

THE FEAST OF THE MONDAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AT THE HOLY ZION

On Monday, May 31/June 13,2022, the feast of the Holy Spirit was celebrated according to the book of Pentecostarion. The Church dedicates this day especially to the Holy Spirit, as He came down in the form of tongues of fire on the disciples' heads and enlightened and strengthened them to preach the marvels of God in boldness and bravery.

“Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast shown forth the fishermen as supremely wise by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them didst draw the world into Thy net” and saved it.

This feast was celebrated with Vespers on Sunday afternoon and the reading of the kneeling service at the Pentecost chapel inside the cemetery of the Holy Zion by His Eminence Archbishop Nectarios of Anthedona, with the co-celebration of Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and the Priests of Saint James Cathedral.

On Monday morning, the day of the feast of the Holy Spirit, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Church of the Holy Trinity in the Patriarchate's Monastery on Zion hill, by His Eminence Archbishop Nectarios of Anthedona with the co-celebration of Archimandrites Klaudios and Ieronymos, Priest Nectarios and Hierodeacon Dositheos. The chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon and the Patriarchal School Students, as the service was attended by many faithful Christians and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras.

The Divine Liturgy was followed by a procession to David's Tomb and the Upper Room where the prayers of the kneeling

service were read at the chapel of the Holy Zion in the catacomb on the east side of the Church, at the Upper Room, and supplications were offered at David's Tomb, and in front of the cemetery gate for the repose of the souls of the departed.

The Episcopal Entourage and the congregation were offered a reception by the Managing Director of the School, Archimandrite Mattheos.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST AT THE PATRIARCHATE

The Feast of Pentecost was celebrated on Sunday, May 30/ June 12, 2022, at the Patriarchate.

On this feast, the whole Church and especially the Church of Jerusalem commemorates in joy, gleefulness and doxology that fifty days after the Lord's Resurrection, and ten days after the Ascension, the Lord, Who had ascended in the heavens and sat by the right side of the Father and deified the human form that He had received for us, fulfilled His promise to His disciples, and sent through the Father the Holy Spirit, the other Comforter, in the form of tongues of fire, which sat on top of each disciple's head. With the Holy Spirit, they received the gift to speak about the marvels of God in 'foreign languages' to the gathered crowds who believed and got baptised, who according to the book of Acts (Acts ch. 2) were 'three thousand souls' and they established the first Church.

This wondrous event was celebrated on Sunday morning with the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Sepulchre, which was led by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with the co-celebration of their Eminences, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, the Archbishops, Theophanes of Gerassa, Aristarchos of Constantina, Theodosios of Sebastia, Nectarios of Anthedona, Philoumenos of Pella, the Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, Archimandrite Klaudios, Arab-speaking Priests and Priests from Russia, Romania and Georgia. Many faithful Christians attended the Service, as well as the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras.

The Divine Liturgy was followed by the Service of Vespers for the Monday of the Holy Spirit, with the prayers of the kneeling service.

After the Services the Patriarchal Entourage returned to the Patriarchate Reception Hall, where His Beatitude gave His blessing to all present.

From Secretariat-General

THE SATURDAY OF THE SOULS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

The Saturday of the Souls was celebrated by the Patriarchate on May 29/ June 11, 2022, with the prayers for the repose of the souls of our departed fathers and brethren of old.

On Friday afternoon Vespers was held at the Church of Saint Constantine and Helen, where His Beatitude our Father and

Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos led the Canon of the dead followed by the reading of the names of the departed Hagiotaphite Patriarchs, Archbishops, Priests, Hieromonks, Hierodeacons, monks and nuns.

On Saturday morning the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the chapel of the Holy Zion cemetery by His Eminence Archbishop Theophanes of Gerassa, the names of the departed Fathers, clergy and laity who are buried there were commemorated, and the Trisagion was read over their graves for the repose of their souls.

From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM CELEBRATES THE DIVINE LITURGY AT THE COMMUNITY TUR'AN OF GALILEE

On Sunday, May 23/ June 5, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the Feast of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council in Nice, under the order of Constantine the Great, where they refuted Arius and established the doctrine of the One Essence of the Son with the Father as read in the Creed.

