

MONK BARTHOLOMEW REINSTATED

On Wednesday, the 18th of March/3rd of April 2014, His Beatitude Theophilos, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the presence of Patriarchal Commissioner, the Most Reverend Isychios, Metropolitan of Kapitolias; the Elder Secretary-General, His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina; the Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod, His Eminence Demetrios, Archbishop of Lydda; the Master of ceremonies, f. Porphyrios, and other Hagiotaphite members, in accordance with a decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, read out the wish of forgiveness for those who repent and apologize to monk f. Bartholomew, annulled his defrocking, and reinstated him to the rank of Archimandrite he used to hold.

Following this, His Beatitude addressed Archimandrite Bartholomew with paternal and encouraging words, underlining that the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood shall again accept him as a regular, active and full member, expecting that he will undistractedly and conscientiously serve any task that may be assigned to him in the future. For the time being, he serves as Assistant Dragoman and Spokesman at the Patriarchates.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/YsBx1hREiYk>



BLESSING OF THE WATERS IN THE

JORDAN RIVER TO TAKE PLACE ON HOLY WEDNESDAY

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem informs the Managers of Pilgrimage Agencies and all pilgrims that, this year, the venerating baptismal in the Jordan river will be performed on Holy Wednesday, namely the 3rd/16th of April 2014, at 11:00 am. All those interested are invited to arrange their pilgrimage schedule on the basis of this information.

From the Secretariat-General

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY AT THE PHANAR

On Sunday, the 24th of February/ 9th of March 2014, the Sunday of the Orthodoxy, a Joint Panegyric Liturgy was held in the Church of St George at the Phanar, by participants in the Pan-Orthodox Synaxis. His Beatitude Irinej, Patriarch of Serbia, led the Matins, with His All Holiness Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch, leading the Divine Liturgy. Concelebrating, were Prelates from the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Prelates accompanying the Primate, in the presence of a great crowd from Constantinople as well as pilgrims hailing from Greece, Russia, Romania and Georgia.

During this Joint Liturgy, His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch delivered the following Message, issued by all Primate participating in the Pan-Orthodox Synod:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Through the grace of God, the Primates of the Most Holy Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, to the Orthodox faithful throughout the world, all of our Christian brothers and sisters as well as every person of goodwill: we extend God's blessing and our greeting of love and peace.

"We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith, labor of love, and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 1.2-3)

1. Having convened by the grace of our compassionate God, at the invitation of the Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, at the Phanar, from March 6-9, 2014; having deliberated in fraternal love on matters concerning our Holy Church today; and concelebrating in the Patriarchal Church of St. George on the glorious occasion of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, we address you with these words of love, peace and consolation.

Inasmuch as our One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Orthodox Church dwells in the world, it also experiences the challenges of every age. Faithful to Holy Tradition, the Church of Christ is in constant dialogue with every period of time, suffering with human beings and sharing their anguish. For "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and to the ages" (Heb. 13.8).

The trials and challenges of history are especially acute in our days, and Orthodox Christians cannot remain uninvolved or indifferent to them. This is why we have assembled "together in one place" (Acts 2.1) in order to reflect on the problems and temptations facing humanity today. "There is fighting without and fear within." (2 Cor. 7.5) These Apostolic words are also valid for the Church today.

2. In reflecting upon people's suffering throughout the world,

we express our support for the martyrdom and our admiration for the witness of Christians in the Middle East, Africa, and other parts of the world. We call to mind their dual martyrdom: for their faith as well as for the safeguarding of their historical relationship with people of other religious conviction. We denounce the lack of peace and stability, which is prompting Christians to abandon the land where our Lord Jesus Christ was born and whence the Good News spread to the entire world.

Our sympathy extends to all victims of the tragedy in Syria. We condemn every form of terrorism and defamation of religion. The kidnapping of Metropolitans Paul and Youhanna, other clergymen as well as the nuns of St. Thecla Convent in Maaloula remains an open wound, and we demand their immediate liberation.

