## THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE FORERUNNER AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday, June 24/ July 7, 2020, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Nativity of the Holy, Venerable, Glorious, Forerunner and Baptist John, at the Holy Monastery bearing his name at Ein Karem suburb of the New City of Jerusalem, in the green valley opposite the Jewish Hospital Hadassa.

On this feast the Church commemorates the narrative according to St. Luke the Evangelist (ch. 1); Saint John was given as the fruit of the womb of the barren and childless Elizabeth and her husband Zacharias, in order to become "the greatest man born of a woman" according to the Lord's words, and prepare the way for God's Providence, in order to save men through His Son, for Whom John declared: "behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"(John 1:29).

For the celebration of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, the Divine Liturgy was officiated at this Monastery by His Eminence Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, with co-celebrants the Archimandrites Kallistos, and Isidoros, Father Hader Baramki and Priest Nectarios, Archdeacon Mark and the Russian Father Nickolaos Koulinsky. The chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon in Greek and by His Eminence in Russian, as the service was attended by a congregation of monks, nuns and Russian and Romanian pilgrims, from Jerusalem and elsewhere.

His Eminence delivered a Sermon to this congregation in Russian and in Arabic (see video).

The Episcopal entourage and the congregation were offered a reception by the good keeper of the Monastery Monk Chariton.

From Secretariat-General