

HIS BEATITUDE LIGHTS CHRISTMAS TREE IN THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

On Friday the 6th/19th of December 2014, His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, lit the Christmas tree in the Old City of Jerusalem.

The tall, decorated tree is fixed on a terrace within the New Gate of the Old City of Jerusalem, a manger at its basis.

Leaders of Churches attended the event, together with a crowd of Christians of various denominations, rejoicing for the birth of Christ in anticipation for more peaceful conditions in the New Year – protesting at the same time for the prosecutions of Christians in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The Heads of Churches passed through the New Gate to arrive at the Notre Dame hotel. There, in the events hall, a Christmas celebration was held, organized by the Palestinian Bible Society. Guests at the event were addressed by the Patriarch in Arabic, after which the Palestinian Ambassador, Mr Issah Kassiye, read the message of President Mahmoud Abbas-Abu Mazen, wishing health, peace, the peace of Jesus Christ, freedom and safety for the residents of the Old City.

From the Secretariat-General

[httpv://youtu.be/l1cWxUQF3Eg](http://youtu.be/l1cWxUQF3Eg)



THE PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA VISITS THE EXARCHATE OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER IN CYPRUS

On 12 December 2014, His Beatitude Theodoros, Patriarch of Alexandria, visited the Exarchate of the Holy Sepulcher in Cyprus. He was accompanied by the Most Reverend Makarios, Metropolitan of Kenya, and the Exarch of the Patriarchate of Alexandria to Cyprus, f. Athenodoros. His Beatitude was welcomed by the Most Reverend Timotheos, Metropolitan of Bostra at the entrance to the Exarchate, and together they attended mass. On the conclusion of the divine Liturgy, a supplication was made for the Patriarch.

The Most Reverend Timotheos went on to address His Beatitude Theodoros, saying how moved he was over this honour bestowed upon the Exarchate. He then pointed out the historical significance of this visit in terms of the relations between these two ancient Patriarchates, in particular for the life and contribution of the Exarchate. An *engolpiyon* and an icon of the Ascension were then offered to His Beatitude.

On his behalf, the Patriarch referred to the link between the two Patriarchates and to the fact that Patriarchs of Alexandria originate from the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. He then referred to his personal contact with the Holy Land, during the first years of his prelacy, through Metropolitan Theodoros of Lampi and Sfakia, his spiritual guide. The Patriarch also talked of his friendship with Metropolitan Timotheos of Bostra and Archbishop Alexios of Tiberias, praising the former for his fine work in restoring the Exarchate.

His Beatitude then blessed the faithful and the premises of the Exarchate, before attending a reception hosted for clerics

and laymen alike.

On his departure, Patriarch Theodoros signed the guest book.

From the Exarchate of the Holy Sepulcher in Cyprus



THE COUNTRY OF HUNGARY DECORATES HIS BEATITUDE THEOPHILOS, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

On Wednesday, the 19th of November, 2nd of December 2014, Mr Zsolt Semjén, Deputy Prime Minister of Hungary, visited the Patriarchate accompanied by Mr Geza Mihályi, Hungarian Representative in Ramallah, and former Ambassador, Mr Csaba Czibere, Director General of the Middle East and North Africa Department.

His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister of Hungary conveyed to His Beatitude the greetings of the President and the Cardinal of Hungary, inviting Him to visit Hungary anew, as His previous visit was fondly remembered.

In response, His Beatitude accepted the courteous invitation in due time, once His pastoral obligations will allow such visit.

During the meeting, Mr Semjén conferred on His Beatitude the supreme medal of his country, namely the Commander's Cross with the Star, Order of Merit of Hungary (civilian division),

in recognition of the harmonious cooperation between the Patriarchate and Hungary, and of the Patriarch's support of Christians in the Holy Land.

His Beatitude gave a reply speech in English, see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2014/12/02/10374>

To reciprocate the honour, the Patriarch bestowed on Mr Semjén the medal of Supreme Taxiarch of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher.

