

CANONIZATION OF ST JOHN THE NEW CHOSEBITE

On Sunday, the 18th/31st of January 2016, the ceremony of the Canonization of Hosios John the New Chosebite by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem took place at the Monastery of Sts George and John the Chosebites.

During the divine Liturgy, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, read the Canonization decree, as follows:

SYNODICAL ACT OF CANONIZATION

OF HOSIOS JOHN THE NEW CHOSEBITE

The area of the Cherith brook and the Monastery of St George Chosebite within it, the place where we hold today this Joint Patriarchal Liturgy, have proven to be sites of revelation of God's miracles for the salvation of man since the days of the Old Testament. This is where, to escape the wrath of king Ahab, Prophet Elias sought refuge, called by God: *"Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there"*. (1 Kings 17, 2-4). In the same area, Joshua asked God to make the sun *"stand still over Gibeon and the moon over the Valley of Aijalon, so the sun stood still and the moon stopped"* (Joshua 10, 122-13).

In the early years of the New Testament, the holy and righteous Joachim and Anna prayed there and became Ancestors of God as by divine intervention they were liberated from the shame of childlessness and bore a child, Maria the ever virgin, through whom the Only Begotten Son and Logos of God, Jesus Christ, became incarnate by the Holy Spirit.

During the first years of the monastic angelic community,

shown to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, this area was inhabited by the five hosioid fathers of the Monastery of Choseba: Promos, Elias, Yannaios, Aian and Zenon, who led a holy life to sanctification.

After them, in the 5th c. AD, St John, Bishop of Caesarea, Palestine, an opponent of the heresy of Monophysitism, expanded this first skete into a large monastic centre. Then, men, churches and cells were lost to the Persian rage in 614 AD. From the ruins and the ashes of destruction, St George the Chosebite, hailing from Cyprus, went on to restore the Monastery and turn it once more into a pole of attraction and a monastic centre for hundreds of monks.

[...]

In the mid-20th c., God blessed the Monastery *par excellence* through the presence of His chosen vessel, St John the New Chosebite. Leaving behind his earthly homeland of Romania, relatives and friends, he arrived in the Holy Land as a pilgrim and received the monastic schema at the Monastery of St Savva the Sanctified, where he would live a monk's life for a decade. He then went on to lead an ascetic life at this Monastery of Choseba, hence why he has been called "the Chosebite". He also lived in the desert of the Jordan river, emulating the example of the Baptist and subjecting himself to asceticism, fasting, vigilance and prayer. [...] Those who have known hosioid John attest to this day his holy life and the help he offered through prayer and spiritual guidance. Others attest that after his dormition they were cured of their illnesses by his mediation. [...]

For these reasons, and for the strengthening of the faithful of the Mother of Churches and those pilgrims who have come to the Monastery of Choseba from across the world, and to the glory of our Triadic God, the Holy and Sacred Synod has decided to sanctify St John the New Chosebite and place him in

the Canon of Saints of the Church of Jerusalem, his memory to be observed on the 28th of July of each year, the day of the translation of his holy relics.

In the Holy City of Jerusalem, 22 December 2015

THEOPHILOS III Patriarch of Jerusalem

KYRIAKOS Metropolitan of Nazareth

ISYCHIOS Metropolitan of Kapitolias, Patriarchal Commissioner

CHRISTODOULOS Metropolitan of Eletheroupolis, Elder Dragoman

BENEDICT Metropolitan of Philadelphia

DOROTHEOS Archbishop of Avila

ARISTARCHOS Archbishop of Constantina, Elder Secretary-General

METHODIOS Archbishop of Tabor

THEOPHYLAKTOS Archbishop of Jordan

DEMETRIOS Archbishop of Ledda, Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod

PHILOUMENOS Archbishop of Pella

Archimandrite **Nektarios, Elder Kamarasis**

Archimandrite **Ioustinos**

Archimandrite **Theodoritos**

Archimandrite **Hilarion**

Archimandrite **Timotheos**

Archimandrite **Evdokimos**

Archimandrite **Galaktion**

More details about this event will be available on our website in due time.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/C8c59LUftGk>



DELEGATION FROM THE PATRIARCHATE OF ROMANIA VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday, the 17th/30th of January 2016, a 50-member delegation of the Patriarchate of Romania, consisting of priests, monks and nuns, led by the former representative of the Patriarchate of Romania to Jerusalem, the Very Reverend Bishop Timotheos, visited the Patriarchate. The purpose of their visit was to participate in the ceremony of sanctification of hosiotes John of Romania, the new Chosebite, held on Sunday the 18th/31st of January 2016.

The distinguished guests were welcomed by H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

On the occasion of their visit, the Patriarch talked to the members of the delegation of the martyr's blood of Christ, that has redeemed mankind from the attrition of death, and of the martyrdom of Christ's disciples such as Stephen the Protomartyr and James the Brother of God, but also of the Hagiotaphite Hieromartyr St Philoumenos, sanctified by the Church of Jerusalem in 2009.

