

THE VISIT OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr. Nikolaos Dendias, on his one-day trip to Israel, on Sunday afternoon, July 15/28, 2019, visited the Patriarchate escorted by a team of his associates among whom the former Ambassador in Israel Mr. Loukakis and the former Attache' of the Embassy Mr. Gennimatas, with the Ambassador of Greece in Tel-Aviv Mr. Elias Eliadis and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos.

His Excellency the Minister and his escorts were warmly received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In this meeting His Beatitude honoured Mr. Dendias with the honorary distinction of the Grand Commander of the Order of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre in recognition of his contribution to the nation, to the Church, and especially to the Church of Jerusalem, addressing him as follows;

“Your Excellency Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr. Nikolaos Dendias,

The Hagiotaphite Brotherhood our Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre and We personally welcome you and your associates in great joy today at the Venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Your visit within the framework of the political, economic and energy cooperation of Greece with the Eastern Mediterranean states including Israel, is of great importance not only for the security and peace of the region but also for the preservation of the existing political, demographic and religious Status Quo of the Old City of Jerusalem, which has

been recognized by all peoples and all religions without distinction as a Holy and Sacred City.

And we say this, because the Venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem, known as the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, is an indisputable factor in the so far undisturbed multi-cultural and multi-religious character of the Holy City.

Needless to say, that the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which the Divine Providence has appointed for the preservation and ministry of the Shrines of the Sacred History throughout the centuries, continues to remain the guarantor of the Christian character of Jerusalem which is considered the spiritual capital of the world.

In this capacity as the guarantor of the Christian character and indeed of the Christian field of the Old City of Jerusalem, our Patriarchate, representing the pious nation of the Orthodox faithful of Romiosyne but also our nation as a whole, makes an appeal, together with the other Christian Communities and Churches, to His Excellency the Prime Minister of Greece Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis and to you personally Mr. Minister, to make every effort to encourage His Excellency Prime Minister Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, in order to execute a resolution to the matter of our Church properties in Jaffa Gate and prevent the forcible take over, by unlawful means, of the well-known Imperial and Petra hotels by the radical group Ateret Cohanim.

Resting assured of the undivided support of our Respected Greek Government, Mr. Minister we would like you to accept the Honorary Distinction of the Grand Commander of the Order of the Studious Ones, namely of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood.

This is a token of our gratitude to the Greek people and to their Governments and to our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as to its diplomatic representatives who are present here.

Thank you.”

Emotional, the Minister thanked His Beatitude and committed himself to continue his work for the benefit of the Church and of Hellenism.

His Beatitude moreover offered the Minister and to the members of his team an icon of the Theotokos of Jerusalem and of the Sacred Edicule of the Holy Sepulchre and gave His blessing for the success of his new Governmental mission and the Minister offered His Beatitude a silver souvenir of Mecedonian origin in return.

From Secretariat-General

LIFTING OF THE DEGRADATION OF MONK EIRINAIOS (FORMER PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM)

The Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Chaired by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, at its 110th Meeting of July 12/25, 2019, unanimously lifted the degradation of Monk Eirinaios and restored Him to the Episcopal Office, which he formerly held, and to the degree of the Former Patriarch of Jerusalem, attributing thus the full owed respect to His Office.

The Holy and Sacred Synod took this decision for the reasons mentioned in the following text:

“Because the enacted according to the rules continuing order of all things in the Church constructs and promotes peace, in

which God's Spirit, "which constitutes the institution of the Church" finds rest, and because the holy rules were enacted by the Holy Fathers "for the healing of the passions and the cure of the souls", therefore also for the abolishment of any passionate and selfish action opposed to the unity of the body of the Church, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, following amenably the canonical orders, within the spirit of the aforementioned canonical principles, took the decision of the degradation of Patriarch of Jerusalem Eirinaios, in deep sorrow, fourteen years ago, and he had ever since been transferred to the order of Monks. Nevertheless, the Holy and Sacred Synod has never ceased to show a vivid interest in the well-being of the aforementioned brother of ours, with much patience, and for this reason it has unceasingly rendered interceding prayers to God for him.

