

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS VISITS THE ARCHBISHOP OF ATHENS

On Thursday afternoon, June 1/14, 2018, while in Athens, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, paid the regular visit to His Beatitude the Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens, who celebrates His Name Day the following day.

His Beatitude was received at the Archdiocese Headquarters by His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece, and His Grace Bishop Simeon of Thespis.

In this meeting the two Heads of Churches confirmed the existing willingness of co-operation between the two Churches and talked about the pilgrimage tours of many members of the Archdiocese of Athens and various Metropolis from the Church of Greece, despite the occasionally intense political situation in Jerusalem.

His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem thanked His Beatitude the Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens for the secondment of clergy from the Church of Greece in order to minister the Jerusalem Patriarchate and referred to the fact that the Church of Greece supplies the Patriarchates in Foreign countries with much needed clergy. His Beatitude also mentioned the renewal of the School of Zion, and the intention to reopen the School of the Cross, to which the contribution of the Church of Greece could be determining.

His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos invited His Beatitude the Archbishop of Athens to visit Jerusalem, who accepted the invitation.

From Secretariat-General

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HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS IN GREECE

On Thursday June 1/14, 2018, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos arrived in Athens by plane, escorted by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina and Archdeacon Mark.

Along with His entourage and the Exarch of the Holy Sepulchre Archimandrite Damianos, on the morning of this day, His Beatitude had a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Ioannis Amanatidis; present at the meeting were also the Minister's associates Mr. Danasis, Mr. Liandis and Mr. Theodorou, and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos.

On this meeting there was emphasis in the need of the continuation of the solid co-operation between the Jerusalem Patriarchate with Mother Greece, the successor of the Byzantine Empire, and His Beatitude informed the Minister on priorities that the Patriarchate is in need of help from Greece, such as the renovation of the Catholicon of the Church

of the Holy Sepulchre, of the God-receiving Cave in Bethlehem, the funding of the Schools of the Patriarchate, the re-opening of the School in the Holy Monastery of the Sacred Cross, etc.

Mr. Amanatidis displayed a great interest in helping the Patriarchate.

At noon, His Beatitude attended a meal in His honour, offered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

From Secretariat-General

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GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE SCHOOLS OF THE PATRIARCHATE GRADUATES IN JORDAN

The Graduation Ceremony of eighty school graduates from Jordan of the "Patriarch Diodoros" Schools of the Patriarchate in the towns Madaba, Fhes and Zarka, took place at the reception hall of the University "Amman Il Ahliye" in town Salt on Saturday afternoon, April 29/May 12, 2018.

The ceremony was well organized by the Responsible for the Schools of the Patriarchate in Jordan Hegoumen of Fhes Archimandrite Ieronymos and his associates, the Manager Mrs.

Amera Sounaa and the teachers of the three Schools.

The reception was honoured by the presence of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and His escorts from Jerusalem, the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Head of Media in Arabic Fr. Issa Mousleh, Archdeacon Mark, as well as politicians from Jordan, Priests of the Patriarchate in Jordan, and the graduates' parents and relatives.

The program included the National Anthem of Jordan, the graduates' parade on stage, a thanksgiving address to His Beatitude by the Schools Manager Mrs. Amera Sounaa, as well as a thanksgiving address by two graduates from each School to His Beatitude, their parents and teachers in Arabic, French and English, traditional songs of Jordan and Arabic dances.

These were followed by the address of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos in Arabic, through Fr. Issa.

In it, His Beatitude stressed the significance of education for the students and thanked His Majesty the King of Jordan for His support to the Schools of the Patriarchate, and the Schools Manager Mrs. Amera for her devoted work. Finally, His Beatitude awarded the graduation certificates to each of the graduates wishing them every success in their lives.