We appeal to all involved for the immediate cessation of military action, liberation of captives, and establishment of peace in the region through dialogue. Christians in the Middle East are a leaven of peace. Peace for all people also means peace for Christians. We support the Patriarchate of Antioch in its spiritual and humanitarian ministry, as well as its efforts for reconstruction and the resettlement of all refugees.

3. We fervently pray for peaceful negotiation and prayerful reconciliation in the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. We denounce the threats of violent occupation of sacred monasteries and churches, and pray for the return of our brothers presently outside of ecclesiastical communion into the Holy Church.

4. A fundamental threat to justice and peace – both locally and globally – is the global economic crisis. The ramifications of this are evident on all layers in society, where such values as personal integrity, fraternal solidarity and justice are often wanting. The origins of this crisis are not merely financial. They are moral and spiritual in

character. Instead of conforming to the worldly idols of power, greed and hedonism, we emphasize our vocation to transform the world by embracing the principles of justice, peace, and love.

As a result of self-centeredness and abuse of power, many people undermine the sacredness of the human person, neglecting to see the face of God in the least of our brothers and sisters (cf. Matt. 25.40,45). Many remain indifferent to the poverty, suffering and violence that plague humanity.

5. The Church is called to articulate its prophetic word. We express our genuine concern about local and global trends that undermine and erode the principles of faith, the dignity of the human person, the institution of marriage, and the gift of creation.

We stress the undisputed sanctity of human life from inception until natural death. We recognize marriage as the union of man and woman that reflects the union between Christ and His Church. Our vocation is to preserve the natural environment as stewards and not proprietors of creation. In this period of Great Lent, we exhort our clergy and laity to observe a spirit of repentance, to experience purity of heart, humility and forgiveness, bearing witness to the timeless teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ in society.

6. This Synaxis of Primates is a blessed occasion for us to reinforce our unity through communion and cooperation. We affirm our commitment to the paramount importance of synodality for the unity of the Church. We affirm the words of St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, that “the name of the Church signifies unity and concord, not division.” Our heart is set on the long-awaited Holy and Great Synod of the Orthodox Church in order to witness to its unity as well as to its responsibility and care for the contemporary world.

The Synaxis agreed that the preparatory work to the Synod

should be intensified. A special Inter-Orthodox Committee will work from September 2014 until Holy Easter of 2015, followed by a Pre-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Conference to be convened in the first half of 2015. All decisions at the Synod and in the preparatory stages are made by consensus. The Holy and Great Synod of the Orthodox Church will be convened by the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople in 2016, unless something unexpected occurs. The Synod will be presided by the Ecumenical Patriarch. His brother Primates of the other Orthodox Autocephalous Churches will be seated at his right and at his left.

7. Inseparably interconnected with unity is mission. The Church does not live for itself but is obliged to witness to and share God's gifts with those near and afar. Participating in the Divine Eucharist and praying for the *oikoumene*, we are called to continue this liturgy after the liturgy, sharing the gifts of truth and love with all humankind, in accordance with the Lord's last commandment and assurance: "Go ye, and make disciples of all nations . . . And lo, I shall be with you until the end of the ages" (Matt. 28.19-20).

8. We live in a world where multiculturalism and pluralism are inevitable realities, which are constantly changing. We are conscious of the fact that no issue in our time can be considered or resolved without reference to the global, that any polarization between the local and the ecumenical only leads to distortion of the Orthodox way of thinking.

Therefore, even in the face of voices of dissension, segregation, and division, we are determined to proclaim the message of Orthodoxy. We acknowledge that dialogue is always better than conflict. Withdrawal and isolationism are never options. We reaffirm our obligation at all times to be open in our contact with "the other": with other people and other cultures, as well as with other Christians and people of other faiths.

