

THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM HONOURED FOR HIS ENDEAVOURS PROMOTING CHURCH UNITY, ANNOUNCES DECISION TO HOST PRIMATES IN JORDAN

21st November 2019, Moscow: His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem has been honoured for his dedication and ceaseless efforts in protection and support of unity of the Orthodox faith. His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia presented His Beatitude with the Patriarch Alexy II Prize at a ceremony in Moscow. In his acceptance speech, His Beatitude announced his decision to open the Patriarchate's home in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan – conscious of the role of His Majesty King Abdullah II as Custodian of the Christian and Islamic sites in the Holy Land – to host his brothers, the Primate of the Orthodox Church, for dialogue on the preservation of Orthodox unity.

The Patriarch Alexy II Prize of the International Public Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations is awarded for “outstanding activities in strengthening the unity of the Orthodox Christian nations” and “for upholding and promoting Christian values in the life of society”.

Speaking at the award ceremony, His Beatitude remarked:

“We accept this prize in humility on behalf of the Church of Jerusalem. For it is the mission of our Patriarchate, that is the Church of Jerusalem, which has been founded upon the redeeming blood of Christ, to be the focus of unity for the Orthodox faithful, and it is our vocation, as those to whom the diakonia of the Holy Sites has been entrusted by Divine

Providence, to ensure that they remain places of religious devotion and worship that are accessible to all.”

The Patriarch spoke of the ‘profound importance’ of church unity as a witness to the world, and the need for constant attention to this sacred duty.

“The unity of the Church in faith and life is a gift of the Holy Spirit, but it is our God-given responsibility – as those to whom the ministry of our Churches, being the mystical body of Christ, has been entrusted – to guard the unity of the Church, even to the point of undergoing sacrifice. We have no choice before God but to commit every effort to defend our unity.”

In service of this effort, His Beatitude invited his fellow leaders of the Church to meet together in Jordan.

“We would like to host, in our home as the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, our brothers, the Primate of the Orthodox Church, to gather in the spirit of fellowship – koinonia – so that counsel will be taken together for the preservation of our unity in Eucharistic communion.”

His Beatitude is widely recognised for his efforts towards unity of the Orthodox faith, in growing fellowship with Christians around the world, and welcoming them to the Holy Sites of Jerusalem; all while tending to the cherished relationships with other faiths and peoples in and around the Holy Land.

From Secretariat-General

THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM & PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN DISCUSS PROTECTION OF CHRISTIANS AND HOLY PLACES

On the 20th of November, while visiting Moscow to receive the prestigious Patriarch Alexy II Prize, His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem, met with His Excellency President Vladimir Putin to discuss the condition of the Christians of the Holy Land.

His Beatitude has over recent years met with political and religious leaders across the globe, promoting the unity of the Church and the protection of Christians. His Beatitude and His Excellency the President spoke of the challenges facing Christians in the Holy Land, and the profound importance of unity as a living witness to the world.

His Beatitude expressed gratitude to His Excellency, President Putin, for his commitment to the Church in the Holy Land. In particular, Patriarch Theophilos praised the President for his crucial and generous assistance in the restoration of the Church of the Basilica of the Nativity; a holy place that every year receives thousands of Christian pilgrims from around the world.

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From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM ADDRESSES THE ANGLICAN MEETING “MAJMA” IN JORDAN

On Wednesday morning, October 24/ November 6, 2019, His Beatitude and our Father the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos addressed the Meeting “Majma” of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, which took place in Bristol Hotel in Amman, after the invitation and welcoming reception of the Most Reverend Bishop Suheil Dawani, with the following address in English;

“Your Grace, Archbishop Suheil,

Your Eminences,

Your Graces,

Dear Father Hosam,

Reverend Fathers,

Sisters and Brothers,

We greet you, dear Archbishop Suheil, and your clergy and people, as you gather for your annual synod. We join with you in welcoming your distinguished guests for the Anglican Community around the world.

