

PATRIARCH THEOPHILOS OF JERUSALEM IN THE UK, PARTICIPATES IN WEEK-LONG ACTIVITIES ON CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

As a year that was particularly tough for the Christians in the Middle East comes to a close, the senior-most Church leader, Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem, visited the United Kingdom this week at the invitation of The Dean of Westminster Abbey and His Royal Highness Prince Charles, to spread awareness and offer a message of hope.

On Tuesday morning at Lambeth Palace, Archbishop Justin Welby welcomed Patriarch Theophilos III and his entourage, Archdeacon Markos, Ms. Anna Koulouris from the Patriarchate's English communications office, and the Executive team of the International Community of the Holy Sepulcher (ICOHS), to give a briefing on issues surrounding the preservation of Christian presence in the Middle East as well as issues pertaining to the Holy land, including the Status Quo. In the spirit of the upcoming Feast of Christmas, the two Church leaders emphasized the importance of hope, prayer, and pilgrimage.

While the Patriarch attended a private session at Clarence House with Prince Charles and other senior Christian leaders from the Middle East, his entourage participated in meetings at Westminster Central Hall with politicians, faith leaders, and select NGOs; identifying major areas of opportunity and need, such as education, channels of communication with the international community, refugee work in Jordan, and ways to empower local leaders to discourage intolerant behavior and exclusionary or radical movements within their respective

regions.

In the evening, Patriarch Theophilos attended a service event at Westminster Abbey in London, presided by the Dean of the Abbey, celebrating the contributions of Christians in the Middle East. The service was attended by various senior church representatives from around the Middle East. His Royal Highness Prince Charles delivered remarks concerning the importance of the Christian presence in the Middle East and their vital, consistent contributions to peace and reconciliation. As the representative of the Christian Churches of the Holy Land, Patriarch Theophilos delivered subsequent remarks, calling to mind our shared yearning for divine-human encounter, which the Holy Land uniquely offers, as well as the need to protect this sacred place for all humankind. His full remarks can be found here;

*“As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.” (Ps 42:1)*

The yearning of the human heart and soul for union with God is the most fundamental of all longings. The Scriptures are full of this yearning, and we have heard some of these words sung beautifully by the choir in this service: As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.

The Holy Land is the place where our sacred history was first revealed, and where this yearning of the human heart and soul for union with God found and continues to discover its divine-human encounter. The Christians of the Middle East are among those who bear this sacred history, and the testimony of this divine-human encounter, in their very lives and witness and they feel this deeply. The Holy Places that have been entrusted to us by Divine Providence are the spiritual oasis, “the flowing streams” as the Psalmist says, that refresh the soul.

It is not possible to conceive of OR POSSIBLY to really

understand the Middle East without understanding the place that Christians hold in our region. We are natives of the land, a land that has been watered not only by the blood of many martyrs, but by the blood of the righteous one, Our Lord Jesus Christ himself. From the revealing of the Church at Pentecost in Jerusalem until now, Christians around the world have called this region their spiritual home, and it is very important to us that this home is kept open to all.

We rejoice in the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious landscape of the Middle East, and we delight in the richness of the heritage that has helped to shape world history and civilisation. There is room for all in our region, and we are the heirs of a spirit of mutual respect, mutual understanding, and mutual affection that we strive to form and shape our common life together.

Being honest, 'though, this long tradition today is under huge pressure. The Christian community in particular is facing unprecedented challenges and difficulties that the rest of the world cannot ignore. The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which is the Mother of all Churches, along with the other Churches and Christian communities of the region, are committed to the well-being and flourishing of the Christian presence not for ourselves alone, but for the sake of our society, and for the sake of the world, and all who look to the Holy Land in hope.

"As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God."

As we gather in this great and historic church to celebrate the contributions of Christians in the Middle East, may we remember that we gathered not for reasons of politics or economics, nor for any human purpose. We gather because we are inspired by the most fundamental longing, that great yearning of humankind for union with God. The Martyria; that is the witness of the Christians of the Middle East keeps the

way to that longing for God open to all. Amen.”

The light recently shed on the crucial role of Middle East Christians and the contemporary threats they face, has sparked further interest across a variety of domains, including within faith organizations, NGOs, government, and academia. In response, Patriarch Theophilos attended a series of other London events, including a Parliament session in which he discussed points of concern at length with members, and explored ways for the UK to contribute positively to the situation. He also delivered a statement and conducted an interview with Premier Christian Radio, covering challenges to the Holy Land’s Christian community, topics of spirituality, advice for young people, and a message of hope for the Christmas season.

Patriarch Theophilos concluded the week by speaking at the London School of Economics Faith Center, where he discussed the witness of the Christians in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, followed by a conversation with university students, faculty, and other experts from the community. A range of topics were explored including how to respond to political conflict in the region, the declining population of indigenous Christians, spirituality in modern times, and how to nurture courage and hope.

