

# **EASTER ADDRESSES OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM**

During Easter 2020, it was a common agreement not to exchange visits with the Churches of Jerusalem due to the COVID-9 pandemic, and therefore, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos handed in privately the letters with the Easter wishes to the Custos of the Holy Land, Reverend Francesco Patton, the Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem His Beatitude Pierbattista Pizzaballa, His Beatitude the Armenian Patriarch in Jerusalem Nourhan Manukian and His Eminence the Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem Suheil Dawani.

The letters follow below;

***His Paternity Fr. Francesco Patton***

***Custos of the Holy Land***

***Saint Saviour's Monastery***

Replying to His Beatitude's Easter letter, Reverend Francesco Patton sent the following letter;

**His Beatitude Theophilos III**

**Patriarch of Jerusalem**

Your Beatitude,

First of all, I want to express my gratitude for your fraternal Easter Wishes and reciprocate them in the words of this beautiful Easter hymn, which we sing in Medieval Latin:

Death and life contended

in a spectacular battle:

the Prince of life, who died, reigns alive...

We know Christ is truly risen from the dead!

To us, victorious King, have mercy!

Amen. Alleluia.

When we celebrate Easter at the Holy Sepulchre, the Holiest Sanctuary under our shared and fraternal care, we understand that hope is not the projection of our desires, but it is the Risen Lord Jesus Christ who has overcome death. In the Easter celebration we understand that the Risen Jesus is the gardener of life, the One who overcame death by passing through it and has conquered all our fears, all our anguish.

Today, just as the pandemic is still sowing death all over the world, we feel that it is our common commitment to accept the invitation that Jesus made to Mary Magdalene: "Go to my brothers and tell them that you have met Me! Tell them I Am alive! Tell them that My grave is empty!". This is the Good News of Easter, and we have to invite all our brothers and sisters to welcome the Risen Lord with faith, because this is the only vaccine that can save from the virus of death, fear and anguish, from the virus of selfishness and evil that infects our humanity and our history, from the virus of a meaningless and aimless life.

We feel that this Easter we have to pray and bring hope especially to the sick, their families, the nurses and doctors who assist them, to those who find themselves passing from this world to the heavenly Father, to all those who are putting their lives at risk to guarantee essential services to our society.

Your Beatitude, we reciprocate your wishes and prayers and we feel deeply united in Christ with you and with all the

brothers of the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem: united in the care of the Holy Places of Christianity, united in proclaiming the Risen Lord, united in the struggle for the safeguard of Christian freedom, united in the pastoral care of the flock that the Lord has entrusted to us.

With these feelings, we want to express the best wishes of our Fraternity to your Beatitude and to all the community of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Amen.

May you continue to enjoy a Happy and Holy Eastertide!

**Fr. Francesco PATTON OFM**

**Custos of the Holy Land**

—

Your Paternity, dear Fr. Francesco,

We greet you with deep joy, and with the Paschal hymn

Christ is risen from the dead

Trampling down death by death

And to those in the tomb, bestowing life

and We wish to extend to you Our prayers and best wishes as you celebrate the Easter Feast.

We give thanks to Almighty God that, notwithstanding the present difficult circumstances of the coronavirus, our Brotherhoods have been able to celebrate the Great Holy Week and Pascha in the empty All-Holy and Life-Giving Tomb of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and all the Holy Places, to the benefit of the Church and our people.

Despite all the restrictions and all the distressing circumstances surrounding the present crisis, our common martyrria to the resurrection of Jesus Christ has been of paramount significance for our communities here in the Holy City of Jerusalem, as well as our fellow brothers and sisters of the other Abrahamic faiths.

We rejoice in this common witness, and we are thankful to you and your Fraternity for your steadfast commitment to our common mission as guardians of the Holy Places, which continues to bear fruit in this difficult present moment, and “until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God,” (Ephesians 4:13). Despite this time of crippling restrictions, we are still able to maintain our important relations for the good of all.

We join in prayer for all those who continue to be affected by the pandemic, especially the sick and all those who care for them. And we remember all who have passed away and those who mourn them. May those who carry the yoke of our Lord find rest in their souls (Matt. 11:29).

Your Excellency, We extend the assurance of Our prayers for you, your brothers in Christ, and your community in this Paschal season, and We look forward to meeting again in our Christian fellowship.

