

A STATEMENT BY THE JERUSALEM PATRIARCHATE ON THE OCCASION OF PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK AND SATURDAY OF THE HOLY LIGHT

On the occasion of the glorious Palm Sunday and the Holy Week, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem extends its greetings to the Orthodox communities and to the people of the world in general. The Patriarchate hopes and prays that peace and security will come to the Holy Land and the entire world in those holy great days.

On this glorious occasion, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem calls for the largest participation in the ceremonies of the Holy Week and Saturday of the Holy light in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the first destination for believers from all over the world during the Holy Week and the Feast of Resurrection.

His Beatitude expresses his wishes and expectations that all believers would be able to exercise their natural God-given right to reach the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, especially on Saturday of the Holy Light, and to worship freely and safely without restrictions, as was the case for 2000 years, for this Holy Saturday is one of the holiest days marked in the annual calendar of the Orthodox Church. It is a symbol of new life and joy in the resurrection, especially in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

Here we note, as indicated by His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III, with the Council of Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, on several occasions and through the Council's statements, that worship and access to holy places is a right guaranteed by religious and worldly laws, This was

also confirmed by His Beatitude during his meeting with a number of heads of state and other high-ranking public figures, and accordingly His Beatitude asks the existing authorities to respect the sanctity of this Holy Week, especially on Holy Saturday, when believers come from all over the world to receive the blessings of the Holy Light coming from the Holy Tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

In these blessed days, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate stresses the importance of establishing the values of love, tolerance, and cooperation among human beings, and urges everyone to work in the spirit of unity and cooperation in order to build more prosperous and advanced societies. The Patriarchate, represented by His Beatitude the Patriarch, members of the Holy Synod and members of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre, extend to all the people of the Orthodox Church and all of humanity, wishes for health, wellness and a happy life, and may the Holy Land enjoy justice, love, and security, and the world enjoys peace, security, and stability.