

# THE FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY ARCHANGELS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Monday, November 8/21, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Synaxis of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel and all the Bodiless Hosts.

By the term "Synaxis", the Church means the assembly – gathering of its members, in order to give thanks and praise the Archangels and especially the Archangel Michael, because he resisted the rebellion of Lucifer against God saying: "Let us stand firm, let us stand in fear » and he was assembled as the archangel in the name of the Most High God.

This feast was celebrated:

1. In Yaffo, at the Holy Church of the Archangels, which was constructed by the Hegoumen, His Eminence Archbishop Damascene of Yaffo, after the total destruction of the old Church due to a fire.

The Divine Liturgy was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with the co-celebration of their Eminences, Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, the visiting from Greece, Metropolitan Ioustinos of Nea Krini and Kalamaria, the Hegoumen Archbishop Damascene of Yaffo, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Hieromonks and Archimandrites, Nectarios, Ieronymos, and Nifon, Arab-speaking Priests, Priests visiting from Greece, among whom the Archimandrite Timotheos from the Holy Metropolis of Florina, Archdeacon Mark and Hierodeacons Eulogios and Dositheos. The chanting was delivered by a Byzantine singer from Greece on the right and the Community of Yaffo Choir in Arabic on the left. The Liturgy was attended by the Ambassador of Greece to Tel Aviv Mr Kyriakos Loukakis and military attaché, the Yaffo congregation and members of the Russian-speaking and Romanian-speaking community of the Patriarchate.

Before the Holy Communion, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos delivered the following Sermon:

“Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure” (Psalm 102: 20-21) the psalmist proclaims.

Beloved brethren in Christ,

Reverend Christians

The noetic hosts of the bodiless angelic forces have gathered us all in this Church which bears their name, in your biblical and historical town of Yaffo, to celebrate in worship the Synaxis of the Supreme Commanders of the Angels, Michael and Gabriel, and the rest of the holy bodiless heavenly hosts.

These heavenly bodiless hosts who are commemorated in both the Old and the New Testament belong to nine orders, distinguished by their names: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, Angels. Their primary and main duty is the unceasing doxology of the Holy Triune God, according to the testimony of the Prophet Isaiah: “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isaiah 6:1-3).

Moreover, the Evangelist Luke mentions the joyful message of the angel to the shepherds: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men” (Luke 2:11, 13-14).

As far as the nature and the property of the angels, Saint Paul says that they are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Hebrews 1:14). Interpreting these words, Saint Theophylaktos says: “it stimulates the minds of the hearers by showing the great

guardianship of God towards us, that even the angels who are superior in relation to us have been ordered to minister to our salvation". This, after all, is confirmed by the Lord's words: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10). For this, Zigavinos says: "that the angels have so much boldness before God that they forever behold God in the heavens".

Indeed, the angels exist in the heavens where they see God the Father. And this is because, as the psalmist says, "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all" (Psalm 103:19). And the Kingdom of God which dominates or rather is extended to the whole creation, is no other than the creation of the whole world, both visible and invisible, and man is its crown, who has been created according to the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen. 1:2).

It is noteworthy that the "image" refers to the soul of man, while the "likeness" to his will is man's free will to reach perfection. Let us hear Saint Basil the Great: "The image is given to us by nature, while the likeness we acquire later in accordance and by one's own judgment".

In other words, the likeness begins in our earthly life and reaches its peak in the heavenly life, where "we shall be like him [God]; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). And it is true, as Saint Paul says, that as long as we are in this corrupt body we sigh because it is with much desire that we long to put on us, like another garment, the permanent dwelling place which will be given to us in heaven. "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (2 Cor. 5:2).

From the abiding abode in the heavens emanates the joy of incorruption. And this, because all who dwell in the heavenly city, I mean the orders of the Holy Angels, have incorruptible bodies, says Saint Cyril of Alexandria.

Our Holy Church honours and venerates the synaxis of the holy bodiless and heavenly hosts, and especially their Supreme

Commanders Gabriel and the most distinguished Michael the Commander because they have displayed many offers and benefits to our human race. Moreover, the Commander of the angels Michael is the one who gathered all the angelic orders and said "Pay heed" when he saw the apostate angels, namely the proud satan falling down from heaven, as we heard in today's Gospel narrative when the Lord said to His Disciples "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18).

Interpreting these words of the Lord, Saint Basil the Great says that satan fell from the power he once possessed: "namely from his own power and fell down so that he may be stepped upon by those who hope in Christ".

The "pay heed" of Archangel Michael on the one hand, and the command of our Saviour Jesus Christ "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20) on the other, are addressed to us who have been renewed and hope in Christ crucified and resurrected, as Saint Peter preaches: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3).

Therefore, let us say along with the hymnographer: "Wherever thy grace casteth its shadow, O Archangel, thence is the power of the devil driven away, for fallen Lucifer cannot bear to stand before thy light. Wherefore, we implore thee to extinguish his fiery darts cast against us, and by thy mediation deliver us from his stumbling blocks, O praiseworthy Archangel Michael" (Glory of praises). Amen. Many happy returns and blessed Christmas!"

At noon Archbishop Damascene hosted a reception and a meal.

