

SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS FOR GREEK NATIONAL DAY

On the afternoon of Wednesday, the 12th/25th of March 2015, the anniversary of the Greek Independence Day, namely the 25th of March 1821, was celebrated at the Patriarchal Hieratical School of the Patriarchate, on the hill of St Sion.

The celebration was attended by Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem. His Beatitude was accompanied by the Patriarchal Commissioner, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias; the Elder Secretary General, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Elder Sacristan and President of the School Board, Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, members of the Greek Parish of Jerusalem, Hagiotaphite Fathers and nuns.

The ceremony included the day's panegyric speech by the Principal, f. Nikolaos Zervis, recitation of poems, a play and patriotic songs.

Poems and songs alike showcased the sufferings of the Greek nation – persecutions, deprivation of religion and other freedoms, decapitations, seizure of ownership – and its resilience with the aid of the Church, the Great Teachers of the Greek People and the Secret School. The Fathers of the Nation, Germanus, Bishop of Old Patras, Kolokotronis, Karaiskakis, Papaflessas, Kanaris and other fighters sacrificed all they had for the freedom of the Greek race. After eight years of relentless struggling, freedom was achieved by God's help, and the establishment of the new Greek State followed in 1832.

Before the end of the ceremony, both the Patriarch and the Greek Consul-General congratulated the Principal, teachers and students at the School for a successful celebration of the

Greek national day.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/80f2-hda0Rk>



DOXOLOGY ON GREEK NATIONAL DAY – 25TH OF MARCH

At 10:00 am on Wednesday, the 12th/25th of March 2015, Doxology was performed at the katholikon of the Church of the Resurrection on the anniversary of the 25th of March 1821, Greek national day.

Doxology was performed as gratitude for the liberation of the Greek Nation from the bitter Turkish slavery, and as supplication for the atonement and repose of our Fathers, the National Martyrs who had fought and died for the freedom of Greece.

Patriarch Theophilos led the service with co-officiating Hagiotaphite Primates dressed in a pallium and a stole, and Hieromonks dressed in a stole. The Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis, attended the service with associates of his, members of the Greek Parish of Jerusalem, fathers and nuns of the Patriarchate.

Doxology was followed by procession to the Patriarchate, where the Greek Consul-General addressed guests in Greek.

His Beatitude also spoke in Greek. In Arabic, His address may

be reached here:
<https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2015/03/25/11183>

A reception followed at the Patriarchate, hosted by the Greek Consulate-General.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/BCyvCqjnvRw>



THE RANK OF ARCHIMANDRITE BESTOWED ON HAGIOTAPHITES

On Thursday, the 7th/19th of March 2015, Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem bestowed the rank of Archimandrite on the following Hagiotaphite hieromonks: Leontios, Hegoumen of the Community of Rafidia; Paisios, Hegoumen at the Monastery of the Prophet Elias; Makarios, Hegoumen at the Monastery of St Nicodemus of the Lentils, and Thaddaeus, serving at the Church of the Resurrection.

Upon conferring the specific rank upon the aforementioned Hagiotaphites, His Beatitude said that it is fair and proper, in view of His Name-Day, that He should bestow this promotion on those Hieromonks who, during the years of their diaconate, have demonstrated humility, patience, obedience and fruitfulness, advising them to wear and honour the Cross as the Christians' prize and weapon against any opposite power.

The promoted brothers thanked His Beatitude for this distinction and pledged to put their *officium* to the service

of Christ, the Church and the Holy Shrines.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/Ucr1xPHXNwA>



A DELEGATION OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (WCC) VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On the Second Sunday of the Great Lent, the 23rd of February/8th of March 2015, a ten-member Delegation of the World Council of Churches, under its Secretary-General, Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit and its Vice Moderator, Metropolitan Gennadius of Sassima, of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Deputy Secretary-General, Mr Georgios Laimopoulos, and: Dr. Agnes Abouom, moderator, Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, vice moderator, Dr. Isabel Phiri, Ms Marrienne Ejdersten and Mrs Elaine Dykes, visited the Patriarchate whilst on a visit to the Holy Land, Israel and Palestine.

The Delegation was received by Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, in the presence of Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Assistant Dragoman, Archimandrite f. Bartholomew, and other Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In the context of the meeting, an interesting discussion took place on the current political instability in Jerusalem and the rest of the Holy Land on the aftermath of incidents of violence; also, on the need to jointly carry on the

peacemaking, conciliatory work of the Churches.