From Secretariat-General

**THE VISIT OF HIS BEATITUDE
THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM AT**

THE PATRIARCHATE OF ROMANIA

From Thursday, November 13/29, 2018, to Saturday, November 18/December 1, 2018, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos will be on a visit to Romania as a guest of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, in order to officiate the co-celebration of the Divine Liturgy at the newly-built and recently consecrated magnificent Cathedral of the Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called.

In this formal visit His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem is being escorted by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Archbishop Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis, the Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Saints George and Ioannis Hozeva Archimandrite Constantinos and Archdeacon Mark.

Upon His arrival at Bucharest airport, His Beatitude was welcomed by the representatives of the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, Reverend Bishop Timotheos of Brahovionil, former representative of the Patriarch of Romania in Jerusalem, and by the present representative Archimandrite Theophilos and his associate Fr. Ioannis, the Manager of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Patriarchate of Romania Fr. Mihail Titsa and Priest Mihail.

After a short rest at the Marriot hotel, His Beatitude was welcomed by His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, by the entourage of the Hierarchs and Priests along with many people, and He participated in a Doxology at the old Cathedral of Saints Constantine and Helen and Saint Demetrios, where He delivered the following address;

“Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple” (Psalm 65:4).

Beloved Brother in Christ and co-celebrant, Your Beatitude
Patriarch of Romania Daniel,

Keeping the evangelic and ecclesiastical tradition of the tradition in Christ regarding the communion of love, we have responded to the noble invitation of Your quite dear and profound Beatitude and we have arrived today from the Holy City of Jerusalem, the City of the Great King, to the great, historic and blessed country of Romania, in much delight and jubilation, in order to participate at the festivities of the Patriarchate of Romania on the commemoration of the Holy and Glorious Apostle Andrew the First-called, founder of the Church of Romania, at the recently consecrated and magnificent Holy Church dedicated to him, a jewel of architecture in the city of Bucharest and in all Romania, and the fruit of the reverence of the Romanian people. We will also participate at the national festivities on the independence anniversary of Romania.

During this blessed visit of Ours, we have been given the opportunity to convey the blessing of the God-receiving Cave of Holy Bethlehem, of the Horrendous Golgotha and of the Holy Sepulchre, with the experience of which we receive God's grace each and every day, as appointed guards of these shrines. We also bring with Us the petrahilion of Saint Ioannis the New Hozevite from Romania, and part of his hair, as a faithful testimony of his holiness, for the sanctification of the faithful who will be venerating them. We also carry the holy relics of the Holy Fathers of Hozeva. We thank You, Your Beatitude, Patriarch of Romania Daniel for Your brotherly invitation along with the honour made to Us for welcoming Us in person and by the members of the sacred Hierarchy of the Orthodox Church of Romania and the clergy of the Christian people, and congratulate You as well as all the Romanian people on the double ecclesiastical and national festivities. We foretaste of the delight and rapture for our sanctification through the celebration of the bloodless sacrifice tomorrow,

on the commemoration of the Holy and Glorious Apostle Andrew, by whose intercessions we beseech the Lord for the protection of the Orthodox Romanian Church and all the Romanian people.”

His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel returned the address as follows;

“Your Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem and All Palestine,

On behalf of the members of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, of the Orthodox clergy and believers in Romania, with great love in Christ, we warmly welcome you in our Country and Church!

We remember with joy the last fraternal visit you made to Romania in 2014 at the feast of the Holy Venerable Demetrios the New, Protector of Bucharest. Today, Your Beatitude, we are again together in this historical Patriarchal Cathedral, preparing to celebrate the Holy Apostle Andrew, the First-called, Protector of Romania, and now of the National Cathedral, whose altar we consecrated a few days ago.

*This is the main reason for Your Beatitude’s visit this year, to concelebrate for the first time in the patronal feast of the National Cathedral, **as a testimony and occasion of holy communion and missionary cooperation between our Churches.***

In this light of fraternal communion and pastoral co-responsibility, we pray to God to bestow His rich gifts upon Your Beatitude, wishing you to have a blessed visit to our Country and Church, together with the accompanying delegation members!”.

At noon and in the evening, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, along with His entourage, dined with His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel at His personal residence in the Patriarchate.

From Secretariat-General

PHOTO & VIDEO CREDIT: BASILICA.RO

<https://www.facebook.com/basilica.ro/videos/2454555717919547/?t=4>

THE 13TH ENTHRONEMENT ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS

On Thursday, November 9/22, 2018, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem celebrated the 13th Enthronement Anniversary of His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, at the glorious Throne of the Mother of Churches. For this extremely significant event in favour of the strengthening and unity of the Church of Jerusalem, there was a Doxology Service at the All-holy Church of the Resurrection.

