

ST JOHN HOSTEL SETTLERS VIOLATE PILGRIMAGE STATUS AGAIN

On Sunday, the 31st of October/13th of November and Monday the 1st/14th of November 2016, settlers-invaders of St John Hostel, members of the Ateret Cohanim organization, misinterpreting and distorting a temporary agreement signed between the Patriarchate's legal consultants and their own legal consultants, entered a room that does not belong to the hostel they have been occupying, but to the building complex of Gethsemane Dependency, and set to work there by force and arbitrarily, whilst preventing the Patriarchate's workman to work as agreed.

Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem went to the site on Monday, accompanied by Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, the Greek Consul to Jerusalem, Mr Christos Sofianopoulos, Dragoman Archimandrite Mathew, and other Hagiotaphite Fathers. There, they strongly protested against the Hostel's settlers, whilst also calling the Israeli Police.

The Police, represented by the Chief Inspector Liaision Officer for Christian Communities and Affairs Mr. Johnny Kassabri, and Mr. Doron Turgeman rightly placed itself on the side of the signed agreement. Faced with the settlers' denial to stop working, the Police ordered suspension of the works until the agreement be made clear.

When, on Monday evening, the Legal Consultants of the two sides failed to reach an agreement, His Beatitude asked for the Police's vigilance in terms of complying with the suspension order, whilst instructing the Patriarchate's consultants to seek justice in the courts towards preventing

the settlers' aim to change the pilgrimage status that includes the Dependency of Gethsemane before finally moving to the Court of the Church of the Resurrection.

From the Secretariat-General



ISRAELI SETTLERS VIOLATE STATUS QUO IN THE CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

On the morning of Tuesday, the 26th of October/8th of November, St Demetrius feast-day, Israeli settlers, members of the Ateret Cohanim extreme right organization, striving to liberate the Holy Land from non-Jewish elements and, in the same spirit, seizing Patriarchal property opposite the Church of the Resurrection in 1991, namely St John Hostel – in breach of a judicial agreement and deceiving the Israeli Police in Jerusalem, set an iron fence and broke the roof on the Dependency of Gethsemane opposite the Church of the Resurrection in order to gain access inside.

Hagiotaphite Fathers, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Archimandrite Mathew and others, led by His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, strongly protested to the Israeli Police on the breach of a court to maintain the situation in the hostel, as well as on the violation of the status quo in the Church of the Resurrection, seeing that the aforesaid chapel stands within its area. The Israeli Police, in collaboration with the Patriarchate,

removed settlers from the room whereas, on the following day, the issue was resolved by means of a court order.

On the morning of Wednesday, the 27th of October/9th of November 2016, Patriarch Theophilos, accompanied by Greek Consul Christos Sofianopoulos and the aforementioned Hagiotaphite Fathers, in collaboration with the Israeli Police, agreed to have legal advisors of both sides work together to restore changes on the condition that the pilgrimage status will henceforth be protected from violation.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/eTRPOVvNHPs>



HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM PARTICIPATES IN “BYZANTINE THESSALONIKI” CONFERENCE

On Sunday, the 24th of October/6th of November 2016, H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, accompanied by the Elder Secretary-General, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, and Archdeacon Markos, led the Divine Liturgy at the magnificent St Demetrius Church in Thessaloniki, having as concelebrants H.B. Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus, Metropolitan Anthimos of Thessaloniki, and other Prelates.

The Divine Liturgy was held on the conclusion of the

Conference on the city's Byzantine ecclesiastical heritage. During lunch, His Beatitude spoke in Greek, see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/gr/2016/11/06/40580>

During the Divine Liturgy, Patriarch Theophilos delivered a sermon, referring specifically to the Apostle Paul. Paul, His Beatitude said, had never known Christ during His presence on earth, but was taught the mysteries of God. "Such mysteries enlightened his mind, expanded his horizon and, mainly, fashioned his heart in perfect love and dedication to Christ, so that he denied everything, even his own life, in order to devote himself to evangelism, demonstrating zeal that exceeded that of the other Apostles".

Though he previously adhered fervently to Jewish laws and principles, he turned this zeal to the basis "on which Christ built the new relationship, guiding him to the right path". His earnestness, the Patriarch said, we must all emulate in our daily lives, proclaiming in deed the testament of Christ. We must, His Beatitude added, willingly carry our own cross, obeying the Lord's advice to stand firm in the face of adversities.

After the divine Liturgy, the Most Reverend Anthimos, Metropolitan of Thessaloniki, hosted lunch in honour of H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and all representatives of sister Churches at the Liknon restaurant in the suburbs.