9. Above and beyond all challenges, we proclaim the good news of a God, who “so loved the world” that He “dwelt among us.” Thus, we Orthodox remain full of hope. Despite all tensions, we nevertheless dare to hope in the “almighty God, who is and who was and who is to come” (Rev. 1.8) For we remember that the last word – the word of joy, love, and life – belongs to Him, to whom is due all glory, honor and worship to the ages of ages. Amen.

At the Phanar, the 8th of March, 2014

+ Bartholomew of Constantinople

+ Theodoros of Alexandria

+ Silouan in Buenos Aires

(representing His Beatitude Patriarch John of Antioch)

+ Theophilos of Jerusalem

+ Kirill of Moscow

+ Irinej of Serbia

+ Daniel of Romania

+ Neophyte of Bulgaria

+ Ilia of Georgia

+ Chrysostomos of Cyprus

+ Ieronymos of Athens

+ Sawa of Warsaw

+ Anastasios of Tirana

From the Secretariat-General

THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM PARTICIPATES IN PAN-ORTHODOX GATHERING IN CONSTANTINOPLE

On the afternoon of Wednesday of Lent, namely the 20th of February/5th of March 2014, His Beatitude Theophilos, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, accompanied by the Elder Secretary-General, His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina, and the Very Reverend Archdeacon f. Evlogios, boarded a Turkish Airlines plane from Ben Gurion airport for Constantinople. There, he will participate alongside the Patriarchal Commissioner in Constantinople, His Eminence Nektarios of Anthedon, in the Gathering of the Heads of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, upon the invitation of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

The Patriarchate's website shall in due time keep its readers up-to-date with the proceedings of this Pan-Orthodox Gathering.

From the Secretariat-General

ILLEGAL ENTRY INTO THE CHAPEL OF ST SION

On the night of Wednesday, the 30th of January/12th of February

2014, students at the Patriarchate's Hieratical School on the hill of St Sion discovered that the adjacent chapel of the Holy Spirit had been broken into, whilst part of the Altar inside it had been destroyed.

This sacrilegious act, the third within a year, had been committed by extreme-religious persons from the Yeshiva, the Judaist Religious School which lies in the vicinity of David's Tomb. This is the third time they root out saplings planted there by the Patriarchate. The motive behind this violent act is opposition to Christian presence in the Holy Sion.

The Patriarchate strongly condemns this sacrilegious act and has already filed a complaint with the Israeli Police.

From the Secretariat-General



THE PATRIARCHATES OF JERUSALEM AND ROMANIA RESTORE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMUNION BETWEEN THEM

On Monday, the 21st of January/3rd of February 2014, the *"Patriarchal decision on the agreement and restoration of the ecclesiastical communion"* between the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Patriarchate of Romania was completed and sealed. The decision had been interrupted because of the construction, on behalf of the Patriarchate of Romania, of a Church in Jericho without the approval of the Patriarchate of

Jerusalem.

The aforementioned agreement was prepared during the year 2013 over meetings between delegations of the two Patriarchates in Jerusalem, upon the peacemaking mediation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

For the completion of the said agreement, His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, received from Romania the Most Reverend Niphon, Metropolitan of Targoviste and Patriarchal Exarch; the Reverend f. Ionitsa Viorel, Professor and Protopresbyter; the Reverend f. Michael Titsa and the new Representative of the Patriarchate of Romania to Jerusalem, Archimandrite Timotheos. With them they brought the said agreement, signed by His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of Romania, on Sunday, 29th of January/2nd of February 2014.

The agreement was signed by His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, on the aforementioned day, in the presence of the Romanian Delegation and the Elder Secretary-General, His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina, and the Chairman of Finances, His Eminence Methodios, Archbishop of Tabor.

The main points of this agreement (see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2013/02/21/2339>) have now been sealed by means of the understanding between the Heads of the two Churches that *"the Church and its guesthouse in Jericho shall operate not as a Monastic Fraternity or any other form of Monastic Community, but as a 'House of Pilgrims'".*

Upon signing the agreement, due gifts were exchanged between the Leaders of the two Churches.