Moved, the Hungarian Deputy Prime Minister thanked His Beatitude for this gesture, tightening the ties between Hungary and the Patriarchate, before going on to venerate at the Holy Sepulcher, Calvary and the Sacristy of the Church of the Resurrection, wherein the Holy Cross and the holy Relics are being kept.

From the Secretariat-General

<httpv://youtu.be/uJ5yqzhursE>



THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM LIGHTS CHRISTMAS TREE FOR JOPPA BOY SCOUTS

On the evening of Monday, the 18th of November/1st of December 2014, H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, visited Joppa accompanied by the Elder Secretary General, His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina, and the Vice-President for Economic Affairs, the Very Reverend Archimandrite

Jeronymus, Abbot in Fhes. There, Patriarch Theophilos participated in the tree lighting ceremony organized by the Boy Scouts of Joppa's Rum Orthodox Arab-speaking Community and the Mayors of Tel Aviv and Joppa, in view of Christmas and the New Year.

In attendance at the ceremony was the Abbot of the Monastery of the Archangels in Joppa, His Eminence, Archbishop Damascene; the priest of the Rum Orthodox Arab-speaking Community of Joppa, f. Constantis, the Vice-Mayor of Tel Aviv and Joppa, the President of the Boy Scouts Association, Mr David Mansour, the President of the Municipal Council, Mr Victor Zakak, and Council members – all extending wishes for a peaceful celebration of Christmas and a happy New Year.

This well-organized event was attended by approximately two thousand residents of Joppa, Israelis and Arabs.

In the framework of this event, Christmas songs were performed, praising the Nativity as a message of peace and love for mankind.

The beautiful ceremony was sealed by His Beatitude's address in Arabic.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/KXjfEYIW0-E>



DORA BAKOYIANNIS VISITS THE

PATRIARCHATE

On Friday, the 15th/28th of November 2014, Mrs. Dora Bakoyiannis, in the framework of a visit to Israel and the Palestinian Autonomy in her capacity as Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee (Subcommittee on the Middle East) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, visited the Patriarchate. She was accompanied by Mr Ioannis Dragasakis, Vice-President of the Parliament, Special Advisor Mr Anastasios Hadjivasileiou, and the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis.

Mrs. Bakoyiannis and her associates were warmly received by H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In the context of the meeting, an interesting discussion took place on the crisis that befell the Patriarchate years ago and which it overcame owing to the help of God, the Greek government and Mrs Bakoyiannis personally.

His Beatitude also explained to Mrs. Bakoyiannis the Patriarchate's present-day capabilities and the adversities it faces in its efforts to make use of its property, especially in the Abu Tor region of Western Jerusalem and in the land owned by the Monastery of the Prophet Elias, between Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

Reference was also made to the significance of the Holy Shrines and the Patriarchate's leading role in their safekeeping; also to its efforts to maintain the religious status quo as a framework of peaceful coexistence in Jerusalem.

After the meeting, Mrs. Bakoyiannis went on to venerate at the Holy Sepulcher and the Church of the Resurrection, having asked for divine empowerment in her life and work.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/ynfXkPKMK0>



NINTH ANNIVESSARY OF THE ENTHRONEMENT OF PATRIARCH THEOPHILOS OF JERUSALEM

On the 9th/22nd of November 2014, the feast day of our Father, Nektarios of Aegina, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem celebrated the ninth anniversary of the election and enthronement of its Leader, His Beatitude Theophilos, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem.

To commemorate the event, Doxology was made at the *katholikon* of the Church of the Resurrection, led by His Beatitude, with co-officiating Hagiotaphite Primates and Hieromonks, deacons, priests and concelebrants from our Arab-speaking flock, as well as pilgrims from Greece and Russia, in the presence of the Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis, his esteemed wife, and Consulate personnel.

On the conclusion of Doxology, guests proceeded to the Patriarchates, where His Beatitude was addressed, on behalf of the Holy and Sacred Synod, by the Elder Secretary-General, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina.

Archbishop Aristarchos was followed by the Consul-General of Greece to Jerusalem, His Excellency Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis.

