

THE FEAST OF SAINT JOHN THE NEW HOZEVITE ASCETIC AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday, July 28/ August 10, 2023, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of our Holy Father John the new Hozevite from Romania, at the Holy Monastery of Hozeva, located at the bank of Brook Chorath, near Jericho.

On this feast, the Church, and especially the Church of Jerusalem commemorates that Saint John came to the Holy Land from Romania in the middle of the 20th century, and lived in utmost ascesis and humility at the Holy Monasteries of the Jordan River area, and in that of Saints George and John the Hozevites, he slept in peace and was deemed worthy to work miraculous signs, that is why he was canonized among the saints by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem in 2016.

The feast of the Dormition of Saint John was celebrated with an all-night vigil at the Holy Monastery of Hozeva, and the Hegoumen and renovator of the Monastery, Archimandrite Constantine welcomed H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, who presided over the vigil with the following address:

“Blessed Father and Master,

The glorious feast of Saint John the New Hozevite, who came from Romania, has dawned for another year. The holy hymnographer characterizes him very successfully as the father of peace and silence and of prayer.

If we delve into the above characterizations, we will clearly perceive the work of each Monk, who, through his silent preaching, renounces the entire world. The monk leaves the world not motivated by hatred, but by love for God first and

for his fellow man. He listens to the misery and pain of his brothers and effectively helps through prayer and almsgiving. And how does the monk perceive the world one could ask. But precisely through quietness and silence and prayer", which were dominant throughout the life of the honoured Saint.

God does not ask the monks to go out into the world to help people walk, but He asks them to give them the light with their experience to lead them to eternal life. Should not the lighthouses always be placed on the rocks? What; should they go to the cities to be added to the traffic lights? The lighthouses have a different mission, the traffic lights have another. The monk is not a traffic light to be placed in the city at one end of the street and to light the passers-by so that they do not stumble. It is a distant Lighthouse, set high on the rocks, which with its flashes illuminates the seas and oceans so that the ships can be guided and reach their destination towards God".

Blessed Father and Master,

Being such a man, a torch flamboyant in life, Sant John even after his dormition, through his intercessions, helps, comforts, inspires, sweetens the pain, and heals the illnesses of souls and bodies, as testified by the thousands of pilgrims of every race and language, who visit him, but as we also testify that as we have been greatly benefited by the Saint many times.

Welcome!

Let us commence the feast!"

Co-celebrants to His Beatitude were their Eminences, Metropolitan Isychios of Capitolias and Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina. The chanting was delivered by Leonidas Doukas, Christos Stavrou, Gregorios Zarkos, Nikolaos Papadimitriou, Vasilios Papadimitriou, Pavlos Papadimitriou, as the service was attended by monks of the Monastery and other Monasteries

from Jericho and Jerusalem.

His Beatitude delivered the following sermon before the Holy Communion:

“For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light (Ps. 36,9).

Because You, Lord, are the source of life and with Your own light we will see the true light, exclaims the psalmist.

Beloved brothers and fathers in Christ,

The Grace of the Holy Spirit, who enlightened and sanctified and directed the footsteps of the holy Prophets Helijah of Thesbis and John the Forerunner in this holy place of Hozeva, brought us all together so that we solemnly honour the memory of our holy Father John the New Hozevite.

Our Holy Father John had been seized by Divine zeal since his childhood, left his homeland Romania and came to the Holy Land, where he retreated and hid himself like another Elijah in the caves of Brook Chorath, near the River Jordan (3 Kings 172-3) and where Saint George from Leukara of Cyprus founded his Monastery, which became a fountain of divine healings for those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ who said, ““He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7,38).

This living water is none other than the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Son of God and our Saviour Christ according to the testimony of the Evangelist John (John 7, 39). This very Spirit is the source of light, as the Lord says “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8,12).

On this word of the Lord, Saint Cyril of Alexandria says: “Whoever follows me, i.e. whoever walks in the footsteps of my teachings will not be in the dark but will obtain “the light

of life", i.e. he will achieve the revelation/manifestation of the mysteries concerning me and the revelation, able to lead to eternal life".

And we ask ourselves, what is eternal life? "Eternal life is the transcendence of the death of corruption, that is, of sin through the death of incorruption, that is, the death of the Risen Christ. In this death of Christ, our Holy Father John became a communicant and sharer, who listened to the order of Saint Paul saying: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death: just as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection" (Romans 6,3-5).

