

PASCHA 2023 MESSAGE BY HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS III

THEOPHILOS III

By the grace of God, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem
and of all Palestine
to the congregation of the Church, grace and mercy and peace
from the Holy and Life-giving Sepulchre of the Risen Christ.

*Come ye receive light from the unwaning light and glorify
Christ who is risen from the dead*

“It was very early at dawn on that day, the first of the Sabbaths” after the Crucifixion and burial of our Lord Jesus Christ. The women who followed Jesus from Galilee went into the city and “had bought sweet spices, that they might come to anoint the body of the Lord Jesus” (Mark 16, 1). When they arrived at the door of the sepulchre, the bright angel sitting on it said, “Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him” (Mark 16, 6 – 7).

“The Lord shewed himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen by them for forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1,3). “Making intercession for us from there” (Rom, 8, 34), He sent us another Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, “who proceeds from the Father (Jn. 15, 26). This Spirit of the Son

enlightened His holy disciples and apostles and strengthened and transformed and highlighted Spirit-bearing preachers of the Gospel. Through them, He enchanted the whole world and established the Church at its ends, which He redeemed with His blood. As the body of Christ, the Church is the steward of His sanctifying and redeeming mission on earth. It performs the redeeming sacraments and preaches to the world, as He did, peace, reconciliation and love to all, even the enemies. We pray in the Churches, along with Saint Basil the Great, “let the schisms of the churches cease, the heresies and revolutions be suppressed”, and “give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully” (1 Tim. 5,14).

The fulfilment of this mission rests particularly on the Church of the Holy Land. The Church “being” in Jerusalem, which from the empty and Holy Sepulchre, the source of the Resurrection, has been persecuted since the beginning, and recently severely, but struggles undefied, “as if dying and behold we live” (2 Cor. 6,9) preaching Christ Crucified and Resurrected and receiving its children, “from the west and the north and the sea and the east” through the sweet melodic greeting “Christ is risen” and through Our Patriarchal wishes and Fatherly blessings.

In the Holy City of Jerusalem

PASCHA 2023

Fervent supplicant for all before God

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Patriarch of Jerusalem