In the spirit of hospitality, Metropolitan Ioannis of Langadas, Liti and Rentinin, welcomed His Beatitude and Entourage at his Holy Bishopric.

On the evening of Sunday, Patriarch Theophilos sat at a dinner hosted in His honour by the Most Reverend Barnabas, Metropolitan of Neapolis and Stavroupolis, and Metropolitan Pavlos of Drama, who offered H.B. the amount of 5.000 euro for the restoration and conservation of the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulchre.

On the morning of Monday, the 25th of October/7th of November 2016, His Beatitude visited the Monastery of Vlatades and the Centre of Paternal Studies that stands within its area.

There, He was warmly welcomed by the Hegoumen and Director of the Centre of Paternal Studies, Metropolitan Nikiforos of Amori.

Then Patriarch Theopilos was courteously welcomed to the Holy Bishopric of Serres and the Cathedral of Sts Taxiarchs by Metropolitan Theologos of Serres and the pious congregation of his Bishopric.

On His return to Thessaloniki, He was hosted to lunch at the “Macedonia Palace” where He was staying, before boarding Aegean Airlines to arrive in Tel Aviv and from there return to Jerusalem.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/hSn8-afC8Ck>



HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM ADDRESSES 6TH EUROMED CONFERENCE IN NICOSIA

Between Monday the 18th/31st of October and Saturday the 23rd of October/5th of November 2016, the 6th Biannual Euromed Conference takes place in Nicosia, Cyprus, at the “Filoxenia” Conference Centre. Participating in the Conference are

distinguished representatives of international foundations, organizations and institutions, i.e. UNESCO, examining ways of protection, conservation and restoration of national and religious monuments that make part of global cultural heritage.

The speakers, activities and purposes of the Conference appear in detail on the invitation forwarded by Dr Marinos Iacovides, Conference Chair, and Professor Antonia Moropoulou of the National Technical University of Athens, Co-Chairlady; also on the programme of deliberations, attached here below:

programme

invitation

The opening of the Conference was blessed by His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, on the morning of Monday the 18th/31st of October, with a speech on the emblematic restoration project of the Holy Sepulchre, conducted by the NTUA. See link:

<https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2016/10/31/27427>

The Co-Chairwoman of the Conference, Professor Antonia Moropoulou, made an on-screen presentation of the restoration works and the significance of the participation of religious dignitaries in EuroMed 2016, see link:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/pznnbcy08atm08r/05_EUROMED_Antonia%20Moropoulou_v2.pdf?dl=0

At noon of Monday, the 18th/31st of October, His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus hosted lunch for Patriarch Theophilos and His Entourage, Metropolitan Timotheos of Bostra, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Ms Moropoulou and Hierodeacon Markos.

Also in the framework of the Conference, a reception was

hosted by the Most Reverend Timotheos, Metropolitan of Bostra,
on the evening of Monday, the 31st of October.

From the Secretariat-General

BLESSING OF THE WATER RITES AT THE PATRIARCHATE'S ARABIC SCHOOLS

On the occasion of the beginning of the new school year for 2016-2017, blessing of the water rites were performed between the 3rd/16th of October to the 9th/22nd of October 2016 at the Patriarchate's Arabic Schools, namely: St Demetrios in Jerusalem, The Shepherds in Beit Sahour, St George in Ramallah and Taybeh in the town of Taybeh, adjacent to Ramallah.

In the context of the ceremony, the school Principals and teachers, as well as the retired Chairman of Arabic Schools, Archimandrite Ieronymos, collaborated with the new Chairman, Archimandrite Mathew, the member of the School Board, f. Issa Mousleh, and Secretary Fandi Abdelnour, who conveyed to both teachers and students the blessings of His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem.

From the Secretariat-General



EYDAP REPRESENTATIVES PARTICIPATE IN RESTORATION WORKS ON THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

On Friday, the 8th/21st of October 2016, representatives of EYDAP, the Athens Water Supply and Sewerage Company, namely Antonios Angelopoulos (Geophysicist), Elias Karambelas (Mechanical Engineer) and Demetrios Tambakeras (Robotic Systems Manager) visited Patriarche Theophilos of Jerusalem. The visit was realized on the initiative of Professor A. Moropoulou, coordinator of restoration works on the Holy Sepulchre. Present at the meeting was Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, Elder Sacristan.

EYDAP's representatives were brought to date on the restoration works and the project's religious and cultural significance and received His Beatitude's blessings so as to work, trace problems and conduct a study on the sewerage situation under the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulchre.