Our sanctified Father John not only walked in newness of life but also fore-tasted the future resurrection of Christ, as his incorruptible and fragrant whole-body relic testifies before our eyes.

The incorruption of his body was achieved by the spirit-bearing John, listening and applying in theory and practice, the exhortation of Saint Paul: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Romans 12,1). Interpreting this word of Paul, Saint Chrysostom says: "What is rational worship? The things of the soul, the things of the Spirit (God is Spirit, and those who worship Him, shall worship Him in Spirit and Truth), (John 4:24); what is not seen in the body, what is not seen in the organs, is not in the places, which are leniency, sobriety, mercy, non-judgment, long-suffering, humility... "I want mercy and not sacrifice" (Hesiah 6:6)... and there are other miracles, indeed the holocausts, the bodies of the holy martyrs; there is a saint and a soul and body; that smell of

fragrance is great". [And in more detail; what is rational worship? Those that are offered with the soul, with the spirit (because the Lord said "God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him, do so in Spirit and in truth"), meaning what is not needed by the body, by organs, by places. And such are; leniency, temperance, charity, non-judgment, tolerance, humility, "I want mercy and not sacrifice"... however, there are other sacrifices, the real holocausts, the bodies of the holy Martyrs. Both the soul and the body are holy there, they have a great fragrance.

Indeed, my beloved brothers, our celebrated Father John loved God with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his mind (cf. Matt. 22,37), thus becoming a sacrifice pleasing to God. Because even the psalmist exclaims, "God is wonderful in His saints" (Psalm 67:36).

The Father of the Church, Saint Chrysostom, points out the value and power of rational worship, which leads the faithful Christian to the purification of the heart (God, create in me a clean heart – Psalm 50,12) and consequently to incorruption, says: "You can too if you want this sacrifice to be repeated.. Let your body die and crucify, and you also shall receive the crown of this martyrdom", [and simpler; you can too if you want to offer your body as an instrument and then will you yourself receive the crown of this martyrdom].

Our holy Church of Jerusalem boasts of boasting in Christ (Rom. 15,17), because the Monastery of Hozeva, by the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and of the today honoured Saint John the New, continues to be a lodging of the holy and righteous men of God, and those who practised and are practising their monastic striving in this Monastery and Lavra "these are shining lamps everywhere on earth", according to Saint Chrysostom.

We thank the Holy Triune God and after Saint Paul, we say: "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in

sincerity. Amen” (Eph. 6:24). Many happy returns.”

After the dismissal of the vigil, there was a monastic meal.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR AND HEALER PANTELEIMON

On Wednesday, July 27/August 9, 2023, the memory of the holy glorious martyr and healer Panteleimon was celebrated by the Patriarchate in his holy Monastery, located between the Patriarchate and Jaffa Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem.

On this day, the Church remembers that the Saint came from Nicomedia and was the son of a pagan father, Eustorgios, and a Christian mother, Eubouli, from whom he learned the sacred scriptures and had as his Spiritual Father Saint Hermolaos, celebrating 26th of July.

Having been taught medical science, he healed the sick without money, working signs and miracles in the power of Christ, Whom he confessed and was tortured and martyred and ended by beheading during the reign of Maximian in AD 305.

In the Holy Church of the above Monastery, in honour of the Saint, Vespers on Tuesday afternoon and the Liturgy on Wednesday morning were presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Capitolas, along with Archimandrite Christodoulos and Hierodeacon Dositheos, at the chanting of Mr Angelos and the participation in prayer of a congregation

of monks, nuns and pilgrims.

During the Divine Liturgy, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos came for veneration along with the Holy Sepulchre Fathers.

The Abbess Charitini, who renovated the Holy Church, presented a treat of refreshment to the Patriarchal and Episcopal entourages and the congregation in the hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Holy Monastery.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR PARASKEVI AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday, July 26 / August 8, 2023, the memory of Saint Paraskevi was celebrated by the Patriarchate in the chapel of the Holy Monastery of Saint Basil, where the Saint's icon is kept. Saint Paraskevi confessed Christ and suffered a martyr's death in Rome, during the reign of Emperor Antonios in AD 140.

In honour of the Saint, a Liturgy was celebrated on the morning of the feast by the Master of Ceremonies Archimandrite Bartholomew with the Archdeacon Mark and the Hierodeacon Dositheos with the participation of the faithful from Jerusalem and pious pilgrims.