There is, beyond the martyrdom of the blood, the martyrdom of a holy life as the life led by St John the Chozebite, who came to the Holy Land from Romania in order to join the Church of Jerusalem as a monk and a priest. St John has been officially ranked as a saint by the Orthodox Church.

Upon the exchange of gifts, His Beatitude gave blessings for the participation of the delegation members in the sanctification ceremony of St John the Chozebite at the Monastery of the Chozebites.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/GlencHR8wQc>



METROPOLITAN ARSENIOS OF AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday, the 17th/30th of January 2016, the Most Reverend Arsenios, Metropolitan of Austria and Hungary, visited the Patriarchate, leading a team of 50 pilgrims of his Metropolis.

The Most Reverend Metropolitan and pilgrims were welcomed by Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, in the presence of Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In the context of this meeting, an interesting discussion took place on the significance of Jerusalem as holy city that

incarnates Sacred History from the Old Testament to the years of the New Testament through the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, hence why Jerusalem invites the interest not only of religious factors but also of political ones.

The discussion was followed by an exchange of brotherly gifts and the Metropolitan's wish to officiate at the Holy Monastery of Choseba during the liturgy of the sanctification of St John the New Chosebite, at the Holy Sepulcher and Gethsemane – a wish that was promptly blessed by His Beatitude.

From the Secretariat-General

http://youtu.be/JgK_ertPBiU



JOINT PRIMATIAL SERVICE AT ST PAUL, CHAMBESY

On the morning of Sunday, the 11th/24th of January 2016, a Joint Liturgy was held at the Stavropegic Church of St Paul in Chambesy that had as participants the Primate and Heads of Delegations, as a testament of their joint faith and love and unity in Christ.

Co-officiating at the Joint Service were the Patriarchs, Archbishops and Heads of Delegations of the Churches that were not represented by Primate, with the exception of the representative of the Patriarchate of Antioch.

His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, co-

officiated at the Joint Service as fourth in rank according to the Orthodox Diptychs.

From the Secretariat-General



SPEECH OF HIS BEATITUDE THEOPHILOS OF JERUSALEM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE PRIMATES

On the afternoon of Friday, the 9th/22nd of January 2016, deliberations began at the Synaxis of the Primates of Orthodox Churches at the Stavropegic Church of St Paul in Chambesy. Deliberations began with a prayer, the introductory speech of the Chairman of the Synaxis, His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and speeches of the Primates in the order specified in the Diptychs.

His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, addressed participants in Greek. There follows an excerpt from His speech:

“The purpose of Our Synaxis is truly holy and sacred, the completion of the work that was commenced a long time ago by Our Fathers, namely the study, review and resolution of vital issues and problems facing Our flocks and Our fellow human beings across the world.

Therefore, Our Synaxis provides testament to Our unity in

Christ *“through the bond of peace”* (Ephesians 4, 3) and consolation to Christians, mercilessly persecuted today in the Middle East and other parts of the world, as well as moral strengthening for contemporary man, tested and tortured by political disunity and divisions, by the economic and moral crisis and by arbitrary and unprecedented hideous crimes against innocent souls.

Our Synaxis is similarly a manifestation not only of coexistence but also of Our affinity and correspondence as members of the same Body of Christ, the Church, bearing testament to the truth that *“each member belongs to all the others”* according to the Apostle of the Nations (Romans 12, 5); and not only that, but also that *“we suffer for one another”* as *“when one part suffers, every part suffers with it”* (1 Corinthians, 12, 26).

Therefore, placing Our trust in the education, construction and salvation of the souls of Our rational flocks, we have by the Lord Himself the authority, in the upcoming Great Pan-Orthodox Synaxis, arranged by the Synaxis of the Primate in Constantinople in March 2014, to rule on the issues that have been unanimously agreed upon and on those on which unanimity has not been reached, and assign these for further thorough study and resolution.

Thus, by order of the Lord *“shepherd my lambs”*, and the request of the Apostle of the Nations, *“no one should seek their own good, but the good of others”* (1, Corinthians 10, 24), let us exceed ourselves, let us put aside obstacles and adversities and let us be moored in the cloudless port of the Conference scheduled long ago [...]

May the Grace of the Holy Spirit be with each and every one of Us”.

From the Secretariat-General

THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM PARTICIPATES IN THE PAN- ORTHODOX SYNAXIS IN GENEVA

Between Thursday the 8th/21st of January 2016 and Thursday the 15th/28th of January 2016, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem will participate in the deliberations of the Synaxis of Autocephalous Orthodox Churches taking place at the Inter-Orthodox Center in Chambesy, Geneva, towards preparing the topics to be discussed at the Pan-Orthodox Conference on the feast of Pentecost 2016, as had been decided by the Heads of Churches in Constantinople in March 2014.