The Doxology was officiated by His Beatitude, with co-celebrants Hagiotaphite Archbishops, Hieromonks and Deacons, Arab-speaking Priests and with the participation in prayer of monks, nuns and many laity. The service was also attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos and the Ambassador of Georgia in Israel.

After the Doxology His Beatitude and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood along with the full congregation returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters.

Therein, first among those who congratulated His Beatitude was

Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina with the following address;

“Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Today the Holy Sion, the Mother of all Churches, the Church of the Holy Land, the land of the appearance of the divine revelation, rejoices and is glad, along with the venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, on the commemoration of the thirteen-year-ago event, which turned out to be extremely important for its life and mission in the world.

In the year 2005, after a period of crisis and turbulence, which however did not lead to the submerging of the vessel of the Church of Jerusalem, by the illegally signed documents without the Synodical agreement, which mortgaged invaluable property of the Patriarchate, the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, which is the guardian and the depositary of the Christian presence and property in the Holy Land, fulfilled the cause of its mission, and by the legal and homophonous voting of the Holy Synod, elected Your Holy Beatitude as the 141st Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and all Palestine and as its Hegoumen.

This event is being celebrated festively today, with a Doxology at the All-holy Church of the Resurrection in the presence of the full congregation of monks, clergy and laity, due to its significance as a means of solidarity for the body of the Church, as bonding its unity and as safeguarding the continuation of its episcopal succession, ever since its foundation by the Lord and by its first Hierarch, St. James the Brother of God.

The continuation of the pastoral mission of the Church of Jerusalem throughout its jurisdiction in the three Palestines as far as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, was then placed in the hands of Your Beatitude by the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, and You have ever since proven to have been worthy of their trust on

you, in both words and actions for the last thirteen years.

Out of these, worth mentioning are "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:28); parishes in towns and villages of the Greek-Ortodox Arab-speaking flock, and especially Your care for the Arab-speaking communities in Jordan, through the recent appointments and Episcopal promotions, with the aim of a better pastoring care of the flock in Jordan, with the King of which the Patriarchate keeps good relations in favour of all the Christians and citizens of the Kingdom, nevertheless, it does not fail to care for the Russian-speaking flock in Jordan and Israel.

During Your Patriarchal Office, Your Beatitude has shown a special sensitivity and generosity of spending time at the Patriarchate for the reception of the incoming multitudes of pilgrims from all other Orthodox Churches, blessing and teaching them on their spiritual benefit from their pilgrimage, cultivating with their guiding Bishops and Priests good relations of ecclesiastical communication and cooperation and presenting, even at times of crisis, the viewpoints of our Patriarchate, which always aim to maintain the unity of the Orthodox Church under the bond of peace.

Beyond the pilgrimage visits, Your Beatitude has repeatedly received visits of, state, political and diplomatic delegations and representatives, to whom You have presented and projected the cultural and peace-making work of the Patriarchate, in the turbulent and flammable political environment, in which it is ordered to minister ecclesiastically. Your Beatitude has exported this work further than its local boundaries, in Your overseas travels, seeking supporters for the cancelling of the illegal agreements of mortgaging the property of the Patriarchate and the prevention of law enforcements which impose heavy tax measures, and deny its right for the free management of its property.

The interest of Your Beatitude in the historic holy Monasteries of the Patriarchate was displayed by Your relevant actions, so that by the cooperation of the Palestinians with the Israeli Army the installation of water was made possible in the Holy Monastery of Hozeva, and by the permission of the Israeli Army as well, the Holy Monastery of St. John the Baptist in the Jordan was renovated and opened again to the pilgrims' visits.

By the actions and guidance of Your Beatitude irreconcilable was the support, claim and confirmation of our rights in our shrines which were questioned by the Armenians, as for example the presence of the second guard of ours by the Angel's stone inside the Holy Tomb for the reception of the Syriac and Coptic Communities right after our Paschal all-night Vigil and recently, our right in the cleaning of the God-receiving Cave in Bethlehem.

The always granted interest of Mother Greece in favour of the preservation of the indefinable rights of our nation on the All-holy Shrines, has recently been made active by Your Beatitude, through Your invitation to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Markos Bolaris, who, responding willingly, visited the Patriarchate, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Gethsemane, the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Holy Monastery of St. Savvas and the Holy Monastery of the Sacred Cross, intending to support the Patriarchate whenever there is need.

Raising the glass on behalf of the Brotherhood and the Holy and Sacred Synod, to Your health, solidarity and longevity, in fullness of divine blessings, I reassure You, that being encouraged by all the aforementioned, we, the Hagiotaphite Fathers, Your Beatitude, are strengthened and join forces and walk along with You as Kyrinaioi at Your Patriarchal mission of the Cross, increasing our Hagiotaphite fruition for the benefit of souls, the praising of our blessed nation and the glory of our Trinitarian God. So be it."

The Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem also addressed His Beatitude with the following words;

“Your Beatitude,

Most Reverend Archbishops,

Reverend Fathers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today’s celebration is of great importance for all of us, as the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and the Holy Church, the pilgrims and the Orthodox Community, honor with due grandeur the 13th anniversary of the enthronement of the Head of the Church of Sion, the Mother of the Churches, His Holy Beatitude , the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III.

It is a special honor and pleasure for me to attend this celebration and I would like to convey our cordial wishes for health, strength, and longevity, in order to continue Your high mission, which is becoming more and more significant and important, in this difficult time.

On this occasion, I would like to express Greece’s unconditional support towards the Sacred Institution, the Presbyterian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which has played an exceptionally significant historic role throughout the centuries, and as the centre of Orthodoxy in the Holy Land, it continues to be an endless source of hope, projecting the values of Christianity and the message of the salvation of man from the Holy City towards all directions.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem is of course, a steadfast point of reference for all Greeks, wherever they are, and it symbolizes the long-term presence of Hellenism in the Holy Land, while it can only be an unrelenting bond of friendship and cooperation with the other nations, as well as being the expression of the Orthodox Christians of the region, conserving valuable traditions and conveying the ecumenical message of Orthodoxy towards all directions. For all of us,

the Venerable Patriarchate is certainly the depository of the most important Sacred Shrines of Christianity, which the Hagiotaphite Fathers defend daily with devotion and self-denial, and who always inspire and encourage the faith and reverence of the faithful around the world, as well as the bonds with the Church of Sion.

Your Beatitude,

With Your hard work and tireless efforts, You promote the uplifting of the status of the Patriarchate, the defense of the existing Status Quo in the Holy Land and the protection of the herein Christian presence. With the sincere mood of understanding and reconciliation You demonstrate, You systematically cultivate the relations with the other denominations and religions, as well as the wider effort of reconciliation and peace-making in this much tested region. With a series of your initiatives you promote the restoration and highlighting of the most Sacred Shrines of Christianity, while you take care of the spiritual concord and unity of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, and the spiritual guidance and prosperity of a flock that undergoes significant challenges and trials.

Your Beatitude,

The burden You carry upon Your shoulders is heavy and the struggle it entails is also long and arduous. It is my deep conviction however, that with God's help and the active support of all of us, You will complete your task and accomplish your mission.

All the Staff of the Consulate and I, pray that you may have health, strength and longevity for the good of the Patriarchate, of the Brotherhood, of your Greek-Orthodox Flock, of Orthodoxy and of the peace in the Holy Land.

Many Happy Returns."

Likewise addresses to His Beatitude were delivered by representatives of the Brotherly Churches and some Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In return of those addresses, His Beatitude said the following;

“Your Excellency Mr. Consul General of Greece,

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brothers,

Dear Christians,

Noble pilgrims,

“I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth” (Psalm 34:1).

Our Holy Church of Jerusalem, which has been founded by the redeeming blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, gleefully celebrates today the completion of the thirteen-year ministry of Our Mediocrity since Our undertaking the Apostolic and Patriarchal throne of St. James the Brother of God and first Hierarch of Jerusalem. For this reason, along with the Venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, we went to the All-holy Church of the Resurrection, where we had a thanksgiving Doxology to the Holy Trinitarian God, where the love of His Son and our Lord Jesus Christ constrains us (2 Cor. 5:14).

This festal thirteen-year anniversary does not refer to Our unworthiness, but to the Holy-spiritual institution of the Church, namely the mystical body of Christ. “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven” (Col. 1:18-20) according to St. Paul.

Our so far hierarchical, monastic and pastoral ministry “unto the throne of grace of the great Hierarch Jesus Christ the Son of God” (Hebr. 4:15-16), namely of the Biblical Mother of Churches, and Dwelling place of the God of Holy Sion, had one and only purpose, the preservation of our Apostolically-delivered consignment of the healthy faith and the right division of the word of truth according to St. Paul; “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). Moreover, the preservation of the all-holy shrines as places of the logical worship and sources of divine and therapeutic energy, but also the safekeeping of their indefinable privileges and sovereign rights of the reverend and royal nation of the Roman Orthodox Christians.

Nevertheless, hearkening to the words of Paul: “let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebr. 12:1-2), we have not ceased our overseas international campaign in order to awaken the consciousness of those who love the City of the King of kings, the earthly Jerusalem, which is the visible symbol of peaceful co-existence and reconciliation of nations, peoples, and religions, on the one hand; and on the other, we have been striving for the guarantee of the Christian presence and of the Churches in the Middle East and in the Holy Land.