It was precisely in support of this work that the Delegation came to the Holy Land for a pilgrimage, as pointed out by the Council's Secretary-General and moderators. Addressing the guests, His Beatitude said that Churches struggle to maintain the religious character of Jerusalem and urge its residents to emulate the holiness of the events that had occurred on the Holy Land. This holiness is also pursued by the members of the Delegation over their pilgrimage.

His Beatitude also referred to efforts undertaken by the Patriarchate toward the reorganization and upgrade of the Middle East Council of Churches that have so far been met with success.

The Council, He said, is a means of expression for the voice of Christians. Also significant for the promotion of peace is the Council of the Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, which brings together Christian, Jewish and Muslim politicians as well as the religious representatives of the three Monotheistic religions towards a resolution of the political problem in the Middle East. In terms of the exploitation of religion as a weapon of political conflict, it was said at the meeting that religion must be used against this phenomenon and in favour of the prevalence of peace. Jordan also participates in this effort.

It was suggested, at the meeting, that one of the future conventions of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches take place in Jerusalem.

The Delegation went on to continue its pilgrimage in the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, where it was received by the Patriarchal Commissioner, Archbishop Theophylaktos of Jordan. At noon, they were hosted to lunch offered by His Beatitude at St Gabriel Hotel.

From the Secretariat-General



KANA COMMUNITY VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday, the 22nd of February/7th of March 2015, approximately fifty members of the Rum Orthodox, Arab-speaking flock of the Patriarchate in Kana, Galilee, led by Archimandrite Chrystostomos, Hegoumen at the Shrine, visited the Patriarchate.

The Hegoumen and the group of pilgrims were courteously welcomed by Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, former Hegoumen at the Shrine for a period of seven years. During the meeting, the Patriarch blessed the guests, offering words of advice.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/dSuFi6J7Mhk>



DEACON ORDAINED AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On the morning of Saturday, the 15th/28th of February 2015, commemoration day for the miracle of the “kollyva” of St Theodore of Tyre, the Most Reverend Kyriakos, Metropolitan of

Nazareth, ordained Mr Imad-Spyridon Souha as deacon during a divine liturgy on the Horrendous Golgotha, so that he may serve the Rum Orthodox Community of the Patriarchate in Turan, Northern Israel, near Tiberias.

The service and ordination were attended by Hagiotaphite Fathers, pilgrims and relatives of the ordained from Nazareth.

After mass, the Prelatic Retinue returned to the Patriarchates to pay their respects to Patriarch Theophilos, who went on to bless the newly ordained deacon.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/ShGoHI6Z1Kw>

<http://youtu.be/zBwelBbcYds>



UNKNOWN MEN LAUNCH ARSON ATTACK ON SCHOOL OF SION

At 4:00 am of Thursday the 13th/26th of February 2015, two unknown masked men deposited burning material in the building of the Patriarchal Hieratical School of St Sion through a bathroom window in the east wing which is adjacent to the Patriarchate's cemetery.

The complex, which includes the Church of the Holy Trinity, houses the Hieratical School and the boarding house for high school and lyceum students trained to join the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood.

The fire was perceived by the Israeli Police and Fire Department which rushed to extinguish it, thus preventing human losses. Damages have been caused to the building, including profane graffiti sprayed on the walls.

Similar violations and attacks, though not arson, were committed over the past two years by extreme Israeli elements in the outer area of the School, namely the open-air Chapel and the playing field from where two hundred saplings, offered by Keren Kayemeth, Israel, were uprooted.

This recent attack has been recorded on the School's video camera. The Director of the Boarding House, Hierodeacon Dionysios, who was asleep at the time of the arson, notified the Patriarchate of the incident.

His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, travelled to the scene in the morning, accompanied by Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda and other Hagiotaphite Fathers, as well as the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem. The Israeli Police was there during the visit, in order to pursue investigations of the offence. Also present was the representative of the Israeli Ministry of Public Safety, Mr Mordechai Zaken.

The Patriarchate unequivocally condemns this unacceptable act of violence against the School on the Hill of the Holy Sion, whence the first Church of the world set out, and keeps praying and acting towards religious conciliation and coexistence in the Holy Land.

The incident was announced on the morning of the aforementioned day on the Israeli Radio, after which the Elder Secretary-General was asked to provide further information on the event.