2. In the Old City of Jerusalem, at the Holy Monastery of the Archangels, Vespers on Sunday afternoon was led by the Hegoumen and renovator of the Church, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda, with the co-celebration of the Elder Dragoman Archimandrite Mattheos, Archimandrite Ieronymos,

Arab-speaking Priests and Hierodeacon Simeon. The chanting was delivered by Mr Vasilios Gotsopoulos and the students of the Patriarchal School of Zion, with the participation in prayer of Greeks and other faithful Christians and nuns. On Monday morning the Divine Liturgy was officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, with the co-celebration of Archimandrite Dionysios, Fr Nectarios and Hierodeacons Simeon and Patrikios, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras.

The Episcopal Entourage and the congregation were offered a reception by the Hegoumen of the Monastery, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE FEAST OF THE HOLY ARCHANGELS IN JERUSALEM**

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By the term "Synaxis", the Church means the assembly – gathering of its members, in order to give thanks and praise the Archangels and especially the Archangel Michael because he resisted the rebellion of Lucifer against God saying: "Let us stand firm and in fear » and he was assembled as the archangel in the name of the Most High God.

This holiday was celebrated in Jerusalem, in the Holy Monastery of the Archangels in the Old City of Jerusalem, with Vespers led by the Hegoumen of this Monastery and renovator of this Church, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda, with

the co-celebration of the Elder Dragoman Archimandrite Mattheos, Archimandrite Ieronymos, Arab-speaking Priests and Hierodeacon Simeon. The chanting was delivered by Mr Vasilios Gotsopoulos and the Patriarchal School of Zion students, with the participation in prayer of Greeks and other faithful Christians and nuns. On Monday morning the Divine Liturgy was officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, with the co-celebration of Archimandrite Dionysios, Fr Nectarios and Hierodeacons Simeon and Patrikios, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras.

The Episcopal Entourage and the congregation were offered a reception by the Hegoumen of the Monastery, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# **THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR GEORGE THE TROPHY-BEARER IN JERUSALEM AND BETHLEHEM**

On Wednesday, November 3/16, 2022, the commemoration of the transfer of the relics of the Holy great martyr George the trophy-bearer was also celebrated in the Old City of Jerusalem.

1. Within the Old City of Jerusalem and next to the Holy Monastery of the Holy Archangels, at the Monastery of Saint George, the so-called "hospital". In honour of the

Saint, Vespers was held in the evening and the Divine Liturgy in the morning, presided over by Archimandrite Philotheos, the Patriarchal Commissioner in Acre, with the co-celebration of Fr Athanasios, at the chanting of Mr Vasilios Gotsopoulos with the students of the Patriarchal School of Zion. The service was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras and many pilgrims.

After the Divine Liturgy, Nun Pansemni, who took good care of the Monastery and preserved its icons, offered a reception for all at the Hegoumeneion.

2. In the Holy Monastery of Saint George at the Jewish Quarter, also the Divine Liturgy in the morning was held by Hieromonk Chrysostomos of Mount Athos, at the chanting of the Abbess Marianna and Nun Christina with the attendance of pious pilgrims.

After the Divine Liturgy, the Abbess Marianna, who renovated the Church and had the iconographies made, offered a reception at the hegoumeneion and the forecourt of the Monastery.

3. In Bethlehem district, the feast was held at the Holy Church of Saint George Al Khader. The Liturgy was officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Theophanes of Gerassa with the co-celebration of Archimandrite Ignatios, Fr Elias, Fr Nectarios and Hierodeacon Dositheos.

The Episcopal Entourage and the congregation were offered a reception by the Hegoumen Archimandrite Porfyrios.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# THE FEAST OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINT GEORGE THE GREAT MARTYR IN LYDDA

On Wednesday, November 3/16, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the glorious great martyr George the Trophy-bearer in Lydda, at his holy church and tomb.

On this day, the Church does not celebrate the memory of his martyrdom, which took place in Rome under Diocletian, but the memory of the repatriation, that is, the transfer of his relics from Rome to Lydda, his mother's hometown, in accordance with his command to his servant before his martyrdom.

The holy relic was indeed brought back and buried in Lydda. When in the meantime piety shone forth, Saint Helen built a temple around the Saint's tomb and its consecration took place. Today, on the 3rd of November, the Church celebrates the feast of the transfer of the relics and the consecration of the Church in Lydda, while his martyrdom is celebrated on the 23rd of April.

At the celebration in honour of this event, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos officiated the Divine Liturgy, with the co-celebration of their Eminences the Archbishops, Damascene of Yaffo, Aristarchos of Constantina and Philoumenos of Pella and many Priests, the Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, the Archimandrites Ieronymos, Nifon, Artemios and Andreas. The chanting was delivered by the Byzantine choir of the Arab-speaking community of Lydda, in the presence of the representative of the Greek Embassy to Tel Aviv Mr Panagiotis Mitropoulos, the representative of the Cypriot Embassy to Tel Aviv Mrs Louiza Varakla, the representative of the Georgian Embassy to Tel Aviv Mr Lasa and



the Scouts and representatives of the Franciscan, Anglican and Druze Churches, and a prayerful congregation, pilgrims from Greece, Romania and localities from Galilee and the occupied territories.

His Beatitude addressed this congregation before the Holy Communion with the following Sermon:

“O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles” (Psalm 43:3) the psalmist proclaims.