We would like to take this opportunity first of all to underline the importance of the relationship that exists between the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Community, and

especially between the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Needless to say, this relationship has born much fruit over the years, and most especially recently, as we have stood together in the face of challenges to the freedom and the rights of the Church in our region.

We thank you, dear Archbishop Suheil, for your solidarity and strength of purpose, and we give thanks to Almighty God for the blessings we enjoy in our close collaboration.

We also pay tribute today to His Majesty King Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, where we enjoy the freedom to gather from all over our region, and where His Majesty, the Custodian over Muslim and Christian Holy Sites in the Holy Land, ensures religious freedom and supports the historic rights of the Church and the guarantee of the Christian presence.

You have chosen as your theme "Becoming a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1), and this is a timely subject for all of us who call the Holy Land and the Middle East, which is the cradle of Christianity, our home.

We cannot understand the meaning of sacrifice without first referring to our Lord's sacrifice on the Cross. We see in this divine sacrifice the power of humility, and we understand humility through metanoia. Let us listen to the Lord's words, "I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32). Humility and metanoia are the key to salvation, and without them nothing else is possible. The deeper we are shaped by humility and metanoia, the more available we are to God as those who can offer ourselves in sacrificial commitment and service to others.

As the Church Fathers teach us, sacrifice has many expressions. There is the sacrifice of self-giving service to others. There is the sacrifice that is the martyrdom of

conscience. There is the sacrifice of costly commitment. Saint John Chrysostom says; "As we read in the words of Saint Paul, our sacrifice is a living one, holy and pleasing to God". Chrysostom emphasizes that one should not think of sacrifice as the slaughtering of our bodies, but as following the commandments of the Lord, which lead to our salvation and deification.

Sacrifice can be personal, and it can be corporate, but it never means giving up our integrity, for our personal and corporate sacrificial acts are to be understood in and through Christ.

It must be borne in mind that the purpose of the Church is precisely a sacrificial vocation, and this is why the Church is, and should be, a sign and inspiration for political and civic leadership as we see conflicts all over our world, where disorder and confusion are so common a human experience. It is in this context that we consider our role and responsibility as spiritual leaders and priests. For the key to promoting the values of the Bible that are threatened, values like peace and justice, is precisely this kenotic tendency, and this kenosis must begin with ourselves. We do know that we cannot demand sacrifice from another; we can only live the sacrificial way of Christ ourselves, so that the Church may be a true beacon of light and hope. We must ourselves be a paradigm – as Saint Paul says, "Be imitators of me as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1).

To be imitators of Christ is indeed itself a work of sacrifice, and Christians who face trouble and persecution on a daily basis should remain firm in this vocation, because "our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). As our Lord says, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Mat. 10:28).

Thank you for the kind invitation to be with you. May God

bless you, dear Archbishop Suheil, and all the good servants in the vineyard of the Lord, that is your clergy and people, as you seek to live more deeply the mystery of Christ's sacrificial life in your own".

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF 28TH OCTOBER 1940 AT THE PATRIARCHAL SCHOOL OF ZION

On Monday evening, October 15/28, 2019, the anniversary of 28th October 1940 was celebrated as a School event by the Patriarchal School on Holy Zion Hill.

The feast was honoured by the presence of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos with Consulate members, the Chairman of the School Board Most Reverend Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Metropolitans Isychios of Kapitolias, and Joachim of Helenoupolis, the Vice-Rector of the Technical School of Kavala Mr. Demetrios Bantekas with his wife and associates, Hagiotaphite Fathers, Nuns, members of the Greek community of Jerusalem and pilgrims.

The festive speech of the day with the introduction by the Managing Director of the School Archimandrite Mattheos was read by the teacher Mr. Nikolaos Souliotis.

The Students recited poems, read texts, sang patriotic songs and acted on plays, referring to the epic of 1940 events at the military front, and the occupation of Greece by the oppressing, inhuman and murderous Nazi German Occupation, and to the wholehearted and courageous fighting and sacrificial mind of the Greeks, through which and with the help of the great Powers they removed, four years later, with the end of World War II in 1944.