From Secretariat-General

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ADDRESS OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY IN RAMALLAH

On Saturday, April 29/May 12, 2018, at the Graduation ceremony of the Ramallah School Students of the Patriarchate, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos addressed those present at the ceremony through the Most Reverend Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, underlining the following;

Your Grace Archimandrite Mattheos, Chairman of the Schools Board of the Patriarchate in the State of Palestine,

Respected School Manager Mr. Richard Zananiri,

Dear parents and teachers,

Tonight's Graduation Ceremony of the Greek Orthodox School students of the Patriarchate in the town of Ramallah is a great honour for us; this is an annual event that brings joy to all. Our hearts are filled with happiness because we are among people whom we dearly love. These students would not have come to this point in their lives, had there not been a common effort between the school teaching staff and their families. All of you have been watering this effort with the water of knowledge, of studying and love for many years; and today you reap the fruit of this effort and of your hard work. We make an appeal to all of you to strengthen the relationship of the school with the family.

Dear Students,

Beloved Children in Christ,

Today is the end of one field of your life and the beginning of another, similar to your school progress, which is filled with studying and participation in knowledge. In this new field you will distinguish the difference between the higher and the secondary education. For this reason I encourage you to always seek studying and education, because this is the way that leads to knowledge and the fulfillment of man's goals.

All religions lead man in the seeking of wisdom and the civil laws allow the citizens study at the educational institutions, in order to contribute to the building to the society and the elevation of civilization. According to the Old Testament (Ecclesiastes 2:26) "For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God".

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem does not hesitate when it comes to support its schools and stand by them, and toil day and night for the provision of all necessary things in all fields, without distinction for their progress. The annual students' ceremonies and distinctions are the greatest proof of the success and progress of these schools, by the help of God and the common care of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, "The Mother of Churches" with the School Board.

We would like to congratulate the Management, the Teachers, and the students for this year's progress and we wish them God's blessing for the success of their goals.

Moreover we pray for the good outcome of the hopes of the Palestinian people in gaining their freedom, its human rights and independence under the good leadership of His Excellency the President of the State of Palestine Mahmoud Abas Abu Mazen, for the prevailing of universal peace and especially in the sensitive Middle East region.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude and respect to the School Manager Mr. Richard Zananiri, who is responsible for the great percentage of the school's success, who works wholeheartedly for the progress and development of this school. We would also like to thank all of you and the staff of this Greek Orthodox institution, with great love and Patriarchal prayers and blessings.

THEOPHILOS III
PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

GRADUATION CEREMONY OF ST. DEMETRIOS' SCHOOL

The thirtieth graduation ceremony for twenty two graduates from St. Demetrios School of the Patriarchate took place at the Notre Dame Hotel Reception Hall by the New Gate of Jerusalem on Friday afternoon, April 28/May 11, 2018.

The graduation ceremony of the School honoured with His presence H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, the Greek Consulate with Consul Mrs. Katherine Tzima, the representative of the President of the Palestinian State Mr. Abbas Abu Mazen, the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the President of the Schools of the Patriarchate Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos, the member of the Educational Committee Dean Priest Issa Mousleh, other Hagiotaphite Fathers, the teachers of this School, the graduates' parents and relatives.

The School Manager and teacher Mr. Samir Zananiri addressed His Beatitude thanking Him for the support to the School and

also three students thanked Him in Arabic, Greek and English.

The program of the ceremony included national songs, dances and poems in Arabic and Greek, and video clips from the school life and other school events.

His Beatitude addressed the contributors to the ceremony through Priest Issa Mousleh in Arabic. At the end of the ceremony His Beatitude gave the graduation certificates to each one of the graduates, wishing them every success in their professional or academic life.

From Secretariat-General

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NOVICE OF THE PATRIARCHAL SCHOOL OF ZION RECEIVES THE BLESSING TO THE MONASTIC CASSOCK

On Saturday noon April 8/21, 2018, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos blessed the monastic cassock to the novice of the Patriarchal School of Zion

Constantinos Papadopoulos, at the presence of Hagiotaphite Fathers, the novice's parents and one of his brothers.

On the occasion of this joyful event, His Beatitude spoke about the mission and history of the Patriarchate and the Brotherhood at the All-holy Shrines, to which the new novice is called to serve in the future.

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SCHOOL EVENT FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MARCH 25, 1821

On Monday afternoon, March 13/26, 2018, the national celebration of March 25, 1821 was honoured with a school event at the Patriarchal School of Zion.