Beloved brethren in Christ,

Reverend Christians and pilgrims

The joyful feast commemorating the consecration of this magnificent Church dedicated to Saint George the Great Martyr in your biblical town of Lydda has gathered us all to glorify in Eucharist the Holy God, Who has glorified His Great Martyr.

Having been brought up with the moral virtues and principles of the Christian faith by his pious parents, his Cappadocian father and Palestinian mother, George “became shrewd and brilliant in wars” according to his biographer. For this reason, he was promoted to the highest bodies of the Roman army by the emperor Diocletian.

Inspired by David’s words “send out thy light and thy truth”, as well as of those of the Lord, “fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28), Christ’s friend George, presented himself before Diocletian and preached boldly the mystery of the divine reverence, saying that Christ is God and the Son of God. This confession of the Christian faith was sealed by his martyr’s death.

And his martyr’s death made George known worldwide, where

myriads of people honorary bear his name, while a multitude of Churches has been dedicated to him. Among those Churches, the present one is distinguished, in your historical town of Lydda, which was constructed by the God-crowned and great King Constantine, and where the Saint's relics have been transferred and buried.

This God-pleasing event of the consecration of Saint George's Church and the deposition of his holy relics we celebrated festively today. It is noteworthy that the consecration of a house of worship of God refers to Christ's renewal of the old man, which is done by the gift of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of baptism, as Saint Paul preaches: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defiles the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3:16-17). And "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19). "Be renewed and discarding the old man, live in newness of life" Saint Gregory the Theologian says.

This means, my dear brethren, that God, namely the Holy Spirit, does not dwell in hand-made temples, but in the human body, in the heart of man. Let us hear the Evangelist Luke saying in the Acts of the Apostles, "But Solomon built him a house. Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?" (Acts 7:47-50).

Moreover, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, Saint Paul prays that Christ may dwell in their hearts through prayer. "For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith"

(Eph. 3:14-17).

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ is the One Who dwelt in George's heart and illumined his mind and also renewed his inner man, according to the example of the King-prophet David who says: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

Having in him the fulness of faith and the Holy Spirit, the brave George did not hesitate in any way before the Roman Emperor Diocletian and his men to declare himself a Christian and suffer the martyr's death for the truth of Christ. "For longing conquered nature, persuading the lover to pass through death to the Beloved, even Christ God, the Saviour of our souls" (Glory of praises) his hymnographer says.

Let us entreat George the trophy-bearer, whom we honour today in the consecration anniversary of the Church dedicated to him, that by his intercessions and those of the Ever-Virgin Mary the Mother of God, we may receive the renewal of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Amen! Many happy returns!"

A reception followed and at noon a meal was hosted by the Hegoumen Archimandrite Markellos and the Council of the Community.

**From Secretariat-General**

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**THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GREAT  
MARTYR DEMETRIUS THE MYRRH-**

# STREAMER IN OLD NABLUS

On Friday, October 29 / November 11, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated with the transfer of the feast of the holy great martyr Demetrius the myrrh-streamer at his Holy Church, downtown the Old City of Naples, which is used by the Arabic-speaking Community for their worshipping needs.

The Divine Liturgy in honour of Saint Demetrius was presided over by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with the co-celebration of their Eminences, Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth and Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Hegoumen of Jacob's well Archimandrite Ioustinos, the Head of this Community, Archimandrite Leontios and Priest Lazarus from Nazareth. The chanting was delivered by the choir of this parish and the members of this Community participated in devotion.

Before the Holy Communion His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon:

"O Martyr Demetrius, thou great and glorious Saint, thy shining memorial hath cheered the whole Church of Christ while gathering all today worthily to hymn thee as a valorous soldier and destroyer of the foes, O godly-wise victor. Hence, save us from temptations, O Saint, by thine all-holy prayers", the hymnographer of the Church proclaims (Matins, sessional Hymn1).

*Beloved brothers in Christ,*

*Dear Christians,*

*The grace of the Holy Spirit has brought us all together today in the name of the Holy Great Martyr Dimitrios, in this historic place of Nablus, to celebrate his holy memory.*

*The miracle-working and myrrh-streamer Demetrius came from the*

city of Thessalonica and was distinguished by his piety and love for Christ. His divine zeal made him not only a disciple of Christ but also a wise teacher of the Christian and redeeming faith. This, on the other hand, was proven by his martyrdom, which he suffered under the Roman emperors, Diocletian and Maximian in the 3rd AD. Century.

The office of the teacher of Demetrius is particularly emphasized by the Holy Father of the Church Gregory of Palamas, who calls Demetrius "the great wonder of the world, the great beauty of the Church, ... the miracle worker and myrrh-streamer Demetrius".

Indeed, Demetrius was descended from an aristocratic family of Thessalonica, from which he received a Christian education from a young age, which made him a teacher of godly piety. This divine piety, which he made a way of life, was derived from the faithful study of the Holy Bible, listening to the prayerful words of the psalm: "Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments" (Psalm 119:66) and simply: teach me with common sense and science (so that I can distinguish good from evil, that is, show me the usefulness, ability of knowledge and discrimination. Saint Paul exhorts parents to this, saying: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

Saint Demetrius showed a special interest in the education of young people in Christ. That is why he had formed a circle of young people, engaged in the study and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. Among the young men was also his co-martyr, Nestor, who, before duelling with the killer Lyaeus, received the blessing of his teacher Demetrius: "So he came to the stage, saw Maximian, and said: "God of Demetrius help me" and he killed the arrogant Lyaeus. And immediately Maximian ordered that Saint Demetrius should be stabbed with spears, as the cause of the massacre of Lyaeus, and Saint Nestor should be put to the same sword" according to his Synaxarist [=

biographer].