On behalf of Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Church and the Russian Spiritual Mission (MISSIA) in Jerusalem, spoke the Very Reverend Archimandrite Theophanes. Presbyter Daniel spoke on behalf of Patriarch Daniel of the Romanian Church, whereas the Most Reverend Kyriakos, Metropolitan of Nazareth, spoke on behalf of the flock in Nazareth. On behalf of the flock in Joppa spoke His Eminence Damascene, Archbishop of Joppa. On behalf of the flock in Northern Jordan spoke His Eminence Philoumenos, Archbishop of Pella. Archimandrite Philotheos spoke on behalf of the flock in Accra-Ptolemais. Addresses were also delivered by: the vicar of the Cathedral of St James the Brother of God, f. Issa Touma; the Principal of the Patriarchal School of Sion, monk Nikolaos; professors Haled and Komodiki on behalf of the Patriarchal School of St Demetrius and its Principal; and Mrs Im Omar on behalf of the Jordan Prime Minister.

His Beatitude delivered a reply speech in Greek, before guests were hosted to a reception at the Patriarchate.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/s6AHE0qvxak>



HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM DECORATES MR PETROS SOLOMOU

On Monday, the 21st of October/3rd of November 2014, H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, conferred the honorary

title of Crusader of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher, on Mr Petros Solomou of Cyprus, in the presence of his esteemed wife and the Most Reverend Timotheos, Metropolitan of Bostroi and Cyprus Exarch. Hagiotaphite Fathers were also in attendance. The title was bestowed in appreciation and recognition of Mr Solomou's dedicated and selfless collaboration and his support of the recent actions of Metropolitan Timotheos towards restoring the Exarchate of the Holy Sepulcher in Nicosia.

Deeply moved, Mr Solomou thanked His Beatitude for the honor conferred on him and again pledged to dedicate his powers to the service of the Church, especially so the Church of Jerusalem.

Mrs Solomou was offered a golden pectoral cross by Patriarch Theophilos.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/cew2jKuy19g>



28TH OCTOBER CELEBRATIONS AT THE SCHOOL OF SION (2014)

On the afternoon of Tuesday, the 15th/28th of October 2014, the 28th of October national day was humbly celebrated at the School of St Sion.

His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, was invited to attend the celebrations, accompanied by the Patriarchal Commissioner, the Most Reverend Isychios, Metropolitan of Kapitolias; the Elder Secretary-General, His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina; and the Elder Sacristan, Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis. His Excellency the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis, attended the celebrations with his esteemed wife. Also in attendance were Hagiotaphite Fathers, monks and members of the Greek Parish.

Principal f. Nikolaos Zervis welcomed guests, whereas the panegyric of the day was delivered by philologist, Mr Constantinos Komodikis. Students at the school recited poems under the guidance of philologist Mrs Eleni Economou, and the Head Cantor of the Church of the Resurrection, Archimandrite Aristovoulos, led the choir in performing patriotic songs. Mrs Francesca Rocca performed solo violin pieces.

The celebrations included references on the dictatorial attacks of Italy and Germany against our country during World War II, undermining Greece's territorial integrity and depriving Greeks of their freedom. The Greek people's struggle to regain their freedom through hardships, losses and sacrifices was commemorated as a gift from God and their ancestors.

On the conclusion of the feast, Patriarch Theophilos praised the Principal, teachers and students at the School for their diligent and moving performance, held in homage to the fighters of 1940, urging them to carry on their work to the benefit of the Patriarchate and our nation.

From the Secretariat-General

<http://youtu.be/hu0UH37fdds>



DOXOLOGY ON THE 28TH OF OCTOBER NATIONAL DAY

On Tuesday the 15th/28th of October 2014, Doxology was held at the Church of the Resurrection, in celebration of the 28th of October 1940 national day.

Doxology was performed in the form of extending gratitude to God for His help in liberating Greece from the burden of the 1940 Italian and German occupation, and of making a supplication for the repose of those heroically fallen for their faith and country.

Doxology was led by H.B. Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, with co-officiating Prelates and Hieromonks, in the presence of the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis, and members of the Consulate personnel. Concelebrating with them were nuns and members of the Greek parish.