After the end of the Liturgy, refreshments were served by the

Elder Hegoumen Kamarasis Archimandrite Nektarios at the forecourt of the Church.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF SAINT ANNA AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Monday, July 25 / August 7, 2023, the Patriarchate celebrated the memory of the Dormition of Saint Anna in the holy Monastery outside the Gate of Saint Stephen, inside the wall of the Old City of Jerusalem.

On this feast, the Church commemorates the event of the Dormition of Saint Anna, whose prayer moved God's mercy and gave her, who was barren until then, as the fruit of the womb the Most Holy Theotokos and Mother of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus of Christ.

In honour of Saint Anna, a Vespers was held in the above-mentioned Holy Monastery in the evening and the Divine Liturgy in the morning under His Eminence the Archbishop Filoumenos of Pella, with Archimandrite Christodoulos and Archdeacon Mark.

After the Divine Liturgy, the Hegoumen Archimandrite Meletios offered a reception at the hegoumeneion.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH IN THE COMMUNITY OF MAALOULE

On Saturday, July 22/August 5, 2023, the feast of the prophet Elijah was celebrated by the Patriarchate in his Holy Temple, in the village of Maaloule, near Nazareth.

This Holy Church belonged to the Greek-Orthodox Arabic-speaking Community of Maaloule, it was abandoned due to the events during the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, and it was maintained during the last years by the Patriarchate and His Eminence the Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth with the funding of the Hegoumen of Tabor Archimandrite Hilarion, with the permission of the Israeli army and a Divine Liturgy is celebrated in it during the feast of the Prophet Elijah.

In this well-preserved Church, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, and their Eminences, the Metropolitans, Kyriakos of Nazareth and Isychios of Kapitolias, and Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, Fr. Simeon of the Holy Metropolis of Nazareth, at the chanting of the Acre Byzantine choir and that of Nazareth, as the service was attended by many Arabic-speaking faithful Christians, descendants of the founders of the Church and others from Nazareth.

Before the Holy Communion, His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon:

“When thou wast united unto our God through thy virtue and

unspotted life, O Prophet of renown, and hadst for this cause received from Him authority and power, then thou didst change creation as seemed good to thee, and by thy will didst shut the gates of rain on high; and thou didst bring fire down from above, wholly consuming and impious. Do thou entreat Christ the Saviour that our souls be saved" (Matins, praises, Troparion 1).

Beloved brethren in Christ,

Reverend Christians and pilgrims

"The incarnate Angel and the prophet's summit and boast, Elijah the glorious", has gathered us all in this holy place to celebrate his holy commemoration of his fiery ascension into the heavens in Eucharist.

Praising the character of Elijah of Thesbis, Sirach says about him: "Then Elijah arose, a prophet like fire, and his word burned like a torch. He brought a famine upon them, and by his zeal he made them few in number. By the word of the Lord he shut up the heavens, and also three times brought down fire. How glorious you were, Elijah, in your wondrous deeds! Whose glory is equal to yours?" (Sirach 48,1-4).

Saint James the Brother of God, referring to the power of the righteous man's prayer says in his catholic epistle: "The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest" (James 5,16-18).

And Luke and Mark the Evangelists mention the presence of the Prophet Elijah during the Lord's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor: "Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one[a] on earth

could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus" (Mark 9,2-4/ Luke 9,28-30).

The conversation among Elijah, Moses and Jesus testifies to the fact that Christ is the Lord of the Law of Moses and of the prophets and Moses appears as the representative of the Law, while Elijah is the representative of the prophets according to the interpretation of Origen and of Saint Cyril of Alexandria. "Moses appears as the man of the Law, while Elijah as that of the prophets; for He [Christ] is the Lord of the Law and of the Prophets".

Elijah was distinguished to the extent that he was the only one of the prophets, after Moses to converse with the Transfigured Christ, the Christ that they both knew on Mount Sinai; Moses knew Him as "fire and steam and darkness", while Elijah like "fine breeze of thin air" (3 Kings 19,22). They saw God with their own eyes, in the Transfigured Jesus Christ on Mount Tabor, becoming the exception to the Lord's word to His disciples: "Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it" (Matt. 13,17).

Indeed, my dear brothers and sisters, Elijah from Thesbis was especially favoured by God. And this was because as the hymnographer says: "When thou wast united unto our God through thy virtue and unspotted life, O Prophet of renown, and hadst for this cause received from Him authority and power, then thou didst change creation as seemed good to thee, and by thy will didst shut the gates of rain on high; and thou didst bring fire down from above, wholly consuming and impious. Do thou entreat Christ the Saviour that our souls be saved" (Matins, praises, Troparion 1).