Patriarch Theophilos represents the Patriarchate in the Synaxis, along with the Elder Secretary-General, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Patriarchal Commissioner in Constantinople, Archbishop Nektarios of Anthedon, Archdeacon Evlogios, and Mr Theodoros Yangou, professor of Canon Law at the Faculty of Theology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and advisor to the Patriarch.

Followers of our website will be kept updated on the Patriarchate's participation in the proceedings of the Synaxis.

From the Secretariat-General

CYPRIOΤ HEALTH MINISTER VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Wednesday, the 7th/20th of January 2016, the Minister of Health of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr George Pamborides, visited the Patriarchate. He was accompanied by his associates, Dr Olga Kalakouta, Chief Medical Officer, Ms Anastasia Anthousi, Head of the Minister's Office, Mr Anastasios Ioannou, the Ambassador of Cyprus to Israel, Ms Thessalia Salina-Shambos, and Ms Louiza Varaklas.

His Excellency the Minister was welcomed by H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

Mr Pamborides thanked the Patriarch for offering him the honour and blessing to visit the Patriarchate and the Holy Sepulcher, whilst on a visit to Israel, the purpose of which was to meet with Israel's health officials.

In response, His Beatitude expressed His joy over the minister's visit, which demonstrates the harmonious relations between the Church and the State of Cyprus and the Patriarchate, which have borne a number of Cypriot Hagiotaphite Fathers, St Philoumenos the Hieromartyr being the most eminent amongst them.

Upon the conclusion of addresses and the exchange of gifts, the Minister went on to venerate at the Church of the Resurrection.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/iiCCysr0JHk>



PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM ROMANIA VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Wednesday, the 7th/20th of January 2016, a delegation of the Romanian House of Representatives, made of House President, Mr Libiu Nicolae Dragnea and his wife, Ms Gabriela Firea, Mr Petru Gabriel Vlase and the Romanian ambassador to Israel, Ms Andreea Păstârnac, visited the Patriarchate.

The delegation were welcomed by H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In the context of the meeting, the head of the delegation explained that the purpose of their meeting was the creation of social, commercial and political relations with the state of Israel, and that they consider it their obligation to visit the Holy Sepulcher, and an honour to visit the Patriarchate.

Patriarch Theophilos referred to the harmonious relations between the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Church of Romania during the Medieval period, modern times and today, underlining the need to preserve such relations to the benefit of both Churches and Romanian pilgrims to the Holy Land, that I pastorally safeguarded by the Patriarchate.

Upon the exchange of gifts, the Romanian delegation went on to venerate at the Church of the Resurrection.

From the Secretary-General

<httpv://youtu.be/0tpGgalBFq4>



ST ZION PATRIARCHAL SCHOOL BECOMES ONCE MORE SUBJECT TO ATTACK BY UNKNOWNNS

In the early hours after midnight on Sunday the 4th/17th of January 2016, the Patriarchal School of St Zion became once more subject to an attack by unknowns.

The perpetrators had attempted to break the lock on the School's northern iron gate but failed; they went on to write slogans on the door which they then overwrote so that they wouldn't be legible.

Early in the morning, the School's students informed the Patriarchate of the violations.

The event, which comes after a series of similar incidents against the School, took place two days after the Patriarch's visit there. After the pie-cutting ceremony, His Beatitude visited the open area to the south of the School, property of the Patriarchate, wherein stands the St Pentecost chapel, and inspected the rearrangement works carried out in collaboration with the Municipality of Jerusalem. He was accompanied by the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis, Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, Metropolitan Isychios of

Kapitolias, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Architect of the Church of the Resurrection, Mr Theodoros Mitropoulos, the Principal, Mr Nikolaos Souliotis, and students from the School.

The Patriarchate irrevocably condemns this unacceptable violent action and intends to pursue legal action for the protection of the School.

From the Secretariat-General



CUTTING ST BASIL'S PIE AT THE PATRIARCHATE (2016)

At 5:00 pm of Wednesday, the 31st of December 2015/13th of January 2016, New Year's Eve according to the Julian Calendar, the traditional pie-cutting ceremony took place at the Patriarchate's hall. In attendance at the ceremony were Hagiotaphite Primates, Hieromonks, monks and novices, nuns, the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem with his esteemed wife, as well as members of the Greek Consulate and of the Greek Parish of Jerusalem. The humble ceremony began with the troparion of the Circumcision of the Lord and of St Basil, and was followed by the Patriarch's address in Greek.

In His speech, His Beatitude quote St Paul in saying *"But you are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many*

witnesses" (Tim. 1, 6, 11-12). And: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 6, 12).

The Patriarch went on to bless St Basil's pie, wishing "a favourable and blessed New Year" for everyone before distributing the pie amongst the guests. Students of the Patriarchal School sang carols for the Nativity and the New Year whilst the choir of St James the Brother of God sang the Apolytikia in Arabic. Jerusalemite dentist, Mr Ioannis Tlil, got the piece with the lucky coin.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/jmJ0aj07t7o>