And we have been working on this cause, under the spiritual and religious mission of the Mother of Churches, namely the primary institution of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which has been preserving the existing Status Quo, on both the pilgrimage and the demographic areas in the Holy City of Jerusalem, which has been threatened by those who covet its distortion.

We say this, because Jerusalem has been the primordial and inexhaustible source of the blood of righteousness, always remaining the shelter of those who desire God the Father of

love and peace, according to the psalmist; "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God" (Psalm 41:1-2).

This thirteen-year enthronement anniversary of Our Mediocrity calls us not in boasting over the things done by us, but that we "may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God" (Rom.15:17). "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience" (2 Cor. 1:12).

It is precisely for this testimony of our conscience that we are called to continue our ecclesiastical and hierarchical mission amidst a world suffering from confusion and especially in our region of the Middle East. "Quench not the Spirit", St. Paul orders (1 Thess. 5:19).

In this sacred ministry of the throne of the apostles and martyrs of St. James the Brother of God, as well as of the mystery of the divine Providence, we have as collaborators and communicators our dear Fathers in Christ and Hagiographite Brothers, Archbishops, Hieromonks, Deacons and Monks, along with whom, according to St. Ingatius the God-bearer, "in concord we watch over all things that should be done, with the Bishop who is the Head in resemblance of God, and the Presbyters in resemblance of the Apostles, and the deacons to whom the ministry of Jesus has been entrusted, just as it has been along the centuries with the Father and it has finally been revealed" (Vol.2, p. 269).

We honestly say that our fight is a fight "against the doctrines of deceit" (Eph. 4:14). For this reason St. Paul advices us saying: "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (Eph. 6:14,16), "for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44) according to John the Evangelist. These

methods of deceit and lies of the devil are being recorded in the sacred history of the past but also the present times of the Church of Jerusalem, namely of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate, which has been challenged but not debilitated by the sons of the darkness of this generation (Luke 16:8).

Let us pray to God the Father of lights and of truth, "that he may guide our footsteps in the working of His commandments" by the intercessions of the Most Blessed and Ever-Virgin Mary, our Lady Theotokos, and those of our Father among the Saints Nectarios of Pentapolis. And may the grace of the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ fortify all of us in the ministry of the All-holy Shrines, the irrefutable witnesses of our faith, as well as in the pastoring of our reverend Christian flock.

As far as all these are concerned, we call upon all those who participated in the prayer with Us and honoured with their presence this feast of Enthronement, and pray for strength from on high, the grace of the All-holy Tomb, patience and all blessings of God, expressing our warmest thanksgiving for those who addressed us, Geronda Secretary-General, Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, who spoke on behalf of the members of the Holy and Sacred Synod and our Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, His Excellency the Consul General of Greece Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos, His Excellency the Ambassador of Georgia, Reverend Archimandrite Alexander, the representative of our Brotherly Holy Church of Russia, who conveyed the wishes of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Moscow Cyril, Reverend Archimandrite Theophilos, representative of our Brotherly Holy Church of Romania, who conveyed the wishes of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, who spoke on behalf of Our flock in Nazareth, the Most Reverend Archbishop Damascene of Joppa, who spoke on behalf of our flock in Joppa, Reverend Fr. Halalambos Bandour, who spoke on behalf of St. James Cathedral, the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of

Madaba, who spoke on behalf of the Madaba Community in Jordan and of the Russian-speaking Community in Ber-Sheba, Reverend Archimandrite Philotheos, who spoke on behalf of the Communities of Acre, Reverend Steward Fr. Savvas, who spoke on behalf of the Community of Beit Sahour, Reverend Steward Fr. Yusef Hodali, who spoke on behalf of the Community of Beit Jalla, the School of St. Demetrios, Mr. Abu Aeta and all who participated in the celebration of this Enthronement anniversary.

To the health of all of you!"

At noon there was a festal meal.

From Secretariat-General

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday October 26/ November 8, 2018, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr. Markos Bolaris visited the Patriarchate, escorted by his associate Mr. George Psiahas and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs was received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and

Hagiotaphite Fathers and was escorted to venerate the Holy Sepulchre and the Horrendous Golgotha. His Beatitude informed the Deputy Minister on the scheduled projects of the Patriarchate for the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, for which there had been mention on His visit to the Deputy Minister's office in Athens two months ago.

In this visit of the Deputy Minister in Jerusalem, His Beatitude offered him the honorary distinction of the Grand Commander of the Order of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, in reinforcement and reward of his vivid interest and actions in favour of the Patriarchate, and also gave him an icon of the Theotokos of Jerusalem. The Deputy Minister offered His Beatitude a silver disk, copy of the exhibits of the National Museum of Athens.