At the end of the ceremony, His Beatitude and the Consul General praised the Managing Director of the School, the teachers and the students, for the well-organized ceremony of the Patriarchal School which evoked feelings of patriotism and national excitement and pride.

From Secretariat-General

DOXOLOGY FOR THE NATIONAL ANNIVERSARY OF 28TH OCTOBER

The Doxology at the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the National Anniversary of 28th October 1940 took place on Monday, October 15/28, 2019.

This Doxology was a thanksgiving to God for His aid in the liberation of our nation from the Italian threat and the German yoke of occupation in the years 1940-1944, and as a prayer for the repose of the souls of our fathers who fought, sacrificed themselves and gloriously fell in the battlefields.

The Doxology was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with the participation in prayer of

the Archbishops and Priests Hagiotaphite Fathers, at the chanting of the Novice Monk Constantinos Spyropoulos, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos and members of the Greek Consulate, as well as members of the Greek Community and the Arab-speaking flock of the Patriarchate.

After the Doxology, bells tolling, the Patriarchal Entourage returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters, where there was a short reception with reciting of poems by the students of St. Demetrios School of the Patriarchate and the National Anthem, followed by His Beatitude address as below;

“Your Excellency Consul General of Greece Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos,

Reverend Fathers and Brothers,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Today’s anniversary of 28th October 1940 is a remembrance of a great and wondrous action for humankind, and especially for the Greek nation, because the epic of “No” was crucial for the outcome, namely the defeat, of the moral and physical instigators of the devastating World War II.

The recognized by all heroic resistance of the Greek warriors against the marching of the enemy forces of Axis, proved that the nation of the Greeks is governed by native moral and spiritual principles, of both their cultural heritage and Orthodox Christian faith with the tradition of the Holy Fathers.

Faith in righteousness, love for the country, self-sacrifice and especially the dignity of man for the non-negotiable principles of freedom, justice and national independence prevailed over the insanity and wrathful aggressiveness of the Nazi atrocity in the sacred fight of the safeguarding of the national borders and the defense of the territorial integrity

of the country.

The “No” of 28th October 1940 was not only the negative answer to the insulters and arrogant treacherous cosmocrats, but mainly to their morbid ideology, namely to the totalitarianism, to fascism and to Nazism.

The Venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, honouring as it should the epic of 1940, and wholeheartedly participating in this victorious commemoration of freedom, after the crushing of the relentless occupation of Nazism, came down to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, for the thanksgiving Doxology to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Crucified and Resurrected.

Moreover, we have prayed for the eternal repose of the souls and everlasting remembrance of our fathers and brothers who fought and gloriously fell in the fight for our faith, country and freedom.

This very faith in the light of God the Word, Christ, has established the epic of 1940, and we are called to preserve it as a sacred consignment for the generations to come.

For all these, allow Us to raise our glass in a toast and cry out:

Long live 28th October 1940!

Long live the “NO”

Long live Greece!

Long live the noble nation of the Rum Orthodox!

Long live the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood!”

And the Consul General’s address as follows:

“Your Beatitude,

Most Reverend Archbishops,

Reverend Fathers,

Ladies and Gentlemen

We celebrate today a leading event of the modern Greek history. The unanimous rejection by Hellenism on 28th October 1940 of the ultimatum for the unconditional surrender of the Homeland and the concession of its national sovereignty. We celebrate the heroic and unequal struggle for the defense of Greece's freedom and territorial integrity during World War II, which began with the epic of Pindos. Today is a day of honour and remembrance for all Greeks.

This historical NO demonstrated the moral stature, the love for freedom and the strong sense of justice of the Greeks. Thanks to this code of principles, they opposed overwhelmingly superior forces: the dark fiber forces of fascism and Nazism that sought to impose the bond of totalitarianism and racism on the peoples of Europe and beyond. The sense of justice shielded the Greeks, who, knowing that they fought in fair struggles for their freedom, achieved their first victory against the Axis, sending a message of hope to the other peoples of Europe and delaying the implementation of their more general strategic plan, contributing this way in the final victory of the Allies.