The martyrdom of both Saints Demetrius and Nestor is expressed clearly by the hymn of the Church: "A great champion hath the whole world found thee to be when in grave perils? for thou dost put to fight the heathen, O victorious one. As thou didst humble Lyaeus' arrogance and gavest boldness to Nestor in the stadium, thus, O holy great martyr Demetrius, do thou entreat Christ God that we be granted great mercy" (Apolytikion).

Saint Demetrius became not only the patron saint of Thessalonica, but the saint of the world, and this is because through his preaching and martyrdom for Christ's death he destroyed, condemned in deed and theory the nations, i.e. the religion of the idolaters.

In other words, the Martyr Demetrius listened to the order of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16), and became light in the darkness of the idolatry of the world of his time. This is why the Lord says to him: "O Martyr Demetrius, thou boast of contest for Christ, apparelled with Him, thou foughtest as most mighty in war defeating the strengthless foe [namely the ruler of the darkness of this age] (cf. Ephesians 6:12); for in Christ didst thou destroy the fraud of the lawless and didst train the faithful to defend true religion" (Matins, sessional hymn 2, Glory).

Through his personality enlightened by the Holy Spirit, Demetrius, full of grace, contributed to the abolition of the devil's fallacy, thus becoming "infallible", that is, a teacher of believers in the mystery of piety, in the mystery of the divine providence of the Incarnation of the Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed with "the bath of immortality and the garment of incorruption", Saint Demetrius preached the truth, teaching

and saying through the mouth of Saint Paul: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto? whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Tim. 6:16). And more simply: God who has immortal life and who dwells in light, in whom no one can draw near, and the God whom none of the people had seen, nor can they see Him. "If the dwelling is inaccessible, how much more so is the One Who dwells therein", says Zigavinos.

This testimony of "the true and unattainable light of Christ" is preached and confessed by his incorruptible myrrh-exuding holy relic, which is kept and honoured in his magnificent temple in Thessalonica.

To this great martyr of the truth of Christ and the teacher and infallible of the mystery of piety, Demetrius the myrrh-streamer, let us, who honour his memory, pray, and after the hymnographer, we say: "Martyr of Christ Demetrius, as by God's grace aforetime thou didst destroy Lyaeus'scorn, his brutish pride and vaunting, and in the stadium gavest strength to the valiant Nestor by the great power of the Cross, O victorious athlete, so also now ever strengthen me by thine intercessions against the demons' treachery and soul-corrupting passions" (Exapostilarion). Amen. Many happy returns!"

After the Divine Liturgy, there was a reception and a meal was offered at noon.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR DEMETRIUS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday, October 26/November 8, 2022, the commemoration of the glorious great martyr Demetrius the myrrh-gusher was celebrated by the Patriarchate.

During this feast, the Church remembers how it was handed down to her that Saint Demetrius came from Thessaloniki, the son of pious parents and a teacher of the Christian faith.

When Maximianus came to Thessalonica, he learned of this and imprisoned him, as he was in the stadium watching the human race and Lyaios being carried away by his power.

Nestor the Christian, coming to the prison, asked for the blessing of Saint Demetrius in order to collude with Lyaios. Demetrius gave him the blessing, crossing himself with the sign of the Cross, telling him prophetically that "he will also defeat Lyaios and he will testify for Christ". Arriving at the stadium, Nestor got into a fight with Lyaios and managed to wound and kill him. When Maximian learned this, he felt sorry and, being informed that this happened with the blessing of Demetrius, he ordered his death in prison by spears and Nestor's death by the sword.

In their memory, Vespers and Divine Liturgy were held in the evening and the morning of the feast in the old chapel of Saint Demetrius in the Central Monastery. The services were officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Theophanes of Gerassa, with the co-celebration of the Typikon keeper and responsible for the chapel Archimandrite Alexios, the Archimandrites Makarios and Dionysios, Priest Nektarios and Hierodeacon Dositheos. The chanting was delivered by Mr Vasilios Gotsopoulos and the students of the Patriarchal School of



Zion, in the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras, of the Arabic-speaking students of the Patriarchal Arabic-speaking School of the same name, members of the Greek parish, the Arabic-speaking flock and pilgrims.

During the Divine Liturgy, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotaphite Fathers visited for veneration.

Before the Holy Communion, His Eminence delivered a Sermon about the martyr's love for Christ, through which he also defied death, and about the participation of all of us in the Mystery of the Eucharist and in the living Church.

In honour of Saint Demetrius, the students of the School held a modest school celebration in its ceremony hall.

This ceremony was honoured by the presence of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, who was accompanied by the President of the School Board, His Eminence Metropolitan Joachim of Hellenoupolis, and through the following address by Him in Arabic: (see video).