This authority was also received by Christ's disciples and saints, as Saint Luke the Evangelist says: "See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all

the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you" (Luke 10,19).

Interpreting these words of the Lord, Saint Basil the Great notes that it is impossible for man to exercise this power, if he has not cleared himself and become fortified by the Lord beforehand, the Lord who said to the apostles, behold I have given you the power to tread on snakes and scorpions.

In other words, my dear brothers and sisters, the one who hears and keeps God's commandments is able through the power of the divine Grace to become a communicant of the power of the prophet Elijah, just like the prophet Elisha, who followed him.

Behold why Saint Paul says, "Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1,27).

It is noteworthy that the prophet Elijah has a special place in both the Old and the New Testament. And this is so because Elijah is recognized as the second forerunner of the presence of Christ, meaning the last days of the Judgment. Regarding the reappearance of zealot Elijah during the last days, the prophet Malachi says about him: "Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes" (Malachi 4,4). Replying to His disciples' question, "Why, then, do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" Jesus replied, "Elijah is indeed coming and will restore all things" (Matt. 17,10-11).

According to the interpretation of the distinguished Church Fathers, the Lord here speaks about His Second Coming, of which Elijah is the forerunner. "I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but they did to him whatever they pleased" (Matt. 17,12). This second Elijah is Saint John the Baptist who came before our Lord Jesus Christ. Saint John the Baptist was very much like Elijah of Thesbis which is why the Scripture calls him "With the spirit

and power of Elijah” (Luke 1,17). Interpreting these words, Zigavinos and Origen say: “[The Scripture] named ‘spirit’ the spiritual gift, while power is the strength. It thus says that he has both the gift and the strength of Elijah”.

As for us, who keep fervently the commemoration of the prophet Elijah, let us say along with the hymnographer: “Compassionate Lord, grant Thy people remission of sins and the great mercy, by the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and of the holy glorious prophet Elijah of Thesbis”. Amen, Many happy returns.”

After the Divine Liturgy, under the shade of the towering pines, a recreational reception was held by those who sustain the Church, Archimandrite Hilarion and those with him, while at lunch the Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth hosted a meal for His Beatitude and His Entourage at the Metropolis.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF SAINT MARY MAGDALENE THE MYRRH-BEARER & MARCELLA OF CHIOPOLIS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

- 1. The feast of Saint Magdalene in her Russian Holy Monastery in Gethsemane.**

On Friday, July 22/August 4, 2023, the memory of Saint Mary

Magdalene was celebrated in the female Russian Monastery in Gethsemane.

During the Divine Liturgy in this Monastery, which was presided over by the Metropolitan of Berlin, His Eminence Mark, with two High Priests of the Russian Orthodox Church of the former diaspora, their Eminences Irenaeus and Theodosios, and Priests of the same Church. H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos visited the Monastery and presented an icon to Metropolitan Mark and a cross of blessing to the Abbess Nun Elizabeth and spoke in English.

2.The feast of the Holy virgin Martyr Markella of Chiopolis at the Patriarchate.

On the same day, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of the Holy Martyr Marcella of Chiopolis, who martyred in the island of Chios at the hands of her own father. The feast was celebrated with Vespers on Thursday afternoon and the Divine Liturgy on Friday morning at her chapel in the Holy Monastery of Saint Spyridon, by Archimandrite Christodoulos and the caretaker of the Monastery Hierodeacon Dositheos, in the presence of many faithful Christians who honoured the Saint.

3. The Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene in the Church of the Resurrection

The memory of Saint Mary Magdalene was celebrated in a Vigil at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which was presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantine in special honour, in a litany around the Holy Sepulchre and the shrines in procession and worship of the Saint's sacred relic, which is preserved in the Sacristy of the Church of the Resurrection.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Wednesday, July 20 / August 2, 2023, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Prophet Elijah of Thesbes, so named from his hometown Thesbes or Thisbes of the city of Gilead.

During this feast, the Church recalls to its memory the things about the prophet Elijah as described in the Old Testament, mainly in the books of the Kings, but also in the New Testament, in the Gospels through the words of the Lord and in the Catholic Epistle of Saint James the Brother of God.

The prophet Elijah, as from his zeal for God, was called a zealot, and because of his faith he was heard and performed many miracles through God, such as the absence of rain for three years and the falling of rain again, the burning of the stones and firewood of the altar on Mount Carmel, the resurrection of the daughter of the Sumanite woman, the crossing of the Jordan river and the throwing of his fleece to his disciple Elisha, through which he parted the waters of the Jordan and walked as if on dry land and also received double his teacher's grace.