This feast was celebrated in all the Churches of the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate and at the Holy Church of Saint George the Trophy Bearer in the Community Tur'an of Galilee, near the town of Cana. The 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, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Dean Priest of the Community Fr Spyridon, Fr Simeon and other Arab-speaking and Russian Priests. The chanting was delivered by Archimandrite Artemios, the Hegoumen of Haifa, in Greek and the parish choir in Arabic. The Liturgy was attended by the Orthodox congregation of this parish which the Hagiotaphite Archimandrites Timotheos and Hilarion served in the past.

Before the Holy Communion His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon in Greek and in Arabic and offered an icon to be kept in the Church:

“Making careful inquiry, with the Divine Spirit’s guidance, and joining together all knowledge of things spiritual, as the scribes of God, the august Fathers wrote that most blessed Symbol, the august Creed of our holy faith, wherein they clearly teach that, with His Begetter, the Word of God is also co-beginningless and is consubstantial with Him in truth. For these godly-minded all-glorious, and truly blessed Saints openly followed with fervent faith all that the Apostles taught” (Matins, Troparion 1 of the Fathers, Praises) the hymnographer of the Church proclaims.

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

Noble Christians

The Grace of the All-holy Spirit has guided our footsteps to your town Tur’an of Galilee, to co-celebrate today, on the seventh Sunday after Pascha the First Ecumenical Council of Nice, of the three-hundred and eighteen God-bearing Fathers in AD 325.

These God-bearing Fathers, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and through the hands of the Apostles, who bore the Spirit, became genuine descendants of Christ’s Disciples and Apostles and Shepherds and Teachers of the Church as the most genuine servants of Christ, and followers of the Apostle’s

teachings, as the hymnographer says.

Today's Gospel narrative according to the Evangelist John refers to the Episcopal prayer that the Lord prays to God the Father for His disciples, saying: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (John 17:11-13).

In His prayer, our Lord Jesus Christ asks God the Father that His disciples may remain united in Him as well as with each other in the bond of love according to the prototype of the union of Christ the Son and Word of God with His Father. On the other hand, He asks His Father that the Disciples may have in them the perfect joy that He feels, as He returns to God the Father. Interpreting the Lord's word, "that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (John 17:13), Saint Cyril of Alexandria wonders: "what is that fulfilled joy? To know and believe not only that Christ was human for us, but that He was human in everything among us except sin, and that He is the true God".

The Holy Church of Christ honours especially the God-bearing and Spirit-bearing Fathers because they fought like the Apostles of Christ for the unity of the faith, namely the steadfastness of the faith, and of course, for the unity of the Church, whose the whole institution is composed by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Fathers of the Church, my dear brethren, are those who set the doctrine of the one Triune God, one Trinity, of the same essence and divinity, and gave to the Church the mystery of Theology, which is the Holy Trinity, as the hymnographer of the Church says: "Let us acclaim today those

mystical trumpets of the Spirit, namely the God-bearing Fathers, who, in the midst of the Church, sang a harmonious song of Theology, teaching that the Trinity is one, identical in essence and Godhead; they are the refuters of Arius and the foremost warriors of the Orthodox. And they ever intercede with the Lord that our souls find mercy" (Glory of Vespers).

The Fathers that convened the First Ecumenical Council in Nice in AD 325 refuted, as it is known, the heretic Arius, because along with those who had the same beliefs as him, he "erred concerning the truth" (ref. 2 Tim. 2:18). Therefore, we, my dear ones, are called to the same thing as the Holy Fathers, according to Saint Paul, so that we carefully follow his God-inspired words to his disciple: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker" (2 Tim. 2:15-17).

Indeed, my brethren, it is just like a canker that the irreverent messages of the "so-called" New Order are brought forth, the messages of the Globalization. The aim of the New Order is the denial of the principles and redeeming morals of the Gospel, namely the denial of Christ and His Name. "God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9). However, we should not be afraid, because our Lord Jesus Christ promised His Disciples before departing from them and ascending into the heavens: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:18). I will not leave you alone, I will come in a short while to you through the other Comforter, namely the Spirit of Truth, which will abide in you and unite you with me as members of mine.