After the lunch offered by His Beatitude in honour of the Deputy Minister, the latter visited the Holy Monastery of St. Savvas, escorted by His Beatitude, where he was warmly received by the Spiritual Father of the Monastery Archimandrite Eudokimos and the Fathers of the Monastery. The Deputy Minister was impressed by the history of the Monastery, the holiness of the incorrupt relic of St. Savvas, as it is visible and can be venerated in the recently made new reliquary and of the manner of keeping the perfect monastic life by the Fathers of the Monastery.

The following day, Friday October 27/ November 9, 2018, the Deputy Minister visited the Theotokos' Tomb in Gethsemane, where he was welcomed by the Hegoumen Most Reverend Archbishop Dorotheos of Avyla, then the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, where he was welcomed by the Patriarchal Representative Most Reverend Archbishop Theophylactos of Jordan, and the Holy Monastery of the Sacred Cross. The Deputy Minister was informed by His Beatitude on the existing Status Quo and on the rights of our nation on the All-holy Shrines according to it.

The Deputy Minister expressed once again his vivid interest on the moral and material support of Greece for the renovation of the Cave of Bethlehem and of the Monastery of the Sacred Cross, and of the reopening of its historic School of Theology.

His Beatitude thanked the Deputy Minister warmly for his immediate response in His recent invitation to visit the Patriarchate and for his expression of lively and undivided interest as well as for his honest disposition and practical support.

From Secretariat-General

H. H. B. THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM OFFERS HIS CONDOLENCES FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE PITTSBURGH SYNAGOGUE

The Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III offers his deepest condolences to those individuals and families who are mourning the loss of loved ones as a result of the hateful targeting of innocent people engaged in prayer and celebration at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh on Saturday October 27th.

Such an act of terrorism is an attack on the whole of our civilization and values,

which The Patriarchate of Jerusalem resolutely condemns.

We join our prayers with millions around the world and ask that God would bring comfort to victims and peace to our communities; with the only consolation being that such heinous crimes of bigotry will only strengthen our solidarity and resolve to protect fundamental liberties and freedom of worship.

From Secretariat-General

SCHOOL EVENT FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF 28 OCTOBER 1940

On Sunday afternoon, October 15/28 2018, there was a school event at the Patriarchal School of Zion on the national anniversary of 28 October 1940.

On behalf of the Patriarchate, the school event was attended by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, escorted by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina and other Archbishops and Priests of the Patriarchate. Present were also Hagiotaphite Fathers and members of the Greek Community.

On behalf of the General Consulate of Greece, the event was honoured by His Excellency the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos and members of the Consulate.

The school event included an introduction by the Managing

Director of the School Reverend Archimandrite Mattheos, the Festal Speech of the Day by the literature teacher Mrs. Catherine Kolonelou, the reciting of poems and texts from historic authors of 1940, the delivery of patriotic songs under the lead of the Choir Leader of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and Boarding School Manager Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos, and a theatrical play on the reshuffle of soldiers to the Albanian Front.

Through this School event there was a commemoration and presentation of the Italian and German attack against our country during World War II, the undermining of its territorial integrity and the sacrifices of blood of the Greeks and the liberation of the country through them.

At the end of the event, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos praised the contributors of the event, the educational staff, the students and His Excellency the Consul General of Greece for his support to the School.

From Secretariat-General

DECORATION OF METROPOLITAN MESOGAIAS AND MR. MYLONAS

On Sunday evening, October 1/14, 2018, at the Patriarchate Reception Hall, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos awarded the Most Reverend Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia and Lavreotiki and Mr. Charalambos Mylonas with the medal of the Grand Commander of the Order of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. His Beatitude also offered a

pectoral cross to Mr. Mylonas' wife and Mr. Koufopoulos as a small token for their work of the new elegant Relinquiry for the relics of our Holy Father among the Saints Savvas the Sanctified.

From Secretariat-General

ST.SAVVAS' RELICS ARE PLACED IN A NEW RELINQUARY

On Saturday night, September 30/ October 13, 2018, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Holy Lavra of St. Savvas the Sanctified according to the Typicon order of the Lavra. The Liturgy was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with co-celebrants the Most Reverend Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia and Lavreotiki and the Most Reverend Archbishops, Aristarchos of Constantina, Philoumenos of Pella, and the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Arab-speaking Priests, as well as visiting Priests from other Churches, Archdeacon Mark and Deacon Demetrios.

The Patriarchal and Episcopal Liturgy took place on the event of the placement of St. Savvas' relics from the Relinquiry in which he came from Venice on October 12 1965, to a new elegant silver one. The new Relilnquary has been made under the noble, studious and tireless care of the Most Reverend Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia and Lavreotiki, funded by Mr. Charalambos Mylonas, founder of the Shipping Company TRANSMED SHIPPING and his wife Charikleia, with the fine art of the Architects Petros Koufopoulos and Marina Myrianthi-Koufopoulou, the silversmiths Vasilios and Spyridon Haidou and the Company that owned by

brothers Lazarou in Volos.