Because the health condition of our brother in Christ has recently been deteriorating, the Holy and Sacred Synod, having considered the orders of God and acting philanthropically, according to the authority "which is held by the One who heals according to the science of Spiritual medicine" decides unanimously the lifting of the degradation that had been imposed on our brother Eirinaios, fervently praying to "the Lord of every principle and authority" to grant him and all of us the grace of the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb".

The Holy and Sacred Synod delegated Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina and the Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod Most Reverend Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda to announce this decision to the former Patriarch Eirinaios, who under the care of the Patriarchate had recently been hospitalized at the French Hospital in Jerusalem and is currently being looked after at the Holy Monastery of Saint Gerasimos of the Jordan.

From Secretariat-General

H.B. PATRIARCH THEOFILOS III HOLDS A SERIES OF MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. DISCUSSING THE MATTER OF JAFFA GATE

H.B. our Father and Patriarch Theophilos III, held a series of meetings with American politicians, religious and civil society leaders to raise awareness about the threats facing the Christian presence in the Holy Land, and particularly in Jerusalem. These risks have increased along with the increased probability of settlers taking over the properties of Jaffa Gate after the Supreme Court's wrongful decision to allow Ateret Cohanim organisation to do so.

H.B. Patriarch Theophilos III led a delegation from the Holy Land representing the three Church families (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant families) to promote the concept of the Christian unity and the joint Christian action in the face of the challenges that beset the Christian presence in the Holy Land, while working at the same time to enrich the interaction between the Churches of Jerusalem and the decision-makers in the US.

H.B. Theophilos III and the accompanying delegation participated in a conference of foreign ministers to promote religious freedom, which was held in Washington, D.C. with the participation of dozens of foreign ministers from all over the world. H.B. met with ministers and various political personalities, briefing them on the situation of Jerusalemites, and the state of the Christian and Muslim holy sites which suffer from violations at the hands of radical

settler groups. Our Father and Patriarch also briefed the ministers on the latest developments regarding the properties of Jaffa Gate, urging them to encourage the Israeli government to conclude this file that poses an existential threat to Christians in Jerusalem.

H.B. Patriarch of Jerusalem, also met with officials in the White House, the State Department, the International Bureau of Religious Freedom, the USAID, and a large number of members of the Senate and House of Representatives, where he presented the importance of the Jaffa Gate properties and the impact they hold on the Christian presence in Jerusalem, and for the Christian pilgrims as well; for it being the main entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for hundreds of years, and also the main entrance to the Christian Quarter, the monasteries, and ecclesiastical institutions in general, as well. Patriarch Theophilos warned that the seizure by settlers of the Jaffa Gate properties will have catastrophic consequences for the Christians all over the world and not only Christians of the Holy Land.

Among the meetings of Patriarch Theophilos III in Washington, D.C. and the accompanying delegation, they met with leaders of civil society, specifically with heads of universities, to put them in the picture of what is going on in Jerusalem. Our Patriarch asked them to cooperate with the our Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the other Churches in Jerusalem; to raise awareness within the American society about the dangers threatening the Christian presence and the attacks on the Christian and Islamic holy places.

From Secretariat-General

H.B. THEOPHILOS III MEETS WITH U.S. CHURCH LEADERS OVER CHALLENGES TO CHRISTIANS' PRESENCE IN JERUSALEM

His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III, met in Washington D.C., with influential Church leaders in the United States of America to discuss means of supporting the authentic Christian presence in the Holy Land in general and in Jerusalem in particular.

H.B. considered the meeting itself as a positive step towards strengthening the International Community of the Holy Sepulchre organization [ICoHS], which is working to build and strengthen the bond of peace between Christians in the Holy Land and their brothers and sisters around the world.