Behold, therefore, why the Lord asks God the Father "that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (John 17:13). Christ is the joy of the Church and also the joy of those who love Him and commune with His precious Body and Blood. That is

why He says, "enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:23). And according to Saint Paul, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace" (Gal. 5:22).

This joy of the Holy Spirit did the Most Blessed Mother of God enjoy when the Saviour fulfilled the mystery that had been hidden for centuries at His Ascension in the Heavens, as the hymnographer says: "for it was meet that she who, as should also partake of the surpassing joy of the glorification of Thy flesh, O Master, whereof we also have partaken through Thine Ascension to the Heavens, and we glorify Thy great mercy toward us" (Both Now, Aposticha Vespers). Moreover, "following the divine doctrines (of the Fathers) and believing with assurance, we worship, in one Godhead, the Father, Son and All-holy Spirit, the Trinity one in essence" (Glory, Aposticha of Vespers). Amen! Many happy returns."

At the meal His Beatitude again addressed all present as follows:

"Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen" (Deuteronomy 10: 20-21), the Holy Bible writes.

Honourable President and Respected members of the Ecclesiastical Committee,

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brothers,

Beloved Brethren,

Today's celebration of the Holy Fathers who convened the First Ecumenical Council in Nice in AD 325, which was under the order of the pious Emperor of the Rum Orthodox Christians Constantine the Great, has special importance for us Christians who live in the Holy Land and for the wider Middle East.

We say this because indeed the historical and great event of the First Ecumenical Council of the Church signified the precision of the Orthodox faith on the one hand, and on the other, it shaped the cultural and national-religious identity of the faithful members of the Church.

The First Ecumenical Council in Nice is the one that handed over to the Orthodox Church the name "Roumiye" and to the citizens of the Empire the title "Rum". And this is because the Church is the body of Christ and bears His name, "which is above all other name" (Phil. 2:9), and it had a super national character according to Saint Paul's teaching: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-28).

This very unadulterated apostolic tradition of the faith which was kept by the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, as well as the spiritual grandeur of the cultural heritage of Romiosyni is carried out by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Church of Jerusalem, the Mother of all Churches.

The unceasing and living historical presence of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem throughout the centuries is the irrefutable witness of the Christian presence in the Holy Land and of the sacred institution of the Church which has been founded by the redeeming blood of Christ.

The God-bearing Fathers who gathered from all parts of the earth in Nice gave the doctrine of our Orthodox faith and Theology, namely the doctrine of the Holy Trinity through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit and not through contemplative reasonings and philosophical inventions, as Saint Gregory the Theologian says: "we theologise with the simplicity of the fishermen's faith".

Our Holy Church of Jerusalem, my dear brethren, is not only the point of reference for us Christians, but also the guarantee of our existence according to the Lord's word: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

Let our boast then be the God of our Fathers and the Church of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who was Ascended into the Heavens and has not been separated from us. Many happy and blessed returns. Amen!"

At noon the Community hosted a meal for His Beatitude and the members of His Entourage.

After the meal the couple Abu Rami and Im-Rami honoured at their house the Patriarchal Entourage with a variety of delicacies.

From Secretariat-General

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE GOD-CROWNED SOVEREIGNS AND EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES CONSTANTINE AND HELEN AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Friday, May 21/ June 3, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of the Holy glorious God-crowned and equal to the Apostles Constantine and Helen.

On this feast the Church celebrates that after Constantine the

Great accepted the Holy Baptism, and received the sign that appeared in the sky for him with the Cross writing "be victorious with this" and made it an emblem for his army, he defeated the followers of Maxentius and recognized Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Country. His mother Helen came to Jerusalem and discovered the Holy Cross and the places of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and built the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, inaugurating Constantine's Rum-Christian era from AD 326-336.