Within the day, the Patriarchate received expressions of support by friends of peace. The Israeli President, Mr Reuven Rivlin, condemned this act of persecution during a telephone

conversation with His Beatitude. Representatives of the Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian Relations (JCJCR), both rabbis and laymen, extended their support to the Patriarch, whereas the American Consul-General to Jerusalem made a personal visit to the Patriarchate.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/3T3FPKmvGMQ>



HIS BEATITUDE THEOPHILOS, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM, DECORATES THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN OF VERIA

On Thursday the 6th/19th of February 2015, H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, conferred on the Most Reverend Panteleimon, Metropolitan of Veria, Naousa and Campania, the honorary title of the Supreme Taxiarch of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher. Metropolitan Panteleimon was accompanying a group of pilgrims in a pilgrimage along the Holy Shrines.

The award of the honorary distinction took place in the context of a humble ceremony at the Patriarchate in recognition of the Metropolitan's contribution to the progress of church life and the science of the theology of the New Testament by establishing the "Pavlia" event; also, for his support of the Patriarchate by organizing pilgrimage tours to

the Holy Land.

Moved, the Most Reverend Metropolitan of Veria thanked His Beatitude for this heartening honor and promised to continue working for the elevation of the spiritual life of the members of his Bishopric, as well as carry on his activities in support of the struggles of the Mother of Churches in the Holy Land.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/70KhAJaEbZU>



THE METROPOLITANS OF VERIA AND KITROUS VISIT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday, the 1st/14th of February 2015, the Very Reverend Metropolitans Panteleimon of Veria and Georgios of Kitrous visited the Patriarchate, heading two groups of pilgrims numbering approximately sixty members each.

The Metropolitans and accompanying pilgrims were received by H.B. Theophilos in the presence of Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In the context of the visit, the two Metropolitans addressed the Patriarch, extending their thanks to God for enabling them to carry out the pilgrimage, and to the Patriarch for courteously welcoming the pilgrims.

In His response, His Beatitude expressed joy for meeting with two distinguished Prelates from the Church of Greece, and for the benefit reserved for pilgrims, as well as for our Orthodox flock, from pilgrimage tours along the Holy Shrines.

On the occasion of the meeting, the Metropolitan of Veria offered His Beatitude a volume commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the "Pavleia" event, thanking Him for the Patriarchate's participation. Metropolitan Georgios of Kitrous, in his first visit to the Holy Land, offered the Patriarch the medal he himself had been given one year ago, on the occasion of his election and ordination as Prelate.

From the Secretariat-General



THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM MEETS WITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN JORDAN

On the afternoon of Friday, the 24th of January/6th of February 2015, Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem met with approximately twenty members of the Executive Committee of the recently appointed Advisory Committee in Amman, Jordan. The Patriarch was accompanied by Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, Patriarchal Commissioner; Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Elder Secretary-General; Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella, Patriarchal Commissioner in Northern Jordan; the Hegoumen in Fhes, Archimandrite Ieronymos, and Ms Wafa Gousous, M.E.C.C. Director of the Amman Office.

The Committee has been set up by Patriarch Theophilos of select members of the flock in Jordan, in order to collaborate with the Patriarchate towards the investigation and settlement of problems facing its flock, and the consolidation of its unity.

The Executive Committee was headed by its Chairman, Kamal Abu Jaber, and Vice-Chairman Munther Haddadit.

At the meeting, members of the Committee greeted the Patriarch's visit as a blessing and moral enhancement for Jordan's Orthodox flock and as a token of support of all Christians in Jordan.

On His part, His Beatitude pointed out a series of questions in need of settlement, i.e. the frequency of His visits to Jordan and His meetings with the flock there, the setting up of Press Center for the promotion of the Patriarchate's work against its denigrators, the foundation of a Center of Orthodox Studies and of a School for Clerics, the arrangement of press conferences on the work of the Patriarchate, the setting up of an Audit Committee, the convening of the plenary session of the Advisory Committee, and meetings with the Patriarchate's critics aimed at reuniting them with the rest of the flock in a single body accepting the Patriarch of Jerusalem as Christ, because as a Primate, the Patriarch is as Christ on earth.

His Beatitude carefully listened to the Committee's opinions, even those that were unfavourable, and said that in His view, priority should be placed on founding schools in Salt and Karak and supporting Christians against abandoning their homes in the Middle East, as well providing support to the Hashemite family in its fight against violence and for the preservation of truth.

At the end of the meeting, His Beatitude and His retinue left for Karak, Jordan, to offer their condolences to the relatives

of the brutally executed Jordan pilot Maaz al-Kassasbeh, who hailed from Karak.

On the following day, Saturday the 25th of January/7th of February 2015, His Beatitude returned to the city of Karak in order to inspect reparation and renovation works carried out at the Church of the Patriarchate's Greek Orthodox Arab-speaking Community.

From the Secretariat-General