Immediately afterwards, His Beatitude Theophilos received the Letters of Commendation of His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of Romania, for the appointment in Jerusalem of the

Representative of the Patriarchate of Romania, Archimandrite Timotheos.

The former Representative of the Patriarchate of Romania in Jerusalem, Archimandrite Ieronymos, then approached and apologized to Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, which marked his restoration after being defrocked by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Archimandrite Ieronymos has now been transferred to serve in the Patriarchate of Romania.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/vUbQ6snbeCI>



AGREEMENT ON RESTORATION OF ECCLESIASTICAL COMMUNION

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem is happy to inform the followers of its official website that today, Monday the 21st of January/3rd of February 2014, an agreement was signed to restore the ecclesiastical communion between the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Patriarchate of Romania. Further details on this issue will be posted within the day.

From the Secretariat-General

UNKNOWN PERPETRATORS TRESSPASS ON CHAPEL AND ROOT OUT SAPPLINGS AT SCHOOL OF SION

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem strongly denounces and categorically condemns the trespassing on the fenced Chapel of the Pentecost and the rooting out of saplings planted around the chapel, committed on Sunday the 9th/22nd of December 2013 by unknown fanatical religious elements, inhabiting the area of the Tomb of David. The chapel of the Pentecost belongs to the Patriarchate and lies to the southeast of the Hieratical School and the cemetery. The Patriarchate has filed a complaint against the act with the Israeli Police.

From the Secretariat-General



THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM CONDEMNS THE ABDUCTION OF THE NUNS OF SAINT THEKLA MONASTERY

His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem and the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem explicitly and completely condemn the abduction of the twelve

nuns of the historical Monastery of Saint Thekla in the city of Maaloula of the Patriarchate of Antioch as a violent and flagrant act, which violates the human rights of life, religious freedom and worship.

Quoting the Apostle to the Nations Paul: "If one member suffers, all members suffer together" (1 Corinthians 12:26), the Patriarchate of Jerusalem profoundly participates in the problems of its neighboring Patriarchate of Antioch. While sympathizing with the Patriarchate of Antioch, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem is praying from the All-Holy and Life-Giving Tomb of Christ for the cessation of the hostilities in Syria, for resolution and reconciliation, and it appeals to every responsible official to act for the immediate liberation of the abducted nuns and for their return to the holy monastery of their repentance.

From the Chief Secretariat

ISLAMIC-CHRISTIAN STATEMENT OF THE HEADS OF CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM.

On Monday, Sept 30, 2013, a delegation of the Heads of Christian Churches in Jerusalem paid a solidarity visit to Al-Aqsa Mosque, in the light of continuous violations at the hands of Israeli settlers. They were received by the head of the Waqf Council, the Grand Mufti, the Director General of the Waqf, members of the Waqf Council and the Islamic Higher Council. They released the following statement:

- We ascertain the inviolable character of all holy places in Jerusalem, and especially Al-Aqsa Mosque, and denounce what is considered by many as the Judaization of the Holy City, its history and religious geography.
- We affirm the harmonious historical and social ties between Muslims and Christians in the Holy City, based on common language, common history and common destiny.
- We ascertain the importance of the latest agreement between HM King Abdullah Ben Al-Hussein II and HE President Mahmoud Abbas, in protecting the holy places in Jerusalem and elsewhere, and the importance of Hashemite support for the Waqf, and for Islamic and Christian holy places in the Holy City of Jerusalem.
- We appeal to all international organizations and establishments in Jerusalem and internationally and the Israeli government to protect the Islamic and Christian Holy places in Jerusalem from violations of religious extremists.
- We unanimously denounce all forms of violence and extremism directed against all holy places and Cemeteries in the Holy City.

The Heads of Churches in Jerusalem

for the Official Website of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.