H.B. Theophilos III presented updates on the Jaffa Gate Church properties (The Imperial and Petra Hotels) which make up the entrance to the Christian Quarter of Old Jerusalem. H.B. said: "The likely take-over of buildings there, by a radical group, if unabated, will undermine the integrity and compromise the Christian character of the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem; it will further threaten the access of pilgrims and the local community to our Churches, schools, health facilities and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre itself. This will indeed change the character of the Christian Quarter forever."

H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, said that two years ago he was given an important mandate by fellow Church leaders in Jerusalem; adding: "I was tasked to engage political and religious leaders around the world concerning the challenges that Christians currently face in the Holy

Land. As Church leaders we are as one, united both in the Spirit, and in crucial concern for the Church and our communities.” Furthermore, H.B. Theophilos III stressed that there is a clear and present challenge to the continued existence of the Christian community in the Holy Land, and only by strengthening the bonds of peace with “our brothers and sisters around the world will we be able to remove this existential threat in our beloved region.”

H.B. informed his audience that Christians in Jerusalem face multiple threats due to the fragile nature of politics which makes the Churches an easy target for politicians pursuing quick votes. He added “Against this political backdrop are practical problems, among them desecration and vandalism of Churches, and intimidation from radical groups.”

From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM GIVES MEDAL AWARDS TO CHOIR MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF BEIT SAHOUR

On the evening of the feast of the Ascension, May 24/ June 6, 2019, at the ceremony held at Paradise Hotel by Rachel’s Tomb, which belongs to the Roum-Orthodox Christian Mr. Athanasios

Abu-Aeta, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem gave medal awards to 7 choir members of the Community of Beit Sahour, who have been distinguished for a number of years for their keeping and cultivation of our traditional Byzantine Music. The ceremony was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos, Metropolitan Chrysostom of Patra, the Spiritual Father of St. Savvas the Sanctified Lavra Archimandrite Eudokimos, the Hegoumen of the Monastery of the Shepherds and of Beit Jalla Archimandrite Ignatios, Priest Issa Mousleh and Fr. Savvas Her, Priests of Beit Sahour Community and many members of the Beit Sahour Parish, and the relatives of the awarded with the distinction of the Order of the Cross Bearers of the Holy Sepulchre.

The awarded choir members, Mr. Hanna Judeh, Mr. Elias Andraos Banoura, Mr. Kareem Saliba Kokali, Mr. George Bassil Abu Etah, Mr. Raed Nasri Al Atrash, Mr. Khader Ibrahim Saeed, Mr. Zuneir Qumsieh, thanked His Beatitude and expressed their willingness to always support the Patriarchate and promote the studying of the angelic and heavenly Byzantine Music.

Thanking the host of the ceremony and Hotel owner, Mr. Abu Aeta, His Beatitude offered him an icon of the Theotokos of Jerusalem.

From Secretariat-General

SIGNING AGREEMENT ON THE

INTEGRATION OF WORKINGS OF THE SACRED EDICULE AND THE ROTUNDA AROUND THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

On Monday afternoon, May 14/27, 2019, at the Franciscan Monastery, there was a meeting of H.H.B. the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, and Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos, with the Franciscans, the Custos Fr. Francesco Patton, Fr. Dobromiro, Fr. David, and with the Armenian Patriarch in Jerusalem Archbishop Nourhan Manougian, the Hegoumen of the Armenians at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Fr. Samuel and Fr. Gurion, for the signing of the agreement for the completion of the maintenance and restoration project of the Sacred Edicule and the Rotunda, after the maintenance and restoration works of the Sacred Edicule that were completed two years ago under the technical supervision of the Technical University of Athens.