**From Secretariat-General**

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**DIVINE LITURGY AND MEMORIAL  
SERVICE OF THE FOUNDERS OF**

# **SAINT JAMES CATHEDRAL & THE LATE PATRIARCHS OF JERUSALEM**

Following the feast of Saint James the Brother of God in his Cathedral, on Friday 23rd October / 5th November 2022, in memory of the builders of this Cathedral and in memory of the Holy Forty Martyrs of the Holy Fathers consecrated in the chapel next to this church, Vespers was celebrated on Saturday afternoon.

On the morning of Sunday, October 24 / November 6, 2022, a Divine Liturgy was held in this Cathedral after the Memorial Service, which was held in the adjacent chapel of the holy Forty Martyrs, presided over by His Eminence, Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella, with the co-celebration by priests. The chanting was delivered by the Byzantine choir singers of the Cathedral in Arabic and Mr Vasilios Gotsopoulos in Greek, as the service was attended by members of this parish of the Arabic-speaking Community of the Patriarchate in Jerusalem.

Before the Holy Communion, His Eminence spoke about the personality of Saint James the Brother of God, the First Bishop of Jerusalem and his work for the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the world at large.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE FEAST OF SAINT JAMES THE**

# BROTHER OF THE GOD AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday, October 23 / November 5, 2022, the Feast of the Holy Glorious Apostle James the Brother of God was celebrated by the Patriarchate, which is the Enthronement Feast of the Patriarchate, as Saint James was the first Bishop of the Church of Jerusalem.

On this feast, the Church of Jerusalem commemorates that Saint James was ordained its bishop by the Lord and that he presided over the First Apostolic Synod of Jerusalem, in the year 49 AD. He opened the doors of the Church to the nations and left as a legacy to the Church his Catholic letter in the New Testament and his martyrdom. Saint James confessed Jesus as the Christ and for this, the rulers of the Jews pushed him down from the wing of the Temple in the year 62 AD and killed him.

In his memory, evening Vespers were held in his Cathedral, the one between the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Patriarchate, in which H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos presided. The Divine Liturgy in the morning was also officiated by H.H.B. with concelebrants their Eminences; Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias and the Archbishops; Arisarchos of Constantina, Theodosios of Sebasteia, the Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, the ministering Priests of the Cathedral, Fr Charalambos Bandour and Fr George Baramki, along with Priests from other Orthodox Churches. The chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon with the help of the Patriarchal School of Zion students in Greek and the Cathedral choir under Mr Rimon Kamar in Arabic, in the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras and in the participation in prayer of many believers from the

members of the parish of Saint James and pilgrims from Greece, Russia and Romania.

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

“Enlightened with the fiery brightness of the Divine Spirit, thou didst prove to be a divine zealot of piety, O James, Brother of God. Wherefore, He that in His compassion received thee as a brother, clothed thee like Aaron of old, but with raiment more venerable than that of the priesthood of the Law. O thou who art glorious among the Apostles, entreat Christ that our souls be saved” the hymnographer of the Church proclaims (Menaion, Glory of praises).

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

Reverend Christians and pilgrims

The grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us all, the people of godly mind, to celebrate in Eucharist and Doxology the sacred commemoration of the Brother and disciple of the Lord, James the Just, who became the first Hierarch of the Church of Jerusalem.

Indeed, Saint James was established as a zealot or reverence by the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, namely a faithful disciple of Christ and preacher of the mystery of the Divine Providence, the foretold mystery of the Incarnation of God the Word, according to the Prophets of the Law of Moses.

This is clearly expressed in his Catholic Epistle to the twelve tribes of the Christian Jews that were dispersed around the nations, where he writes: “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting” (James 1:1).

The purpose of this Letter of Apostle James was the comfort of those suffering various trials and the control of abuses, the

redress of deviations and “the form of sound words” (2 Tim. 1:13) of the Christian doctrine and the redeeming true faith, which is no other than the wisdom that is from above. “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy” (James 3:17). [In simple words, the wisdom that is given by God, is firstly pure from every impure incentive, then it is peaceful, indulgent and sympathetic to the ignorance and imperfection of others, willing to obey and free from stubbornness, full of mercy and good works, free from the hesitations of doubt, and alien to hypocrisy].

According to Ecumenios the interpreter, “the wisdom from above” (cf. James 3:17) is “pure and taintless, notwithstanding any of the carnal things”, in no way tolerating the carnal mindset, because it operates under the light of the power of the Holy Spirit, through Whom the heart of man is made pure. For this reason, Saint James invokes the power of prayer saying “Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms” (James 5:13).

To confirm this, he refers to the example of the Prophet Elijah saying, “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit” (James 5:17-18).

The Lord says to King Solomon: “And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there forever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually” (3 Kings 9:3).

“In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Phil. 4:6), Saint Paul advises. And our Lord Jesus Christ, Who showed us the

manner of prayer, says: "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22).

And Saint James, who for his excessive righteousness was called "the Just", had had his knees hardened like those of a camel because he was unceasingly praying on his knees, "worshipping God and asking for the remission of the sins of the people".