This feast was celebrated at the Monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen of the Brotherhood, with Great Vespers on Thursday afternoon and the Divine Liturgy on Friday morning, officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, along with the ministering Priests of the Church, with first in rank the Typikon Keeper Archimandrite Alexios. The service was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras, representatives from the Patriarchates of Moscow and Romania, many pilgrims and local faithful.

After the Divine Liturgy, the Patriarchal Entourage headed to the Patriarchate Reception Hall via the Central Monastery gate and received the small loaves of bread that had been prepared by the baker Nun Seraphima.

There His Beatitude addressed those present as follows:

"Not from man did great Constantine with his blest mother Helen receive the royal sovereignty but by God's grace from Heaven. For he beheld the divine Cross as a bright flashing trophy. With it he was victorious over all who opposed him and he destroyed the deceit and error of all the idols while making strong throughout the world Orthodox faith and practice" (Matins Exaposteilarion).

Your Excellency Consul General of Greece Mr Evangelos Vlioras,

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brethren,

Noble Christians

Today the Holy Church of Christ, and especially the Church of Jerusalem most joyfully celebrates the sacred commemoration of the Holy glorious God-crowned and great sovereigns Constantine and Helen, who became equal to Christ's Apostles and Fathers of Romiosyni, as well as founders of the beautiful Monasteries and magnificent Churches around the shrines of the Holy Land, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, among others.

Constantine the Great received the calling from the Lord and the knowledge from the Holy Spirit and significantly contributed to the recognition not only of the Christian faith as the official religion of the Empire but also the support of the institution of God's Church.

Two primary events point out the contribution of Constantine the Great in his grandiose work for the Church; First, the invitation of the distinguished Church Fathers at the First Ecumenical Council of Nice in AD 325, which condiment the heresy of Arianism. Second, the pilgrimage of his mother Helen to the Holy Land and the greatest of her achievements, the discovery of the wood of the Precious Cross, along with the establishment of the Order of the Studios ("Spoudaioi" in Greek, referring to those who endeavoured in studying the teachings of Christ), namely of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood.

Let us hear at this point the words written in a letter by Constantine the Great to the Persian King Sepori about the care of the people of God: "By keeping the divine faith I earn the light of truth. Guided by the light of truth I gain consciousness of the divine faith" (Eusebius on Constantine the Great, Book 4, ch.9). And in another letter to the Bishop Makarios of Jerusalem about the construction of the Holy Sepulchre, he writes: "It is righteous to beautify the value

of the most marvellous place in the world”.

Needless to say, the Christian character of the Holy Land and of Jerusalem is entirely attributed to the God-inspired initiative and actions of the Holy Sovereigns Constantine and Helen.

Honouring all these gratefully, our Holy Church of Jerusalem, for their commemoration held the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy at the Monastic Church dedicated to them, rendering thus a thanksgiving Doxology to the Holy Triune God.

And let us say along with the hymnographer, Constantine most respected, along with your pious mother Helen, pray to Christ our God to grant remission of sins to those who celebrate your holy commemoration. Amen. Many Happy returns!

At noon there was a festal monastic meal.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday May 20/ June 2, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the Despotic Feast of the Ascension.

On this feast, the whole Church and especially the Church of Jerusalem commemorates and celebrates the event that for forty days after His Resurrection, our Lord Jesus Christ revealed Himself to His Disciples in many appearances, and after them, while the Disciples were watching, He ascended from the Mount of Olives into the Heavens and sat at the right side of the

Father and deified the human bodily form He had received at His incarnation.

For this Feast at the Mount of Olives and the place of the Ascension the Great Vespers was held on Wednesday afternoon, by His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, along with the Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, Archimandrite Klaudios, the Priests of Saint James Cathedral Fr Farah and Fr Hader, at the chanting of Hierodeacon Simeon, Mr Gotsopoulos and the Patriarchal School students in Greek and Saint James Cathedral Choir under Mr Rimon Kamar in Arabic.

The service was followed by a procession to the Monastery of the Men of Galilee, which His Beatitude blessed with His visit there.

The procession returned to the place of the Ascension for the reading of the Compline and the Canon of the Feast.