His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos made the following interview regarding the signing of this agreement:

"Your Paternity,

Your Beatitude,

Dear Brothers,

It is a great blessing, for us to be here in this very special place, and it is a great blessing, because what we are about to sign is the confirmation of what is being mentioned in your script, it is the confirmation of the initiative that was taken some years ago, for the restoration of the Holy Edicule

of the Holy Sepulchre.

It is true that our common initiatives and joint venture and common action that we altogether work for the restoration of the Holy Edicule of the Holy Sepulchre, that opened a new phase I would say, in our history, in our cooperation, in our co-existence, and above all, in our mission and as witness to the Holy City of Jerusalem and of course to the Holy Places, with the Crown of them, the Holy Sepulchre, which as you said, indeed has become the main destination not only for our own pilgrims the Christian pilgrims, but also the destination of all other visitors and non-Christian pilgrims as well.

Today is really a special day, not only for us and for our Communities, that we are in charge of the custody of the Holy Places, but it is important for the Holy City of Jerusalem because everybody is now realizing and acknowledges that if Jerusalem maintains her Christian character as well, it depends on us as well. Therefore our mission is very important, not only in religious terms but also in diplomatic terms and inevitably in political terms.

I would like very much from the bottom of my heart to express on behalf of our Brotherhood, and myself personally, our thanks and appreciation, and we hope and pray that this initiative, to not just restore the foundations and the pavement of the Holy Sepulchre, but that this would be the completion of the restoration of the Holy Sepulchre, that has started so many years ago. And I think that this will bring the Holy Sepulchre to a new era, to a new phase, because, so far, due the restoration works which are going on, there is no doubt that the Holy Sepulchre suffers from its holiness and sanctity and reverence. But by completing the restoration works, the Holy Sepulchre will recover its splendour.

And I must rest you assured that our technical team is ready to join forces with your own technical team, as well as with the technical team of our Brothers the Armenians. And we are

ready also in any possible way, to make our contribution, so that the works will go smoothly, as it happened with the restoration of the Holy Sepulchre.

Thank you very much indeed! Christos Anesti! Christ is risen!"

From Secretariat-General

THE IMPERIAL PALESTINIAN SOCIETY DEPARTMENT PRESIDENTS VISITED THE PATRIARCHATE

On Friday morning, May 4/17, 2019, approximately 20 Presidents of the Imperial Russian Palestinian Society from Russia and abroad, visited the Patriarchate, under the lead of Mr. Stepashin.

The group of representatives was received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In this meeting Mr. Stepashin thanked His Beatitude on behalf of the Society for yesterday's delegation with His Message at Sergei hotel, which was read by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, and Secretary-General.

Mr. Stepashin furthermore informed His Beatitude on the activity of the Society for the help of the needy Christians of the Holy Land, and especially for the suffering Christians of Syria, and on the occasion of the completion of 200 years since the founding of the Society, offered Him the Supreme

Award of the Society.

His Beatitude thanked Mr. Stepashin for the award and the briefing, and simultaneously informed him on the activities of the Patriarchate for the moral and material support and help it offers to the needy Christians of the Holy Land, as well as on the recent establishment of THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE (ICOHS), which serves the purpose of helping the preservation of the Status Quo in Jerusalem.

His Beatitude also referred to many other activities of the Patriarchate for the encouragement of the Christian presence in the Holy Land and concluded His words by offering Mr. Stepashin an embossed icon of Jerusalem, depicted in the centre of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and to the members of the delegation He offered souvenirs from Jerusalem as blessings.

From Secretariat-General

THE SERVICE OF THE HOLY LIGHT AT THE PATRIARCHATE

At noon on Holy Saturday, April 14/27, 2019, the Service of the Holy Light took place at the Patriarchate, according to the Typikon order and the Status Quo of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Before the Service, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III welcomed at the Patriarchate the Delegation that came from the State and Church of Greece in order to receive the Holy Light.

At noon His Beatitude escorted by Hagiographite Fathers, members of the Greek Delegation, members of Diplomatic Representations, and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos, went down the stairs of St. James Cathedral to the Holy Altar of the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

There, He received the representatives of the Armenians, Syrians and Copts who came to receive His blessing to take the Holy Light.