According to his apolytikion, the prophet Elijah is: "the incarnate angel the prophets' summit and boast, the second Forerunner of Christ's presence".

In honour of the prophet Elijah, Vespers was held in his Holy Monastery, between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, on Tuesday evening, by His Eminence Metropolitan Benedictos of Diocesarea, and the Divine Liturgy on the morning of the feast, presided over by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of

Jerusalem Theophilos, along with their Eminences, Metropolitan Isychios of Capitolas and the Archbishops Aristarchos of Constantina and Theodosios of Sebastia. The chanting was delivered by Mr Angelos in Greek and the choir of Saint James the Brother of God under Mr Rimon Kamar in Arabic. The service was attended by many Greek-speaking Orthodox believers, but mainly Arabic speakers from the occupied territories and especially from Jerusalem.

Before the Holy Communion, His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon:

“When thou wast united unto our God through thy virtue and unspotted life, O Prophet of renown, and hadst for this cause received from Him authority and power, then thou didst change creation as seemed good to thee, and by thy will didst shut the gates of rain on high; and thou didst bring fire down from above, wholly consuming and impious. Do thou entreat Christ the Saviour that our souls be saved” (Matins, praises, Troparion 1).

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Behold why Saint Paul says, "Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1,27).

It is noteworthy that the prophet Elijah has a special place in both the Old and the New Testament. And this is so because Elijah is recognized as the second forerunner of the presence of Christ, meaning the last days of the Judgment. Regarding the reappearance of zealot Elijah during the last days, the prophet Malachi says about him: "Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord

comes" (Malachi 4,4). Replying to His disciples' question, "Why, then, do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" Jesus replied, "Elijah is indeed coming and will restore all things" (Matt. 17,10-11).

According to the interpretation of the distinguished Church Fathers, the Lord here speaks about His Second Coming, of which Elijah is the forerunner. "I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but they did to him whatever they pleased" (Matt. 17,12). This second Elijah is Saint John the Baptist who came before our Lord Jesus Christ. Saint John the Baptist was very much like Elijah of Thesbis that is why the Scripture calls him "With the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1,17). Interpreting these words, Zigavinos and Origen say: "[The Scripture] named 'spirit' the spiritual gift, while power is the strength. It thus says that he has both the gift and the strength of Elijah".

As for us, who keep fervently the commemoration of the prophet Elijah, let us say along with the hymnographer: "compassionate Lord, grant Thy people remission of sins and the great mercy, by the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and of the holy glorious prophet Elijah of Thesbis". Amen Many happy returns."

After the Divine Liturgy, the hard-working caretaker of the Monastery Monk Achillios hosted a reception and a rich banquet, with the help of the nuns of the Holy Monastery of the Ascension of the Lord.

From Secretariat-General

FORTIETH DAY MEMORIAL SERVICE OF THE BLESSED ARCHIMANDRITE PHILOTHEOS

On Monday morning, 18/31 July 2023, after the Divine Liturgy at the Horrendous Golgotha which was led by His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the fortieth-day memorial service of the Patriarchal Representative in Acre-Ptolemais Archimandrite Philotheos was held by the Patriarchate. Archimandrite Philotheos passed away while working on restoring the Holy Church of Saint George in Acre.

The memorial service was led by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with Holy Sepulchre Archbishops, Hieromonks and Hierodeacons, with the participation in prayer of monks, nuns and faithful Christians, who honoured the memory of the departed and prayed for the repose of his soul in the land of the living along with the righteous.

After the service H.H.B. and the Fathers returned to the Patriarchate hall for the memorial reception.

Everlasting his remembrance!

From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE PATRIARCH THEOPHILOS III PRESIDES OVER THE SERVICE OF THE DIVINE LITURGY AND THE FORTIETH DAY MEMORIAL FOR THE BLESSED SOUL OF ARCHIMANDRITE PHILOTHEOS IN ACRE

His Beatitude Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem Theophilos III visited the Monastery of St. Georgios in the city of Acre, accompanied by His Eminence Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, the General Secretary of the Patriarchate Archbishop Aristarchus, the Metropolitan of Jordan, Archbishop Christophoros, and a group of the esteemed clergy. The patriarchal envoy was received by Archimandrite Silwanos, the deputy of the Patriarchal Vicar in Acre, the venerable fathers, the pastors of the churches, and Mr. Fouad Breik, the head of the Church Council in Acre, as well as the heads and members of the pastoral councils.