Full of righteousness and piety, the according to the flesh relative of Jesus Christ, he was ordained the first Bishop of Jerusalem by the Lord Himself and was the first one to write the Divine Liturgy. During the first Synod of the Apostles and Presbyters in Jerusalem (Acts 15:6), Saint James stands out, having the leading role in the Church. His Priestly ministry and excellent apostolic work were sealed by his martyr's blood. During Passover's feast, he was called to testify before the people about Christ, and he confessed that Jesus is the Son of Man and sits at the right of God's greatness.

In his Letter to the Galatians, Saint Paul calls James the Just "a pillar" of the Church (Gal. 2:9). He does so, due to James' leading status, the spiritual authority of the interpretation of the teaching of Christ, on the basis of which the Christian community was organized in the Holy Land and in Jerusalem. It is also noteworthy that James calls himself a servant of Christ: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (James 1:1). And according to Saint Paul, "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise, also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (1 Cor. 7:22).

This very phrase of Saint James "a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ" is embodied and witnessed by the Christian Community throughout the centuries, knowingly and consciously, that is, members of the living body of the local Church of Jerusalem. This very freedom in Christ from the bondage of corruption (Romans 8:21) is also testified today by the festive

commemoration of the Holy Glorious Apostle James the Brother of God and the first Hierarch of Jerusalem.

Let us, therefore, say along with the hymnographer, "Distinguished among the Apostles as the brother and successor of Christ the Chief Shepherd, thou didst love death for His sake, and wast not ashamed of martyrdom, O glorious James. Entreat Him unceasingly that our souls be saved" (Vespers, aposticha Glory). Amen! Many Happy Returns!"

The Divine Liturgy was followed by the ascent to the roofs of Saint Constantine, where the Bishops were waiting and escorted His Beatitude to the Patriarchate, passing through the Gate of the Central Monastery, and receiving the small loaves of bread as a blessing of the Patriarchate's bakery from the baker Gerontissa Seraphima.

At the Patriarchate's Main Hall, His Beatitude addressed those present with the following address:

"Thou didst set forth the law of life for the Church of Christ, ordaining and proclaiming it in the life-creating Spirit" O most wise James, the hymnographer of the Church proclaims (Matins, Ode 3, Troparion 3).

Your Excellency Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras,

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brethren,

Reverend Christians and pilgrims,

Today the Holy Church of Jerusalem celebrates the sacred commemoration of the Holy Hieromartyr and Apostle James the Brother of God, who became the first Bishop of Jerusalem, and was ordained by the Lord Himself, as his hymnographer clearly says: "The Word of God, the Father's Only-begotten, came down and dwelt here in our midst in these last days. He then appointed thee as the first shepherd of all-holy Jerusalem,

and He made thee her teacher and a faithful steward of lofty spiritual mysteries. For this cause, as is meet, O wondrous James, O blest Apostle, we all praise and honour thee" (Kontakion).

For this reason, we went to the Cathedral dedicated to him, which is adjacent to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where we celebrated the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy, thanking God Who gave us a Just Hierarch and Shepherd as well as a faithful steward of the spiritual sacraments of the Church.

Saint James commemoration is of particular importance for the Church of Jerusalem, as it refers to the God-founded and God-man institution of hers; "every institution is a work of its legislator", Saint Dionysios the Areopagite says. Referring to the Episcopal office of Christ, Saint Paul says: "We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:1-2).

The leader of "this true tabernacle" namely of the Church, the "apostle and great high priest of our faith, Jesus Christ" (cf. Hebrews 3:1-2) but also the "Chief Shepherd" (1 Peter 5:4), the Holy and Just James, along with his other apostles and disciples. The leading status of the Brother of God as the High Priest and Apostle of the Mother of Churches was strengthened at the first apostolic synod (AD 49) in Jerusalem, which he also led.

This Holy and Apostolic Synod which was inspired by the Holy Spirit under the presidency of Saint James established the apostolic institution of the Church, namely the apostolic succession of its Shepherds and founded its canonical order. The apostolic succession and the canonical order constitute the unity of the Church in the Holy Spirit. That is why Saint Paul entreats, "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). And the Hieromartyr James



advises: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you... Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:7,10).

The Holy Church of Jerusalem boasts in the Lord today for its first Hierarch, "made a minister, according to the dispensation of God" (cf, Col. 1:25) for our sakes. Therefore, we cry out loud along with the hymnographer: "Distinguished among the Apostles as the brother and successor of Christ the Chief Shepherd, thou didst love death for His sake, and wast not ashamed of martyrdom, O glorious James. Entreat Him unceasingly that our souls be saved" (Vespers, aposticha Glory). Amen! Many Happy Returns!"

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE SCHOOL CELEBRATION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF OCTOBER 28, 1940 AT THE PATRIARCHATE**

On Friday, October 15/28, 2022, a celebration of the Patriarchal School of Zion took place in its ceremony hall, on the hill of Holy Zion in memory and honour of the national anniversary of October 28, 1940.

The ceremony was honoured primarily with her presence by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and the sponsor of the Patriarchate, Mr Athanasios Martinos, the Consul General of Greece, Mr Evangelos Vlioras, the President of the School Board, His Eminence Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, Hagiotaphite Archimandrites and Priests, and

Archimandrite Antypas from Mount Athos, members of the Greek Community and pilgrims from Greece.

The well-organized program of the celebration began with the Prologue by the Schoolmaster Archimandrite Mattheos and the solemn speech by the School teacher, Hierodeacon Dositheos.