On Thursday morning, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the same place, by His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, along with the Archimandrites Ieronymos and Stephen, the Priests of Saint James Cathedral, Romanian and Russian Priests and the visiting from the Church of Greece Fr Agathangelos from the H. Metropolis Kilkisiou. The chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon, Mr Gotsopoulos and the Patriarchal School students in Greek and Saint James Cathedral Choir under Mr Rimon Kamar in Arabic, and the service was attended by many faithful Christians.

During the Divine Liturgy His Beatitude and Members of the Holy Synod came for veneration. Then His Beatitude, according to the custom and for the sake of the peaceful coexistence, visited the imam that lives in the nearby mosque, followed by the visit to the Holy Monastery of the Ascension opposite the shrine, where the hardworking Caretaker of the Monastery Monk Achilios hosted a reception.

The next visit of His Beatitude was to the Holy Monastery of the Ascension of the Russian Church and Diaspora on the Mount of Olives and finally the Monastery of the Men of Galilee, where the Caretaker Nun Daniilia offered breakfast with eggs, milk and cheese.

From Secretariat-General

THE APODOSIS OF PASCHA AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Wednesday, May 19/June 1, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the Feast of the Apodosiis of Pascha, which is held at the completion of forty days after the day of the Resurrection. On this day the Troparia of Matins are the same as those chanted on Pascha day.

For this joyful feast, the Service of Matins and the Divine Liturgy were celebrated at the Monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen, with the participation of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

After the Divine Liturgy, according to the custom, the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where the Divine Liturgy was also being celebrated at the Catholicon, led by His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias with the co-celebration of the visiting from Cyprus, His Grace, Bishop Nikolaos of Amathous, under the chanting of Hierodeacon Simeon and Mr Gotsopoulos, with the attendance of local faithful Christians and pilgrims.

After the Divine Liturgy, the Episcopal Entourage returned to the Patriarchate to pay their respects to His Beatitude.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE SIGN OF THE CROSS IN THE HEAVENS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Friday, May 7/20, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the appearance of the sign of the Precious Cross in the heavens.

On this feast, the Church, and especially the Church of Jerusalem celebrates the event that took place in AD 351, at the third hour, which is at nine o'clock in the morning, a brighter than the sunrays Cross appeared and was visible from Golgotha to the Mount of Olives. The Cross was seen by many inhabitants of Jerusalem who in awe glorified God, according to the description written by Cyril the Archbishop of Jerusalem to Emperor Constantius, son of Saint Constantine the Great.

For this event, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Horrendous Golgotha, by His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, with the co-celebration of Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Priests and Priests from other Orthodox Churches and Deacons, under the chanting of Hierodeacon Simeon and Mr Gotsopoulos. The service was attended by Nuns and pious

faithful Christians.

After the Divine Liturgy, there was a procession with the Hagiotaphite High Priests and Hieromonks from the Deposition Slate to the Holy Sepulchre, marching three times around the Sacred Edicule.

After the Procession, the officiating Metropolitan stood in front of the Sacred Edicule and read the Gospel narrative of Easter Sunday and Saint Cyril's letter, with the description of the celebrating event in Greek, and His Eminence Archbishop Theodosios of Sebastia read the translation of this letter in Arabic. There was a supplication at the end of the readings.

Finally, bells tolling, the Episcopal entourage returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters and paid its respect to His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos. His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios addressed His Beatitude as follows:

"Your Beatitude, Father and Master,

Twenty centuries ago, the cross was an instrument of shameful punishment and horrible death. The Romans sentenced the greatest criminals to death by crucifixion.

Today the cross dominates the whole life of the faithful Christians, the whole life of our Church, as an instrument of sacrifice, salvation, joy, sanctification and grace. As Saint Chrysostom writes, "this accursed and abominable symbol of the worst punishment has now become coveted and lovable." You see it everywhere: "In the Holy Table, in the ordinations of the priests, in the divine liturgy, in the houses. So much needed has this wonderful gift become to all, this inexpressible grace. "

The Lord Himself, with supernatural facts and wonderful revelations, revealed on various occasions, in a glaring way, how the sign of the Cross is His symbol and the invincible

trophy of the faithful.