On the conclusion of Doxology, a reception was hosted at the Patriarchate, where His Beatitude addressed guests in Greek.

In Arabic, His speech may be reached here:
<https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2014/10/28/7860>

In his own speech, the Consul-General of Greece said the following:

The epos of 1940 has been indelibly imprinted on our collective memory as part of our national identity and consciousness.

Today we pay minimum tribute to the worthy guardians and

keepers of our traditions, who sacrificed their lives in the struggle for the freedom of the Homeland. We stand in awe in front of the splendour of their souls, with gratitude in the face of their sacrifices, and with pride of their heroism. We honour their memory and contribution. They fulfilled their duty.

Let us now consider our own duty, and our own responsibilities vis-a-vis our History and the future of our Nation.

From the Secretariat-General



JOINT SERVICE BY THE HEADS OF THE PATRIARCHATES OF JERUSALEM AND ROMANIA ON THE OCCASION OF ST DEMETRIUS FEAST DAY

On Monday, the 14th/27th of October 2014, a Joint Patriarchal and Primatial Service was performed to commemorate St Demetrius the New, patron-saint of Bucharest, at the Cathedral of Sts Constantine and Helen and St Demetrius the New.

Leading the Joint Service, in accordance with the order of the Orthodox Church, was H.B. Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem. Co-officiating with Him was H.B. Patriarch Daniel of Romania, alongside fifty Primates – Metropolitans, Archbishops and Bishops of the Romanian Church – priests and eight deacons,

amongst whom Archdeacon Evlogios and f. Michael of the Patriarchate of Romania.

During the Joint Service, the full communion in Christ between the two Churches – of Jerusalem and Romania – and among all Orthodox Churches across the world, was experienced as the leading Patriarchs and Archbishops were commemorated in the Diptychs.

Despite the cold weather, a crowd of faithful proceeded to venerate the holy relics and the Holy Cross brought from Jerusalem. After the recitation of the gospel, His Beatitude Theophilos preached the Word of God in English, see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2014/10/27/9649>

His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of Theophilos spoke on the conclusion of the divine Liturgy, see link: <http://patriarhia.ro/the-faithful-pilgrims-experience-the-merciful-love-of-god-and-of-the-saints-in-their-life-7642-en.html>

After His speech, Patriarch Daniel offered the Patriarch of Jerusalem a large, holy icon of the Saints of the Martyr Family of St Constantine Brâncoveanu, who suffered a martyr's death in 1750 in Constantinople, as well as the Patriarchate of Romania's medal of honour.

In His turn, Patriarch Theophilos offered Patriarch Daniel a holy icon of Panaghia Jerusalemite and a mother-of-pearl blessing cross, crafted in Bethlehem by Christians.

The service was followed by a processional exit from the Church, during which the faithful rushed to receive the blessing of the Patriarchs, and entry into to the Patriarchal Palace, where presents were offered to the retinue of Patriarch Theophilos.

At noon, lunch was hosted at the Marriot hotel, attended by the Romanian Prime-Minister, Mr Victor Ponta, and other government officials.

In the evening, Patriarch Theophilos paid a visit to Mr Pona, who expressed his joy over the encounter between the two Churches, pointing out that the Orthodox majority in Romania coexists harmoniously with eighteen religious minorities, to which His Beatitude replied He was moved over the faith manifested by the Orthodox Romanian people, and also by the synergy between the Church and the State. Patriarch Theophilos went on to ask for Mr Pona's support of Christians in the Middle East, now under threat and persecution.

To commemorate this visit, the Prime Minister offered His Beatitude a large blessing cross, the Romanian flag and a medal, whereas Patriarch Theophilos wished Mr Pona success in the upcoming presidential elections.

From there, His Beatitude was escorted to Bucharest airport by His Eminence Niphon, Archbishop of Tyrgobist; Protopresbyter f. Titsa; the Very Reverend Bishop Timotheos, former Head of the Romanian Church Delegation in Jerusalem; and the Greek ambassador to Romania, Mr Vassiloconstantakis.

At the airport, His Beatitude boarded a Tarom airlines plane, and landed safely in Tel Aviv.

From the Secretariat-General