This action is the least offering in return to St. Savvas, for all the intercessions and healings he provides with his incorrupt relics for the Fathers in his Lavra and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, to the pilgrims around the world and to the whole world.

After Dismissal, the Patriarchal Entourage was offered a reception by the Spiritual Father of the Lavra Archimandrite Eudokimos who also addressed all present as follows;

Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Most Reverend Holy Archbishops,

Reverend Fathers and noble pilgrims,

This day has gathered us to celebrate a historic event at the Holy and sacred Lavra of our Holy Father among the Saints Savvas the Sanctified.

It refers to the placement of the Saint's relics from the old Reliquary to a new, silver and elegant one.

53 years ago, during the Patriarchal office of Benedict I, after all the procedures between the Latin Patriarchate and the representatives of our Patriarchate, the Holy Synod appointed a Delegation to receive and transfer St. Savvas' holy relics from Venice to his Holy Lavra.

Members of the Delegation were the memorable Metropolitan Vasilios of Caesarea, Archimandrite Germanos, who later became Metropolitan of Petra, at that time Hierodeacon Kyriakos, who is now Metropolitan of Nazareth – and the only one still alive, our reverend Geronda memorable Archimandrite Seraphim, and Archimandrite Theodosios, Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of St. Lazarus in Bethany, who carried the liturgical vestments to dress the Saint.

We thank the All-Merciful God who deemed us worthy to change the liturgical vestments of our Saint, to receive the great blessing, all of us who participated in this beautiful service.

We warmly thank His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch Theophilos; I believe that St. Savvas inspired His heart which loves monasticism to grant the blessing, so the construction of the new Reliquary was made possible despite the difficulties.

We should express our warmest thanks to the noble couple of brothers Mr. Charalambos Mylonas and his wife Charikleia for their great contribution for the construction of the Holy Reliquary of St. Savvas.

Also, we thank from the depths of our heart the Most Reverend Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia and Lavreotiki, who had the initiative for the Reliquary, and supervised all work to be done as it should for a great Holy Father of our Church, with much love, care and diligence.

We also thank the craftsmen of the Reliquary, who worked zealously and with love, so that all things would be done the best they could, and also all those who anonymously contributed in any way for the completion of this sacred work. May the Lord our God, through the intercessions of our Most Glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and our Holy Father among the Saints Savvas the Sanctified, return them a thousand-fold their pay in the Kingdom of Heaven.

By your prayers, Your Beatitude, which we ardently seek.

Thank you.

His Beatitude glorified God and thanked all contributors to this God-pleasing work – righteously done to honour our Holy Father among the Saints Savvas the Sanctified, and underlined the greatness of the spiritual treasure that is kept in the

Monastery of St. Savvas, before he blessed everybody and returned to Jerusalem.

From Secretariat-General

PARTICIPATION OF H.H.B. THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM AT THE VI CONGRESS OF THE LEADERS OF THE WORLD AND TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS IN KAZAKHSTAN

From September 27/ October 10, to September 28/ October 11, 2018, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III participated at the VI Congress of the Leaders of the World and Traditional Religions, which took place in the city of Astana in Kazakhstan, on the topic “Religious Leaders for a safe world”.

At this Congress, His Beatitude addressed the President of Kazakhstan, the members of the Congress and all present as follows;

“Your Excellency, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Your Excellency, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Head of the Secretariat of this Congress, Beloved Fellow Leaders of World and Traditional Religions,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We bring you greetings from the Holy City of Jerusalem, the City of Peace, and a city that is deeply cherished by the three Abrahamic faiths, and highly respected by people of good will all over the world.

Please allow us to express our deep admiration to Your Excellency, Mr. President, for your wisdom in establishing these Congresses. In doing this, Your Excellency, you have shown to the world the truth that religion has a fundamental role in the establishment and sustaining of peace and harmony among all peoples. As we strive for peace, we cannot ignore the religious and spiritual sensibility, for this is deep in human nature. Not only is a proper understanding of the power of religious faith essential to the right ordering of the human community; but it is also the case that religious leaders have an undoubted role to play that cannot be ignored or delegated to others. We applaud this initiative and this commitment that you have shown.

We are reminded of the example of His Majesty King Abdullah II of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Along with many other activities and projects, His Majesty has established The World Interfaith Harmony Week, and this effort was adopted unanimously by the UN in 2010. Since that time, every February, the world interfaith movement is able to show to us the fruits of such interfaith co-operation and understanding, and awards are made to outstanding efforts of leadership in interfaith collaboration from around world.