The courageous attitude of the Greeks of the generation of 1940, inherited by our ancestors of old was recreated and presented in both the above speeches as well as in the readings and reciting by the students of the School and in the performances of the songs on stage as well as from the screen scenes.

Through this mindset, Greece faced and repelled, initially through the courageous "no" of Prime Minister Metaxas, the Fascist Italian invasion, then the inhumane Nazi German occupation, which caused the confiscation of property and homes, starvation and individual and group executions. These are just a few of the crimes-scars of Hitler's German occupation.

All the regions of Greece, from Epirus and Thrace to the Peloponnese and Crete, resisted these, fighters and people, women and men, young and old, delayed Germany's invasion of Russia and brought about its downfall.

His Beatitude and the Consul General Mr Evangelos Vlioras praised the achievements and dedication of the students in this celebration and the successful creation of a spirit of modest national pride.

His Beatitude thanked the Managing Director of the School and the teachers for the perfect organization of the celebration and Mr Martinos for his practical financial support to the Patriarchate and for taking on the responsibility of renovating the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

He also thanked the Consul General for his lively and

practical interest in the School. He especially thanked the Managing Director of the School Archimandrite Mattheos for choosing students for the school's operation, which is a continuation of the life of the Patriarchate.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE ANNIVERSARY OF OCTOBER 28, 1940 AT THE PATRIARCHATE**

On Friday, October 15/28, 2022, the national anniversary of October 28, 1940, was celebrated by the Patriarchate.

On this day at around 10.30 a.m., a Doxology was held in the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

This Doxology was held as a thanksgiving to God for His help to our nation to repel and defeat the German Nazi and Italian Fascist forces during the war of 1944-1945, as a prayer for the repose of the fathers who fought and fell heroically in this fight.

The doxology was presided over by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, of the Holy Sepulchre High Priests and Hieromonks and deacons co-ministering with Him and of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem, Mr Evangelos Vlioras and of the staff of the Greek Consulate General, Holy Sepulchre monks, members of the Greek Embassy and the Arab-speaking flock of the Patriarchate.

After the Doxology, a reception followed in the Patriarchate.

Then His Beatitude spoke through the following address in

Greek:

His Excellency Consul General of Greece Mr Evangelos Vlioras,

Dear Holy Fathers and Brothers,

Reverend Christians and pilgrims,

The celebration of the anniversary of October 28, 1940, is a sacred commemoration of the historical indelible event of those who defended the honour, freedom, and national territorial integrity of our fallen fathers and brothers against the arrogant invasion of Fascism and the military forces of Fascism.

The group and cold-blooded executions of our innocent fellow human beings, men and women and children, but also the concentration camps and the systematic genocide of hundreds, thousands of people are the undeniable testimonies of the Nazis possessed by the diabolical hatred. "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer", (1 John 3:15), says Saint John the Theologian.

Hence, Our Mediocrity, accompanied by the honourable members of our Venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood as well as pious people along with the visiting pilgrims, went to the Most Holy Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where we offered thanksgiving praise "to the Holy Triune God" Who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Cf. 1 Cor 15,57).

Moreover, we prayed for eternal memory and blessed repose of the souls of those who fought heroically and of those who were martyred for the faith and the country of our blessed race and nation.

The blasphemy against the human person, the apparent insanity, the pride and the stupidity of the Nazis, these evil things, the ones that caused the Second World War, unfortunately, did not achieve anything, as the psalmist also says: "The Lord

looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps. 14, 2-3).

We say this because the demonstrated self-sacrifice of the Greek fighters in the field of frontal combat against the unrepentant invaders on the tops of the wild mountains of Northern Epirus was burning with the fire of love for the country and freedom. The generative cause of the admirable heroism of the Greeks was faith in God and the power of prayer.

The Greek-Christian and Greek-Orthodox mindset, which is highlighted today by the solemn anniversary of October 28, 1940, was admired by the nations and peoples of the earth. And this is because our enemies were "brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright" (Cf. Psalm 19:9).

The epic of 1940 was recognized internationally as a prominent event in world history on the one hand and a distinguished station in the historical course of the Greek Nation on the other. The epic of 1940 demonstrated boldly that "God is not unjust", (Heb. 6-10) and "his righteousness endures forever" (2 Cor. 9,9).

Today humanity is threatened by the veiled form of Nazism and Fascism and we are referring to the violent invasion of the ideology of the so-called "New Order of things", where an international political and economic ruler is a group of "crooked and perverse" (Phil. 2:15) people – according to Paul – they impose and legitimize their morbid self-religion in the name of so-called human rights. There is no lack of those who alter the historical truth, thus reducing the moral value of the ideals, which highlighted the unrepeatable epic of 1940.

Therefore, we are called to preserve the epic of 1940 as a sacred tradition for the coming generations, listening to the

order of the wise Paul saying: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16,13). This legacy of our Orthodox faith and sacred tradition as well as cultural and historical heritage was sealed by the sacrificial blood of the martyrs and freedom fighters, but also by the unsullied ethnic Rum-Orthodox sentiment of the people against the powerful German military forces.

In conclusion, let us cry out loud;

Long live the "No" of October 28, 1940!