1. The well-known ecclesiastical historian Eusebius of Caesarea (+340), a contemporary of Saint Constantine the Great, describes vividly and unequivocally the well-known incident of the appearance of the light Cross on Constantine the Great with the inscription "be victorious with This", and in fact at broad daylight, with witnesses all the men of his army.
2. In addition to the above supernatural revelation of the sign of the Cross, there was another, again in front of innumerable eyewitnesses, when the king was Constantius, son of St. Constantine, and Saint Cyril was the Archbishop of Jerusalem. The miracle is narrated by Saint Cyril himself to the king in a letter, in which he states that on that day (May 7, 346 AD, the period of Pentecost), around the third hour (9 a.m.), the sign of the Holy Cross appeared in the sky, huge, bright, extending from Saint Golgotha to the Mount of Olives. Not one or two saw it, but all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And it did not appear for a moment only, but for many hours it hung on the firmament. And it was so bright that it surpassed the rays of the sun in the Flash, so they could see it clearly at daylight, at noon. Seeing this miracle, the people of the city ran to the Church of the Resurrection.

If September 14 is the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy and Life-giving Cross, a feast on which human hands, Patriarchal and Royal, raised the Holy Cross, projecting Him as the symbol of the Christian faith and the "lock of Paradise" because it is the point of our reference to the One who shed His holy blood on It, May 7th is another celebration of His Exaltation, not by human hands this time, but by the "hands" of God Himself. Because He wanted, when the Christian faith had already been accepted and expanded, to reveal the Cross in Heaven, as an extension, we would say, of His revelation on

Constantine the Great, with the well-known “In this be victorious”. The hymnology of our Church highlights the event and pervades it in all its parameters: “Today the divine multitude of the faithful rejoices. Because the Cross appeared in Heaven to a great extent. The air shines from uncreated light. The air is illuminated and the face of the earth becomes beautiful. The Church of Christ sings divine songs. The Church shows its respect, honouring the divine and miraculous Cross that protects it from Heaven ” (free translation of a sticheron from Vespers).

The Venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem, following the order and practice of the Orthodox Church, honours and celebrates the feasts, among which is the present feast, “of the appearance of the sign of the Precious Cross in the heavens”, which, although being a local feast, has an effect on Orthodoxy around the world.

Pray Your Beatitude, that Our Venerable Brotherhood continues this tradition for centuries to come”.

From Secretariat-General

THE SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC MAN AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Sunday, May 2/15, 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the Sunday of the Paralytic Man, the 4th Sunday after Pascha according to the Book of Pentecostarion.

H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, after the welcoming reception by the Scouts, officiated the Divine

Liturgy at the Community of Rhene, near the city of Nazareth.

Co-celebrants to His Beatitude were their Eminences, Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, the Geronda Secretary-General, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, Archimandrite Artemios, the Dean Priest of this community Priest Simeon, Priest Stephen from the Church of Greece, other Priests, Archdeacon Mark and Hierodeacon Eulogios.

The chanting was delivered by the Byzantine Choir of the Community in Arabic, and many local faithful Christians attended the Service.

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

“At the sheep’s pool a man lay in sickness and when he saw Thee, O Lord, he cried: I have no man that when the water is troubled, he might put me therein. And straightaway, taking compassion on him, the Saviour saith unto him; for thee I became man, for thee, I am clothed in flesh, and sayest thou: I have no man? Take up thy bed and walk” the hymnographer of the Church proclaims (Vespers, Entreaty, Glory).

Beloved brethren in Christ,

Noble Christians

Marvellous is our God, who has gathered us today in the faithful community of Rheine, to celebrate the Pascha of the Lord in gleefulness and joy, as we commemorate the miracle of the healing of the paralytic man who had been ill for thirty-eight years at the Sheep’s pool (ref. John 5, 5-9).