Even as our world experiences terrible incidences of human cruelty, persecution, displacement, and violence, the movement to deeper harmonious co-existence across the divisions of religion gains strength. As religious leaders, it is our mission to support such endeavours with every possible means. And one of the greatest of these means is the subject of this Congress: the fostering of religious and spiritual leadership.

We know the crucial importance of leadership in every aspect of human society, whether it is in the political or civic sphere, or in education, or in business, or in our religious institutions and communities. Where particular endeavours flourish, it is because there is thoughtful, engaged, committed, and wise leadership. Where things are stagnant, where nothing seems to be working, and where there is the absence of hope, there is almost always a concomitant failure of leadership.

We experience this everywhere, and in the Middle East we know first-hand the role of true leadership, especially as it pertains to the three Abrahamic faiths. As we have grown in our region in mutual respect and co-existence over many generations, we know of the impact that our common heritage and our common destiny have on the hearts and souls of our respective peoples and societies.

Here, we would like to emphasize three essential elements of religious leadership that contribute to a safe world for everyone.

We begin with these famous verses from the Bible:

Jesus said to his disciples, whom he appointed as the leaders of the Church. *"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven"* (Matthew 5:13-16).

There is so much wisdom for religious leadership in these few verses, and it is certain that *"the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom"* (Ps 111:10).

First, let us remind ourselves what we know to be true, but which we sometimes forget, that the most important matter to keep in mind is the most basic. The Almighty God himself is at the heart of all religions, and here is the first element of religious leadership. That is to say, religious leadership must always bear in mind that it is the Divine who is at the heart of our proclamation. God is our "common denominator", which means that God is the embodiment of the divine values of love, compassion, and philanthropy. God exists in communion, with his creation and with human beings who have been created in his image and likeness. These values find their consummation of that divine peace "*which surpasses all understanding*" (Philippians 4:7).

The second aspect of religious leadership that we wish to emphasize is this. Because of the Divine Nature that is at the heart of the religious quest, it is not possible for religious leaders to speak or act in any way that is contrary to God's pure nature. As we read in the Epistle to Diognetus, "*there is no violence in God*", and if there is no violence in God, there can be no violence in his servants, that is the religious leaders, and of course, by extension, their followers. Therefore, religious leaders are to be enlightened and guided by the Divine Spirit, and must always radiate these divine values.

Saint John makes this clear by stating, "*those who say, "I love God" and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also*" (1 John 4:20-21).

Thirdly, and finally, religious leaders must be guides of peace, preachers of peace, workers of peace, leading peaceful lives among themselves and among their neighbours. Once again the Holy Scriptures are eloquent on this matter. Let us listen to the Prophet Isaiah, "*How beautiful upon the mountains are*

the feet of the messenger who announces peace (Isaiah 52:7), for as it has been mentioned, peace is at the heart of all religious traditions, because peace is at the heart of God himself. Peace, not violence nor bigotry, is the message of the Lord to the spiritual shepherds and to their flocks.

These three aspects lie at the heart of religious leadership that has the moral obligation of contributing to building a world that is safe for all. We do not dismiss the fact that our world is not perfect. The task of religious leadership is extremely difficult at the present time, because by definition we have been called to lead our communities in a world that is subject to the influence of evil powers and wickedness, the evidence of which is all too plain for all to see.

Allow us to commend this Congress for addressing this urgent subject, and we express our gratitude to Your Excellency Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and to the staff of the Secretariat for all your hard work to make this Congress possible.

May the God of peace and mercy give to all of us to whom the leadership of the world's religions has been entrusted, the strength, the wisdom, and the will to do all in our power, with God's grace and help, to enable the whole creation and all our peoples to live as God intended his creation to live – in mutuality, respect, and peace, fully aware of our common humanity, our common destiny, and our common identity as children of our loving Creator.

Thank you.”

MEETING OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM WITH THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE

On Monday afternoon, September 18, 2018, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos held a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr. Bolaris at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece.

His Beatitude was escorted by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Exarch of the Holy Sepulchre Archimandrite Damianos and Archdeacon Mark, while the Deputy Minister was accompanied by the Ambassador Mr. Constantinos Danasis of the Department of Churches Management, Mr. Liantis and Mr. George Psiahas.

Some of the topics on this meeting, were the encouragement of the Roman Orthodox Faithful of the Patriarchate, the renovation of the Catholicon of the All-holy Church of the Resurrection and of the Cave of the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and the reopening of the School of the Sacred Cross.

The new Deputy Minister Mr. Markos Bolaris expressed a genuine interest for these and willingly committed himself to helping the Patriarchate by all means under his authority.

After the meeting Mr. Bolaris offered a meal in honour of His Beatitude and His escort.

From Secretariat-General