During the Divine Liturgy, His Beatitude spoke in his sermon about the concept of divine love and zeal that operates in the Church, which the blessed Archimandrite Philotheus possessed through his service to his parish, demonstrating in words his paternalism, his honesty, his ecclesiastical and monastic morals, his close affiliation with the Jerusalem Patriarchate and the brotherhood of the Holy Sepulcher. He also talked about his liturgical and church chanting talent, which moved the believers' souls to praise and glorification, expressing that his sudden death left a void and sadness in the hearts of everyone who knew him, affirming our hope that he cherished

the true vine in Christ, praying to the compassionate God to immerse himself in the trials of the saints.

His Beatitude continued, saying, "The divine grace, through the Holy Spirit, visited the Holy Church in this historic city, through the decision of the Holy Synod to appoint Archimandrite Silwanos to this high position, to carry his message and responsibilities." A verse, advising him to always remember what the Apostle Paul said to his student Timothy, the apostle Paul gave this strong command: "But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22)

After His Beatitude held the fortieth day memorial service for the blessed soul of late Archimandrite Philotheos, he went with the accompanying delegation and the faithful to the main hall of the monastery, which from this day is called the "Hall of Archimandrite Philotheos" in his honor. Where a memorial ceremony was held, including a speech by the highly respected Archbishop of Jordan, Christophoros, on behalf of His Beatitude, in which he focused on the spiritual unity that we attained through the Divine Liturgy, as we unite with our risen God, it is our faith and our consolation. He also spoke about the social unity of the people of Acre, and the bond of love and coexistence embodied in preserving the common Christian and Islamic identity. Moving forward to advance the church and the community.

Other speeches were delivered by His Eminence Sheikh Samir Assi, Father Samer Zaknoun from the Maronite Church, Mr. Iskandar Suleiman from the Galilee Choir, Mrs. Salma Hazboun, and Miss Rania of Sunday Schools, Mrs. Siham Mansi on behalf of the Ladies of St. Grace and Mr. Fouad Brik. Through it, they express the importance of moving through the Lord with the hope of resurrection and eternal life, and the spiritual and architectural work of the Blessed One of the Church and his good social and human sense in the Acre community.

After the end of the memorial service, Archimandrite Silwanos and the head of the Church Council, Mr. Fuad Barik, hosted His Beatitude and the accompanying delegation and the attendees to a lunch in the monastery, where the meeting was distinguished by the atmosphere of love and comfort.

Towards the end of the visit, His Beatitude and the accompanying delegation bid farewell to the attendees, thanking everyone for the warm reception, hospitality, and the spirit of love that brought the pastor together with his children and flock.

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR PROCOPIUS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Friday, July 8 / 21, 2023, the memory of the Holy Great Martyr Procopius was celebrated by the Patriarchate.

On this feast, the Church commemorates from the Synaxarion that Saint Procopius came from the city of Aelia Capitolina, which is the later Jerusalem, and martyred during the reign of Diocletian around 290 in Caesarea in Palestine. He used to be a persecutor of Christians but was called by the Lord through a vision, a crystal cross and a voice saying to him "I am the crucified Jesus, the Son of God".

Motivated by the vision, he came to Palestine and brought to the faith his mother of Theodosia and others who had previously delivered him to Diocletian, he was beheaded and thus found the way to the heavenly kingdom.

In honour of Saint Procopius, Vespers was held on Thursday afternoon, which was presided over by the Archimandrite Claudius and Divine Liturgy in the morning in his chapel in Abou-Tor opposite the hill of Holy Zion, inside the Holy Monastery of Saint Modestos. The Liturgy was led by the Spiritual Father of the Holy Monastery of Saint Savvas the Sanctified, Archimandrite Eudokimos, along with the Holy Sepulchre Hieromonks Claudius, Amfilochios and Bartholomew. The chanting was delivered by the left Byzantine singer of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Mr Angelos, as the service was attended by a congregation from Jerusalem, monks and nuns, praying in reverence and contrition.

During the Divine Liturgy H.H.B., our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos visited the Monastery for veneration accompanied by His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina and the Archdeacon Mark.

After the Divine Liturgy, a litany took place in the surrounding outdoor space of the Holy Church.

His Beatitude, the entourage and the congregation were offered a reception by the hardworking Caretaker of the Monastery monk Antiochos at the forecourt of the Church.

From Secretariat-General