They went on to visit the site, accompanied by the Elder Sacristan.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/ALKJRtI7KWI>



THE LATIN PATRIARCH IN JERUSALEM VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday, the 7th/20th of October 2016, the recently-appointed Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem (former Custos of the Holy Land), the Very Reverend Father Pierbattista Pizzaballa, visited the Patriarchate for the first time.

The new Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem was welcomed by H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the presence of Hagiotaphite Fathers.

During the visit, Father Pierbattista extended thanks to His Beatitude for having sent Archbishop Nektarios of Anthedon, the Patriarchate's representative in Constantinople, to represent Him at his recent ordination as Bishop in Bergamo, Italy. He also thanked Patriarch Theophilos for honouring him by His presence during his inauguration at the Latin Patriarchate, and for everything He offers to Christians in the Holy Land.

In His reply, His Beatitude expressed satisfaction over His harmonious collaboration with the Very Reverend Father Pierbattista in the course of his diaconate at the Roman Catholic Church as Custos of the Holy Land for three consecutive tenures. Patriarch Theophilos said He was content for the continuation of this collaboration that can heal the wounds of the past and resolve the problems facing Christians as a result of this century's situations.

On the occasion of the visit, His Beatitude offered the Latin Patriarch a pectoral and a table cross.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/dl0FAxgzP1E>



ROMAN CATHOLIC AND LUTHERAN OFFICIALS VISIT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Wednesday, the 6th/19th of October 2016, Roman Catholic officials from the Synnod of Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, Cardinal Reinhard Marxh, and from the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, Bishop Heinrich Betford-Strohm, whilst on a visit to the Holy Land in search of Christianity's roots, on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, visited the Patriarchate. Their aim, they said, was unity to the extent possible.

The officials were welcomed by H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the presence of Hagiotaphite Fathers. His Beatitude talked of the significance of Jerusalem for the three monotheistic religions, especially Christianity, being the city where Christ was Crucified and Resurrected; He also spoke of the importance of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem, as witness of Christian truth on the very site of its revelation. Finally, He referred to the significance of the ongoing restoration works on the Holy Aedacula.

During the visit, the Bishops offered Patriarch Theophilos a fourpartite cross, symbol of their celebrated anniversary. His Beatitude offered an icon of Theotokos Jerusalemite and of the Aedacula of the Holy Sepulchre of the Resurrected Christ.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/xr8e8cGNaKk>



THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY SPONSORS THE RESTORATION OF THE HOLY AEDICULA

On Monday, the 4th/17th of October 2016, the Heads of the three major Christian Communities, namely Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, f. Francesco, Custos in the Holy Land, and the Armenian Patriarch in Jerusalem, H.B. Nourhan Manougian, and their entourages, met with the President of the Palestinian State, His Excellency Mr Mahmoud Abbas Abu-Mazen. During the meeting, Patriarch Theophilos addressed the President on behalf of the Patriarchate and the other two Communities. In Arabic, the address may be reached here: <http://www.jo-newsgate.net/ar/2016/10/17/24794>

In his reply speech, the President expressed his joy over the meeting and for the peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims within the Palestinian State. He also posited that Christians are not considered a majority in this State, but its integral part, that they in fact preceded Muslims in the Holy Land, and that Christian Churches are considered by Muslims as holy sites, just like their mosques. Therefore, Mr Abbas added, the Palestinian Authority offers 150.000 euro as contribution to the restoration project on the Aedicula of the

Holy Sepulchre.

The Heads of the three Communities thanked the President for his donation and wished him every success in his efforts to complete the recognition process of the State of Palestine.

From the Secretariat-General

MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE AEDICULA OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

On Monday, the 27th of September/10th of October 2016, the members of the Steering Committee on the conservation and restoration project of the Holy Sepulchre met at the Patriarchate.

The Committee is made up of His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem; the Custos of the Holy Land, f. Francesco Paton, and the Armenian Patriarch Nourhan Manougian, with his attendants.

At the meeting, Patriarch Theophilos informed His two partners in the project, Franciscans and Armenians, on the financial and administrative transparency of the project, acknowledged by all.

His Beatitude went on to set out a number of requirements for the future, namely:

a) the creation of an opening on the rock of the Holy

Sepulchre for its own protection by means of suitable materials, b) the opening of a door offering a view into the Sepulchre's interior, c) repairs on the underground sewerage system without compromising the Holy Sepulchre and the Aedicula.

The other two Communities agreed on the points raised by His Beatitude and approved the proposal to prioritise the study on the repairs of the sewerage system.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/I1onSKpM3qg>