The "NO" showed in the clearest way the common, deep historical consciousness of the Greeks, that fueled and reinforced the patriotism, the vigor, the self-esteem and the great sense of responsibility with which the sacred and the holy were defended. The "No" was precisely the refusal of the Greek people to forget their history and live a petty and submissive life. Today, all Greeks, wherever we are, pay tribute to the fallen and the fighters in the battlefields of 1940-41 in Pindos, in the Macedonian forts, in our seas, in Crete and elsewhere. We honour those who participated in the National Resistance and those who continued to fight, on the side of the Allies, in the battlefields of World War II, the

Middle East and Europe. Today we do not forget the hundreds of thousands innocent victims of the Occupation.

In the national heroic effort that began on October 28, 1940, as in any other national endeavor, the dynamic participation and valuable contribution of the Hellenism of the diaspora was crucial. Greece is very proud and grateful for the great contribution of the Greek community in the Middle East and especially of the Hellenism of Jerusalem, which is historically recorded.

Responding to the need to unite all the forces of the Nation, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Mother of Churches, was then and always remains, a key point of reference, the guardian of the moral authority and spiritual merit of our Orthodox faith and proof of unchanging survival potential of the Greek Orthodox tradition, which is a source of strength, inspiration and hope for the future for all of us.

The anniversary of October 28, 1940 has always been and is even more present today, especially for the new generation which needs to understand and embrace its lessons. In an international environment characterized by extensions, disputes and conflicts, often fueled from dark ideologies and distorted attitudes, as in the pre-war period, we, as Greeks, have the responsibility of preservation of our national unity and unanimity of soul, our commitment to the ideals of freedom and democracy, our inspiration from the moral and spiritual values of our Orthodox faith, and our alertness and determination to cope with all kinds of challenges.

Long live the 28th October 1940

Long live Greece!"

A festal reception followed.

From Secretariat-General

BURGLARY AT ST. MODESTOS CHURCH IN ABU TOR HILL

Before dawn on Tuesday October 2/15, 2019, unknown up to the present people broke into the Church of St. Modestos Patriarch of Jerusalem, which lies in Abu Tor hill, opposite Holy Zion. Having first cut the solid iron railing of the Holy Altar window, the offenders entered the Church searching for money, threw down holy icons and holy vestments, and stole the Holy Gospel, the Holy Vessels, the Holy Cup, the Disc and covering clothing, canticles and books, along with other objects which they considered to be of material value.

This profane action was initially reported to the Patriarchate by the Caretaker of the Monastery and supervisor of its refurbishment Monk Antiohos of St. Savvas Monastery, while the Patriarchate reported it to the Israeli Police who acted immediately, and rushed to the Monastery for an autopsy and fingerprinting in order to identify the perpetrators. Consequently, escorted by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina and Archdeacon Mark, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos visited the burglarized Holy Church, and informed the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos.

From Secretariat-General

BEGINNING OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR AT THE SCHOOL OF ZION

On Tuesday, September 18/ October , 2019, the new school year was blessed at the Patriarchal School of the Patriarchate at the Hill of Zion with the blessing of the water, which was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, escorted by the Chairman of the School Board Most Reverend Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, the Managing Director of the School Archimandrite Mattheos and others, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos, the teachers and students of the school.

After the service of the Blessing of the water at the Church of the Holy Trinity in the school, His Beatitude praised the Managing Director Archimandrite Mattheos who brought 20 students from Greece who remain in the boarding school and follow the educational program of the Ministry of Education of Greece for secondary education and are being prepared to study in Universities and join the Hagiotapite Brotherhood for a pilgrimage mission at the All-Holy Shrines and a pastoral one for the flock.

From Secretariat-General

STATEMENT IN RELATION TO THE

PROPERTIES OF JAFFA GATE

Holy City of Jerusalem, 5th August 2019.

The Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem views the attempts of the radical organization, Ateret Cohanim, to seize church properties located in Jerusalem's Jaffa Gate and al-Mu'athamiyah, as a strike to the indigenous Christian presence in the Holy City. The Patriarchate affirms that changing the Status Quo in the Old City of Jerusalem, especially in Jaffa Gate; being the main entrance to the various Patriarchates and to the pilgrim route to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, threatens the continuous hundreds-of-years old mosaic and balance that shores the good relations between Jerusalemites of different faiths.

The Patriarchate stresses that its properties located within the walls of Old City Jerusalem are for the service of pilgrims and visitors of the Holy City especially those on the pilgrim route to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Patriarchate will continue to exercise its right and duty of defending itself, the holy sites and the Church heritage.

After the Israeli High Court of Justice wrongly rejected the Patriarchate's appeal on the decision of the District Court, which approved the dubious transactions involving the above mentioned properties, and true to our belief that justice shall always prevail, the Patriarchate and through its legal advisers and lawyers, succeeded in obtaining unequivocal evidence that proves the voidance of the transactions and the corrupt nature of the deals, that His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III has rejected along with the brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre in addition to the rejection of those deals by all of the Jerusalem Churches as per their joint statements issued in 2017 as well as on 12th June 2019.

Among evidence attained by the Patriarchate are documents dating back to 1996 showing that the radical's financial supporter, billionaire and financier Irving Moskowitz, had reached an agreement with one of the tenants of the Petra Hotel to buy the protected lease rights for \$ 4.5 million, in addition to his willingness to pay for other expenses as well as the adjacent "Little Petra Hotel". This is a clear proof of the corruption of the suspicious deals of 2004, since it is unreasonable to agree to buy the tenants' "protected lease rights" for \$ 4.5 million in 1996, while 9 years later (in 2004) to claim to have purchased from the Patriarchate (the owner of the properties) the property itself, including a further hostel, being the "Little Petra Hotel", for a mere half a million \$.

The Patriarchate also discovered that Ateret Cohanim, through its officer Mati Dan, used to pay bribes to "manage their affairs" in connection to the church properties. These efforts coincided with local civic authorities, such as the Municipality of Jerusalem and the local Tax Authority, imposing arbitrary measures against tenants of the church properties resulting in the weakening of their position.

The new evidence that the Patriarchate has obtained, confirm that Ateret Cohanim and its companies forged documents and initiated court proceedings based on these forged documents, despite Ateret Cohanim's knowledge that they were forged. The evidence shows that the suspicious deals of 2004 involved bribes by Ateret Cohanim, and all indications point to the bribes being paid to the then Patriarchate employee, Nicholas Papadimas.

The Patriarchate notes that the new evidence includes documents signed by leaders of the radical organization Ateret Cohanim, as well as audio recordings by its managing director Mati Dan and advocate Eitan Geva, that prove that they lied and concealed facts during the legal proceedings in court.

Following receipt of this new evidence, the legal advisors of the Patriarchate worked relentlessly to examine, revise and evaluate this evidence. The legal advisors concluded that the new evidence obtained by the Patriarchate, following the decision of the High Court of Justice in favour of the radical Ateret Cohanim, should prompt the Court to reconsider its decision.

Based on the above, and despite the fact that the planned legal action by the Patriarchate is rare and difficult, and despite the fact that the judicial proceedings regarding the above mentioned properties have exhausted the Patriarchate for a decade and a half, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem considers the Old City of Jerusalem a “red line” and the core of the Christian belief, and the Patriarchate pledges that it will defend these principles and reclaim its’ properties; whether through judicial or diplomatic efforts, and in cooperation with the promoters of peace, joined by Christians around the world, protecting the Church heritage at the doors of the Holy Sepulchre and in the heart of the Christian Quarter.

Accordingly, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem announces that today it has filed a new lawsuit, against the radical “Ateret Cohanim” organisation and its companies, in order to overturn the decision of the court, which ratified the ominous deals of the properties of Jaffa Gate and al-Mu’athameya, by exposing the practices of fraud, deception and bribery involved in those unauthorised property transactions.