Long live the pious Nation of the Romans!

Long live Greece!

Long live our Venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood!"

The Consul General of Greece responded to His Beatitude's Message as follows:

"Your Beatitude,

Venerable High Priests,

Dear Fathers,

Dear children,

Colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

With national pride, Greeks everywhere, today we celebrate the anniversary of October 28, 1940, a focal point of memory and honour for one of the most glorious moments of our modern history that encapsulates the memories, experiences and values that have always guided our national life.

Today's anniversary of October 28, 1940, 82 years since that glorious moment that is a point of reference for Hellenism

everywhere, gives us the opportunity to recall in our thoughts and in our hearts the generation of men, women and children who filled the collective our history with countless pages of heroism, self-denial and self-sacrifice.

In the mountains of Epirus, in the ravines of Albania, in the fortresses of Macedonia, in the waters of the Aegean, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, in the Middle East, in occupied Greece, in all the "places where there were no daily and school days", according to Odysseus Elytis, the Greeks, gave everything they had most precious to preserve our national independence and integrity, timeless ideals of all the struggles of the Nation from 1821, until today.

Giorgos Seferis, seconded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Directorate of Foreign Press at the competent deputy ministry, recorded in his diary that historic day, as follows: "I fell asleep at two in the morning, reading Makrigiannis. At half past three, a voice on the phone woke me up: "We are at war." Nothing else, the world had changed. The dawn, which a little later I saw breaking behind Hymettos, was another dawn: unknown. She is still waiting where I left her. I don't know how long he will wait, but I know he will bring the great noon."

And the "great noon" united and brought together the whole of Greece. Organizations, bodies, spiritual institutions, the Church, ordinary citizens, old people, women, and children, all participate directly in the titanic effort to strengthen the front. As the historian Marina Petraki writes: "with enthusiasm and passion, stirred by the flags, the war marches and the voice of the announcer on the radio, [the Greeks] dress in khaki and start for the front as if going to a celebration. And it was indeed a celebration. The most brilliant celebration of modern Greek history. Although they had five days to report, eighty per cent showed up on the first day."

The Archbishop of Athens and All Greece Chrysanthos, in his message on October 28, 1940, encourages the Greeks, reminding them of the power of faith and prayer.

“The Church believes that the children of the Motherland, obeying the will of Her and God, will hasten with one soul and heart to fight for altars and hearths and for Freedom and honour and will thus continue the uninterrupted for centuries series of honourable and glorious struggles [....] “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” [Matt. 10-28]. Let’s cast our care on the Lord and He will be a helper and a perceiver in the defence against the unjust attack of the enemies. These in chariots and these on horses, and we in the name of the Lord God and in bravery and courage are magnified.”

The atmosphere of war creates an unprecedented rivalry, which motivates and captivates a huge army of civilians in the rear, fighting alongside the armed force of the front line, creating an unrepeatabe moment in Greek History.

To everyone, the known and the unknown, soldiers and civilians, who defended our national dignity with heroism, self-denial, self-sacrifice and bravery during the war and later, during the years of cruel occupation, until the liberation of Greece, we reverently bend the knee.

As Greeks who have the privilege and responsibility to leave or serve in the Holy Land, we recall, today, with emotion, in our memory, the eighty fallen that Greece left on these soils, during the Second World War, in Cemeteries of Haifa, Ramle and Gaza City.

Akir Airport, near the city of Ramle, was also the cradle for the rebirth of our Air Force in the Middle East in September 1941.

After all, we should not forget that when the fortunes of the



War appeared negative for the Allied Struggle, Jerusalem and the Consulate General of the Motherland in this city were, from June to August 1942, the seat of the Government of Free Greece, with the blessed Patriarch Timotheus, the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and the Hellenism of the city, the majority of them refugees from Asia Minor, to offer all possible help to the Vice-President of the Government Panagiotis Kanellopoulos, to the members of the Government, to the officers and staff of our Armed Forces, to service agents, including Giorgos Seferis and to refugees, from Alexandria and Cairo, including the writer Stratis Tsirkas.

The national anniversary of October 28 does not merely testify to a historical event but reveals our collective identity based on universal values: democracy, love of freedom, national dignity, commitment to the performance of duty and awareness of the debt towards History.

Your Beatitude,

Venerable High Priests,

Dear Fathers,

Dear children,

Colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

In difficult and particularly conflicting times, the Venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood bear witness to and reinforce the Resurrection Message and the timelessness of our Orthodox Faith and the presence of Hellenism in the Holy Land.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, as the pre-eminent exponent of the Orthodox faith and the Greek tradition, remains, throughout the centuries, a living example of God-bearing life, faith and hope and a guardian of our moral and spiritual

values.

In our age, as in any other, national unity and vigilance, adherence to the moral and spiritual values of our Orthodox faith and the ideals of freedom and democracy, are essential resources for our effective response to circumstances.

The anniversary of October 28, 1940, reminds us that the unity and the strong will of the Greek people to preserve their freedom and national pride determined the victorious outcome of this struggle.

With these thoughts in mind, I invite everyone to exclaim:

Long live October 28, 1940!

Long live Greece!"

In the afternoon of the same day, a school ceremony will take place in the Patriarchal School on the hill of Zion.

**From Secretariat-General**