

THE FOREFEAST OF THEOPHANY AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday, January 5/18, 2024, the Great Royal Hours of Epiphany were read in the monastic and Patriarchal Holy Church of Saints Constantine and Helen of the Holy Sepulchre Brotherhood, presided over by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, followed by the Divine Liturgy of the Great Basil and the Service of the Sanctification of the waters of the Eve of Epiphany. The Church and the faithful were sanctified and then the Patriarchal entourage went up to the Patriarchate Hall, under the chanting of the “When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan...”. His Beatitude concluded the service and received the Episcopal entourage of His Eminence Archbishop Theodosios of Sebasteia, who brought the sanctified water from Saint James Cathedral.

Then, at 9:00 a.m. His Beatitude departed to Jericho, where he visited the Holy Monastery of the Prophet Elijah and Sycamore tree of Zacchaeus, and the Prefect of Jericho Mrs Yousra Sweti, before he reached the Holy Monastery of Saint John the Baptist. The Royal Hours with Vespers and the Divine Liturgy had been held at the Holy Monastery by Archimandrite Meletios before the Patriarchal Entourage arrived. The Master of Ceremonies of the Patriarchate and Hegoumen of the Monastery Archimandrite Bartholomew has renovated the whole structure and the complete service of the Forefeast of Theophany has been held there in the last few years.

Upon His Beatitude’s arrival, a supplication was held, and then the Procession towards the west bank of the river Jordan began, under the chanting of the “When Thou wast baptized in the Jordan...”. At the bank of the river, His Beatitude held the service of the Sanctification of the waters and went down to the river where He boarded a small boat and blessed its waters. The river Jordan was sanctified by the baptism of our

Lord Jesus Christ, through which we were redeemed from the sin of our forefathers and set free from the power of the devil.

As the waters were blessed, the apolytikion was sung again, in joy and rejoicing by the participating limited number of pilgrims, due to the war situation, in the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem, Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos and the Ambassador of Georgia Mr Lasha.

After the service, the Hegoumen and renovator of the Monastery, Archimandrite Bartholomew hosted a fasting meal. Later on, the Patriarchal Entourage visited the Holy Monastery of Abba Gerasimos of the Jordan and returned to Jerusalem to prepare for the great Despotic and universal Orthodox Feast of Theophany.

From Secretariat-General

<https://www.facebook.com/JerusalemPatriarchate/posts/pfbid022XK9w7m1zSbBxwqGLYzf74Fh4Pvqv5rWkr6WtQ3QbniR1vssi6GrdaAtJD3N8TN2l>

<https://fb.watch/pG3D9AWhE3/>