During His presence on earth, the Lord worked many signs in order to reveal His glory so that they might believe in Him, and to show His healing power to anyone who asked for it, which stemmed from the obedience and faith in Him, the Son and

Word of God.

“And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool” (John 5,5-7).

Interpreting this verse from the Gospel, the Holy Fathers of the Church wonder why our Saviour chose this certain paralytic man? Because he was suffering from an incurable disease; “For what reason did Jesus pass by all other (ill people) and came to this man? To show both the power and the philanthropy; the power, because the illness had become incurable and had seized the man; and the philanthropy because Christ and guardian and philanthropist saw this man before all others as he was indeed worthy of mercy and benevolence”, Saint Chrysostom says.

To Christ’s demanding question, “Wilt thou be made whole?” (John 5,6) Saint Chrysostom says that as the healer of our bodies and souls, Christ referred to the double paralysis of both the sins and the body. In other words, when there is mention in the Holy Scriptures about sin, we should understand this as our infirmity of both the soul and the body, which resulted in the death of corruption as Saint Paul preaches, having the Old Adam in mind: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5,12).

And Saint John the Baptist calls upon the words of Prophet Isaiah and says: “he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows” (Isaiah 53,4). Seeing “Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1,29). And the wise Paul says: “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15,3).

Moreover, according to Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, the Lord came on earth “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Hebrews 2,14), and “to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins”. Let us hear the Holy Father saying: “wherever there is Christ, there salvation lies. And if he sees a publican sitting at the cashier, He makes him an apostle and an evangelist; and if He is buried with the dead, He makes them rise. And He makes the blind to see, the deaf to hear; and He visits the pools, not to see the buildings, but seeking to heal the sick”.

It is noteworthy that the paralytic man was healed not by the water of the pool, but by the working of the power of the word of our Saviour Christ, as the hymnographer says: “O Lord, not the pool, but Thy word healed and renewed the paralytic; nor was he hindered by his sickness of many years; for the power of Thy voice proved to be more effectual. And he cast off the weight that was grievous to bear and carried the burden of his bed as a testimony to the multitude of Thy compassions. Glory be to Thee”(Matins, Glory of praises).

The paralytic man became healthy instantly when he heard the Lord’s words “Take up thy bed and walk” (John 5,8-9). And the swift healing power of the Lord’s voice is no other than the overshadowing of the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. And we say this, because the Church is the pool, namely the healing place of our souls and bodies, while the Holy Sacraments, which are being held by the power of the Holy Spirit are the medicine that lead to the cure. According to Saint Chrysostom, the manner of treatment is common and the medicine is available for all. However, healing is not common for all, but it is achieved by the goodwill of those who use it.

Celebrating the Lord’s Pascha, my dear brethren, let us hear the divine voice of the Resurrected Christ: “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matt. 28,20).

And let us say along with the hymnographer; "Having risen from the dead, Thou didst raise us also from the passions by Thy Resurrection, O Lord: And Thou didst destroy all the might of death, O Saviour, for this cause we cry out in faith: Remember us also in Thy Kingdom" (Sunday of the Paralytic, at the Liturgy, Troparion 2).

Christ is risen! Many happy and blessed returns!"

At noon the Community hosted a meal and among the celebrating guests were the Mayor of the city and the Sheikh.

His Beatitude addressed all present at the meal as follows:

"The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down" (Psalm 145,14), the psalmist says.

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brethren,

Your Excellency President and respected members of the Ecclesiastical Committee,

Noble Christians,

The light of the Resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ which has filled both the earth and the heavens, as well as the parts below the earth, has gathered us all here so that along with the hymnographer Saint John of Damascus we may say: "Willingly becoming poor with Adam's poverty, O Christ God, Thou camest upon the earth, incarnate of a Virgin. And Thou didst accept the Cross that Thou mightiest free us from slavery to the enemy. O Lord, glory to Thee"(Wednesday after the Myrrh-bearing women, Matins, 1st Troparion of praises, of the Crucifixion).