***H.E. Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa***

***Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate***

Your Excellency, dear Archbishop Pizzaballa,

We greet you with deep joy, and with the Paschal hymn

Christ is risen from the dead,

Trampling down death by death,

And to those in the tomb, bestowing life.

We wish to congratulate you on your celebration of Easter, and we give thanks to God that our respective communities have been able to keep the Great Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In spite of the enormous difficulties posed by the coronavirus pandemic, we have been able to enter into this great mystery of our faith in our Holy City, in the empty Tomb in the Church of the Anastasis, at the very heart of the divine-human encounter.

We have experienced once again that Christ is the way, the truth, the life, and the resurrection, for he who believes in Him, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in Him shall never die (John 11:24-25).

We are living through these days joined in prayers of both our Churches, and in our common martyria here in the Holy Land. We pray especially for all those in our region and around the world who continue to suffer from the pandemic and its consequences, and we pray fervently for those who have passed away and all who mourn them. May those who carry the yoke of our Lord find rest in their souls (Matt. 11:29).

In our united prayer above all we continue to serve our Lord and his Church both here in the Holy City of Jerusalem as well as the Church and all its faithful the world over. For Jerusalem has been throughout the ages, and remains today, the harbour of hope, peace, and of consolation.

We wish to extend you, Your Excellency, the assurance of our prayers for you, your clergy, and your community this Paschal season, and we look forward to meeting again in our Christian fellowship.

***His Beatitude***  
***Archbishop Nourhan***  
***Armenian Patriarch in Jerusalem***

Your Beatitude, dear Archbishop Nourhan,

We greet you with deep joy, and with the Paschal hymn

Christ is risen from the dead,

Trampling down death by death,

And to those in the tomb, bestowing life

and we congratulate you and your community as you celebrate the Great Feast of Pascha.

This difficult and complicated situation of restrictions and hardship that so many are enduring makes us realise how crucial is our common mission as guardians and servants of the Holy Places, especially during this sacred period where we venerate Golgotha and the All-Holy and Life-Giving Tomb from where our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected. We have been entrusted with this responsibility by Divine Providence, and it is incumbent upon us to enact this sacred trust in all humility and diligence in true collaboration. Let us, as Saint Paul says, "make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

We join with you in keeping in our fervent prayers all those who are affected in any way by this pandemic, especially the sick and those who care for them, and we remember all who have passed away. May those who mourn be consoled by the promise of the resurrection.

Your Beatitude, We assure you of our prayers for you, your Brotherhood, and the community that you serve. We wish you from the bottom of our heart both spiritual and bodily health, and look forward to meeting and joining our prayers for the strengthening of both our fellowship and of our common mission and witness in the Holy Places.

May the light of the resurrection fill the hearts and minds of all people of good will in this holy Paschal season.

***The Most Reverend Suheil Dawani***  
***The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem***  
***& the Middle East***  
***Saint George's Cathedral***

Your Grace, dear Archbishop Suheil,

We greet you with deep joy, and with the Paschal hymn

Christ is risen from the dead,

Trampling down death by death,

And to those in the tomb, bestowing life

and We send our warm congratulations as you and your community celebrate Easter.

We are united in celebrating the Paschal Feast at a time of great difficulty for our Holy City, the Holy Land, and our world. The coronavirus pandemic has meant tremendous hardship for so many, and Jerusalem, usually overflowing with pilgrims and local faithful at this time of year, is practically deserted.

However, we have been able to keep the sacred ceremonies of the Great Holy Week and Easter in the All-Holy and Life-Giving Tomb in our respective Churches, and have been able to share a common martyrria to the truth and power of the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for He is the resurrection and the life, and he who believes in Him, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in him shall never die (John 11:24-25). In this way, we have been able to show the world that Jerusalem remains a harbour of hope, peace, and consolation in a challenging time for the human family.

We join our prayers with yours, particularly for all those who are affected by the pandemic, the sick and those who care for them, as well as for those who have passed away and all who mourn.

We wish to extend to you, dear Archbishop Suheil, the assurance of our prayers for you and your family, your clergy, and your community in this Paschal season, and We look forward to meeting again in our Christian fellowship.

With our Patriarchal wishes for Pascha,

Christ is Risen!

**THEOPHILOS III**  
**PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM**  
**Holy City of Jerusalem**  
**Pascha 2020**