The Patriarchate calls upon the Heads of States and Heads of Churches around the world as well as on all those who strive for peace and justice in the Holy Land, to protect the historic and legal doctrine of the “Status Quo”, relating to the Holy Shrines, and to defend the Holy Sites from all underhanded and immoral dealings.

From Secretariat-General

TONSURE OF A NEW MONK AT THE PATRIARCHATE

The monk's tonsure of the novice and helper of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Basil took place at the Pentecost chapel in the Patriarchate on Thursday afternoon, July 19/ August 1, 2019.

The tonsure was performed by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos at the presence of Geronda Sacristan Most Reverend Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Archbishop Methodios of Tabor, the Most Reverend Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda and Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis and other Hagiotaphite Fathers, the Archimandrites Bartholomew and Nectarios, and the ministering Fathers of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The newly tonsured Monk has kept the name of his baptism, Basil.

After the reading of the prayer for the monks and the completion of the tonsure, His Beatitude addressed the new Monk praising him for his humble and righteous service at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and encouraging him to continue this service, following the example of St. Basil the Great, whose name he bears, and of his sister St. Makrina, whose commemoration we celebrate today.

From Secretariat-General

DEPARTURE FROM LIFE OF GERASIMOS THE HAGIOTAPHITE

The Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Sarantarion Mount Archimandrite Gerasimos Selalmatzidis died on Tuesday morning, July 17/30, 2019, at the Holy Monastery of St. Gerasimos of the Jordan, where he was especially treated for his old age in the last few months, by the care of the Patriarchate and the diligence of the Hegoumen Archimandrite Chrysostom.

The deceased, genuine Hagiotaphite, joined the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood as an adult, and having received the monastic schema and the office of Priesthood, he ministered in various posts of the Patriarchate and served as the Hegoumen of the Sarantarion Mount for many years. Living in the mountains and frugal in his diet, he offered the pilgrims' financial contributions and his own property for the full renovation of the Monastery of the Sarantarion Mount and of that of St. John the Baptist in the river Jordan.

His funeral service, in the afternoon of his departure day, was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with the participation of Hagiotaphite Archbishops, Monks and laity. The requiem was read by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina as follows;

“Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Reverend Fathers,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The departure from life of our beloved Brother in Christ Archimandrite Gerasimos, Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Sarantarion Mount, reminded us St. Paul words; “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” (Hebrews

13:14). And “ourselves and one another and all our lives” should be aligned and directed to the final coming of the Kingdom of Heaven which has been granted to us through Jesus Christ, Who became Incarnate, was Crucified and Resurrected. Through His Cross and Resurrection death has no longer dominion over us. This salvific and hopeful message in Christ drew the soul of the deceased, our Brother Archimandrite Gerasimos.

He came to the Holy Land in an adult age from his hometown Thessalonica, and joined the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, he received the Priesthood, served the Department of Finance with financial transparency, and having been a mountain climber, he was called by our Lord Jesus Christ to minister at Sarantaron Mount in harsh conditions, where the Lord was tempted and conquered all temptations, comforting us and giving us courage to conquer our temptations. He served there for many years, and being frugal, he offered all the financial contributions he received from the pilgrims for the full renovation of the Holy Monastery of Sarantaron Mount and the restoration of the Holy Monastery of St. John the Baptist by the river Jordan. We entreat the Lord that He may consider these good works and forgive him for any sins he may have committed as human, and place him in the land of the living, along with the righteous ones, filling him with the His Trinitarian Light.

The Hagiotaphite Brotherhood thanks those who honored his memory for their participation at his funeral and the Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of St. Gerasimos, Archimandrite Chrysostom, because of the care he offered the deceased with devotion, over the last few months of his life.

May his memory be ever-lasting!”

The Hagiotaphite Brotherhood expresses its condolences to his relatives in the world.

May his memory be ever-lasting!

From Secretariat-General