The celebration was attended by the Patriarchal Commissioner Most Reverend Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, the Chairman of the School Board Geronda Sacristan Most Reverend Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos with some of the Greek Consulate members, monks and nuns of the Patriarchate, members of the Greek Community in Jerusalem and

pilgrims.

The event schedule included a foreword by the School Director Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos, the festal speech by Science Teacher Mr. Nikolaos Souliotis, recitation of texts and poems and a short play related to the Revolution, as well as videos relevant to the historic events of 1821.

The well organized school event brought back to the memory of the spectators the sufferings of the Greeks, who were oppressed for 400 years by the Turkish yoke, and their heroic fight in self-denial. The Greeks offered their properties, fought in the battle fields and sacrificed their lives, resulting in the national spring and resurrection of the Nation. There was special commemoration of names of friends of Greeks and of heroes of the Revolution, such as Papaflessas, Kolokotronis, Nikitaras, Bouboulina, M. Mavrogenous, Athanasios Diakos and the Holy Clergymen.

At the end of the event the Patriarchal Commissioner and the Consul General congratulated all active participants.

A festal reception was offered at the School reception hall.

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CHRISTIANS PROTEST AGAINST ILLEGITIMATE CHURCH TAXATION DECISION BY JERUSALEM MUNICIPALITY

On Saturday February 4/17, 2018, hundreds of Christians rallied in support of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the rest of the Jerusalem Churches against the recent tax measures (Arnona) imposed by the Israeli Jerusalem Municipality on the Holy Churches and their adjacent buildings. These tax measures are a flagrant violation of the Status Quo of Jerusalem, which has been established by the long-term sacred history and respected by the many rulers of Jerusalem over the past decades.

The peaceful protest, was followed by a rally that was launched at the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem through the Christian Quarter and in the area before St. Helen's gates and the Metochion of Gethsemane opposite the Holy Sepulchre. Protesters then roamed around the Holy Sepulcher Church while chanting against the Municipality measures.

After their march, leaders of the groups participating in the rally were received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III at the Patriarchate Headquarters. His Beatitude explained to them that governments so far have respected the tax exemption rights of the Patriarchate and thanked them for their honest and devout support.

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THE CUTTING OF THE NEW YEAR CAKE AT THE GREEK CLUB IN JERUSALEM

The cutting of the New Year 2018 Cake of the Greek Community of Jerusalem took place at the Greek Club in West Jerusalem at 6.00 p.m. on Saturday, January 14/27, 2018. The Club has been donated by the memorable Hagiotaphite Elder Sacristan of the Holy Sepulchre Archimandrite Euthymios.

The ceremony was honoured by the presence of the Consul General of Greece Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos, who wished health, strength, progress and success to the Greek Community of Jerusalem, with the support of Greece and himself.

The New Year Cake was cut by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, wishing an auspicious, peaceful and blessed New Year, by the blessing of the Incarnate for our sake Jesus Christ and the long term support of the Patriarchate, and then He distributed the pieces of cake to the members of the Community.

The President of the Community Mr. Anastasios Damianos thanked His Beatitude and the Consul General for their presence and wished the New Year to be a year of progress for the Greek

Community in the Old and the New Jerusalem.

From Secretariat-General

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MEMBERS FROM THE PATRIARCHATE'S CONGREGATION EXPRESS THEIR SUPPORT TO THE PATRIARCHATE

On Friday January 13/26, 2018, a group of thirty faithful from various areas of the Patriarchate's jurisdiction – Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Beit Jalla, Beit Sahour – visited the Patriarchate, and expressed their support to the institution of the Patriarchate as the first Church and mother of Churches. They also expressed their support specifically to His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos.

A while later on the same day, a group of thirty young people from the town Zababdeh of Samaria, also members of the Congregation, visited the Patriarchate. Likewise, they thanked His Beatitude for supporting their spiritual and material needs and asked for further help from the Patriarchate

regarding student scholarships, social activities and the building of their new Church.

His Beatitude thanked them for their support and cooperation with the Patriarchate and offered them blessings from Jerusalem.

From Secretariat-General

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