this opportunity to thank you, Your Beatitude, for your gracious hospitality to us, and we also wish to thank all those who have made this celebration possible. We also acknowledge all the civic and governmental officials who supported this project during the building of this great cathedral.

May God bless you, Your Beatitude, in your primatial ministry, and may God grant abundant fruit to the mission of the Church in this land, to God's glory, and to the well-being and spiritual nurture of all the people of our beloved Romania.

And so we wish to raise our glass in a toast to you, Your Beatitude, and wish you many years.

Thank you».

There was a formal festal lunch at noon. During the meal His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem delivered the following address:

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Your Graces,

Respected Governmental and Civic Leaders,

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Thank you.

On Friday evening, November 17/30, 2018, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos travelled from Bucharest to the city Alba Julia, escorted by His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, by plane and then by car. A hundred years ago in this city there was the proclamation of the union among Transylvania, Bessarabia and Vukovina with Romania, in one united country. This historic event for the unity and peace of the Romanian people was celebrated with various festivities during its centennial anniversary.

Upon their arrival, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, were received by the Metropolitan Lavrentios of Transylvania and the Archbishop Eirinaios of Alba Julia, who has served as the representative of the Patriarchate of Romania in Jerusalem, along with many Hierarchs, hundreds of Priests dressed in their liturgical vestments, and a large crowd of pious people who were gathered to receive the blessing of the All-holy Tomb from His Beatitude's hands.

The welcoming reception was held at the Holy Trinity Cathedral, bearing witness to the reverence of the Romanian

people and its devotion to its long-term tradition of faith.

It would have been impossible even for the hardest of souls to remain untouched by the manifestations of faith, reverence, joy and jubilation by the pious people of the city of Alba Julia who were present.

In the evening the Patriarchal entourages dinned together and His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem offered the Archbishop Eirinaios of Alba Julia and icon of the nativity of Theotokos.

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From Secretariat-General