

THE DEPARTURE TO THE LORD OF THE BLESSED ARCHIMANDRITE THEODORITOS HEGOUMEN OF KATAMON

At 10.30 p.m. on the night of Wednesday, January 25th/February 7th, 2024, the Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Saint Simeon in Katamon, Archimandrite Theodoritos, slept in the Lord.

His Funeral Service was held at 10.30 am. on Thursday, January 26th/ February 8th 2024 in the chapel of Saint Thecla inside the Central Monastery, presided over by our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with the participation of the Holy Sepulchre High Priests and other Holy Sepulchre Fathers, at the honorary presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem, Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos, and at the joint prayer of monastics and laity of the Greek parish of Jerusalem.

The Obituary was delivered by the Elder Chief Secretary His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, in which the details of his life and activity as a Holy Sepulchre Father and Hegoumen of the Monastery of Saint Simeon Katamon are mentioned as follows:

“Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Reverend Archbishops,

Consul General of Greece,

Dear Fathers,

Beloved brethren in Christ,

We stand in tears before the tomb of our beloved brother Hieromonk Theodoritos, as our Lord stands before the tomb of his four-day friend Lazarus. We mourn the separation, like Christ's disciples after His glorious Ascension. We humanly reflect that death is a great and terrible mystery. We wonder how the most harmonious symbiosis of soul and body is broken, how the soul is forcibly separated from the body, how man, through disobedience and the fall, brought death upon himself and heard from his Creator and Maker: "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return"(Gen. 3, 19).

To these questions of human concern, the person, the teaching and the work of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ comes as an answer. The fact that God condescended to our race, had mercy on us and in Christ, His Only Begotten Son became like us humans. He assumed in the Incarnation our human nature and flesh and through the Cross and the Resurrection He raised us from Hell and granted us eternal life and rest in the heavens with Him.

This truth was revealed to the holy disciples and apostles of Christ. These became eye-and-ear witnesses not only of Christ's teaching but also of His God-human person. They saw and recognized Him in His earthly life and witnessed His healing and redemptive action, but also His Resurrection "in another form" (Mark 16:12). The faith in this redeeming truth is comfort and power against the fear of death, especially of death by martyrdom. The Incarnation, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of Christ compose, hold and sustain the whole body of the Church.

Our beloved, elderly and respected late brother Archimandrite Theodoritos also embraced this faith, as he was ordained as a monk at a young age in the holy Trooditissa Monastery of the Church of Cyprus. From there he came to the Israeli hospital in Hadassah for treatment of the precarious health of his eyes. Following the exhortation of his Spiritual Father, Hieromonk Pagratios, whom he greatly respected, he sought and

joined our Holy Sepulchre Brotherhood shortly after 1967. He served in various ministries with zeal and devotion, overcoming the difficulty of his health. He was responsible for the students in the Patriarchal School, a ministering Priest in the Holy Monastery of the Megali Panagia for years, and a member of the Holy and Sacred Synod, as appointed by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos.

Mainly, he was the Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Saint Simeon the God-receiver in Katamon continuously and uninterruptedly since 1979. He preserved this Monastery and its Church as the functional centre of the Greek Community of Jerusalem in Katamon, as it had always been as a Pilgrimage centre for the adults from the Orthodox countries of pilgrimage. He also protected it from outsiders, because of its historical position.

Conscientiously appreciating the donations of the pilgrims, and not failing to be charitable to the poor, he renovated its temple and enriched its iconography. Many external repairs were carried out for its maintenance and beautification. Thanks to his perseverance and energy, the Patriarchate achieved the impossible, the acquisition of what was said to be a piece of the relic of Saint Simeon the God-receiver from the Roman Catholic Church of Croatia in 2010, kept as a treasure of the Monastery; the return of the Saint's relic is celebrated annually on the 25th September.

For these good works of his life, for his honest and virtuous monastic and priestly ethos and for his tireless patience and determination during the many years of testing due to poor health and for his care for the weekly Divine Liturgy in the Monastery and Holy Communion while bedridden, we beseech our philanthropic God, to forgive him because as a man he has sinned voluntarily or involuntarily; to rank his soul in the land of the living with the holy and the righteous in the enjoyment and rejoicing of the unwaning light of His glory; to

give him the crown of righteousness, "which He shall give to all those who love Him".

May his memory be everlasting!"

The funeral procession to Holy Zion was led by their Eminences the Archbishops, Aristarchos of Constantina and Aristovoulos of Madaba, where he was buried in the Cemetery of the Fathers.

May his memory be everlasting!

From Secretariat-General