The entrance of the Bishops through the stairs of the Catholicon followed, then His Beatitude and the Priests, dressed in their liturgical vestments, and the procession three times around the Sacred Edicule began, under the chanting of the troparia "Thy Resurrection O Christ" and "Joyous Light".

After the third round of the procession His Beatitude remained with His sticharion and entered the Holy Tomb, as the Armenian Patriarch also entered and stayed by the Angel's stone. His Beatitude prayed, received and transferred the Holy Light from the Holy Tomb from the north opening first to the Catholicon and then from the gate.

The faithful received the Light of the Resurrection of Christ in great happiness and gleefulness, transferring it also to one another, receiving it also for the sanctification of their houses in Jerusalem and other towns of Israel, of the Palestinian Autonomy and other countries.

At the end of the Service, His Beatitude returned in Procession to the Patriarchate Headquarters, bells tolling, with the Scouts opening the way. There His Beatitude gave the Holy Light to the Delegation of the Church of Greece and that of the Greek Government, under the lead of the Vice Minister Mr. Markos Bolaris and the Exarch of the Holy Sepulchre in Athens Archimandrite Damianos to transfer it to the Church and

the country of Greece.

From Secretariat-General

THE SERVICES OF THE HOLY WEEK AT THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

From 7/20 April to 16/28 April 2019

Lazarus Saturday

Patriarchal Vespers: 15:00

Palm Sunday

Patriarchal Divine Liturgy: 08:00

Service of the Bridegroom: 18:15

Holy and Great Monday

Pre-sanctified Liturgy at the Horrendous Golgotha: 09:00

Service of the Bridegroom: 18:15

Holy and Great Tuesday

Pre-sanctified Liturgy at the Horrendous Golgotha: 09:00

Service of the Bridegroom: 18:15

Holy and Great Wednesday

Pre-sanctified Liturgy at the Horrendous Golgotha: 09:00

Holy and Great Thursday

Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great at St. James Cathedral:
06:30

The Service of the Sacred Washing of the Disciples' feet at
the Holy Courtyard: 09:00

The Service of the Passion 18.15

Holy and Great Friday

The Royal Hours at the Horrendous Golgotha: 10:00

Patriarchal Vespers: 15:00

The Epitaph Service: 21:00

Holy and Great Saturday

The Service of the Holy Light: 13:00

The Service of the Resurrection: 12:00 midnight

Easter Sunday

The Service of the second Resurrection (Love): 13:00

The Master of Ceremonies of the Patriarchate

Archimandrite Bartholomew

SERVICES OF THE HOLY WEEK 2019 AT THE MONASTIC CHURCH OF SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELEN

From 7/20 April, to 16/29 April 2019

Palm Sunday;

Matins and the D. Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom at 05.00

Vespers at 15:30

Service of the Bridegroom at 18:15

Holy and Great Monday;

The Hours and the Pre-sanctified Liturgy at 06.30

Great Compline at 15:30

Service of the Bridegroom at 18:15

Holy and Great Tuesday;

The Hours and the Pre-sanctified Liturgy at 06.30

Great Compline at 15:30

Service of the Bridegroom at 18:15

Holy and Great Wednesday;

The Hours and the Pre-sanctified Liturgy at 06.30

Small Compline – Holy Unction at 17:00

Holy and Great Thursday;

Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great at 04:30

Service of the Passion at 18:15

Holy and Great Friday;

Royal Hours at 08.00

Service of the Epitaph at 18:30

Holy and Great Saturday;

The Hours and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great at 08:00

Holy Pascha;

Matins & D. Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom at 0:50 am – after midnight

Monday, after the Day of Pascha;

Matins and the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom at 08:00

The Typikon Keeper of the Monastic Church

Archimandrite Alexios