And we wonder, who is the enemy of the slavery of man? The devil, namely the lord of this world (ref. Eph. 6,12) has put men under tyranny. Form this tyranny of the devil did Christ liberate us through His Resurrection, as Luke the Evangelist

says in the Acts of the Apostles: “ye know... Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10,37-38).

Through the pure flesh of the Ever-Virgin and Theotokos Mary, in the Holy Spirit, the Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ became incarnate and took the same form of us men, so that He may transform the body of our humility to become of the same form with the body of His glory (ref. Phil. 3,21), that is, the body of His Resurrection.

In other words, my dear brethren, Christ conquered the death of corruption and sin and in more detail, the death of the body and soul’s paralysis, through His own death. And this happened, according to Saint Athanasius the Great, “so that the conciliation of God toward man may also be freedom of the whole humankind through man in the form of the new image of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord”.

We, my dear brethren, being members of the body of Christ, have the Holy Church of Christ as our “Sheep’s pool”, where the healer of our bodies and souls is always present, both visibly and invisibly. God has granted us this great and unique beneficial and philanthropic Providence.

This Divine Providence is no other than our Mother and natural feeder, the Church of Jerusalem, the Venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which throughout the centuries has remained a beacon and steadfast keeper of the truth in Christ, the faith in Christ, a guardian of the fatherly morals and an enemy of every newly-appearing seemingly religion, such as the Globalization and the New Order.

Christ and only Christ and His Church is the pool of life and the harbour of our recourse. Let us not turn our eyes and attention anywhere else, but only toward Christ, Who is the leader and founder of the faith and makes us perfect in it, as

Saint Paul preaches: "...Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12,2)

Christ is risen! Many happy returns, blessed in the freedom of Christ!"

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN SUNDAY AT THE PATRIARCHATE

Sunday 25 April/ 8 May 2022 was celebrated by the Patriarchate as the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women according to the book of Pentecostarion.

On this Sunday the Church commemorates Saint Joseph of Arimathaea – present-day Ramle – who asked Pilate for the Lord's body and buried Him along with the Myrrh-bearing Women.

This event was celebrated in Ramle, at the Holy Monastery of the Patriarchate, with the Divine Liturgy which was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants their Eminences, the Archbishops, Aristarchos of Constantina, Damascene of Yaffo, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Arab-speaking Priests, with the attendance of a large congregation of the Orthodox faithful of this city.

Before the Holy Communion His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon:

"Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also

waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre” (Mark 15,43-46) Mark the Evangelist testifies.

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

Noble Christians and pilgrims

Today the Holy Church of Christ honours and venerates the commemoration of the Holy Myrrh-bearing Women and that of the secret disciple, Joseph from Arimathaea, the current city of Ramle. According to the witness of the Evangelists, the Myrrh-bearing Women were true witnesses of the Resurrection, while Joseph and Nicodemus of the burial of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as of His God-man nature of His.

“The Myrrh-bearing Women were the first people to see the Resurrection and they evangelised it to the disciples” according to the synaxarist. These women were the first witnesses of Christ’s resurrection. “Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him” (Mark 16,6). Joseph and Nicodemus were distinguished for their bravery and boldness as Mark the Evangelist says: “Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus” (Mark 15,43).

Christ’s resurrection, my dear ones, is the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets, that is the revelation of the purpose of the mystery of the incarnation of God the Word through the pure flesh of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary. In other

words, the Myrrh-bearing Women and the Lord's secret disciples Joseph and Nicodemus were given the grace of witness and speak about the One of whom "we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled" (John 1,1).

This graced of the Holy Spirit was given to the former blasphemer and persecutor and injurious (1 Tim. 1,13) Saint Paul, when he was called unto his Apostolic office. He says: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3,8-10).

We, my dear brethren, being members of the body of Christ, that is the Church, which He beautified with His own blood (ref. Acts 20,28), have become communicants of this incomprehensible richness of Christ and the enlightenment of the mystery which was hidden for centuries in God, as well as of the diverse wisdom of God.

Indeed, the Church of Christ is his empty tomb, where "we receive the experience" (ref. Hebrews 11,36) of our resurrection in the communion of the body and blood of Christ during the Divine Liturgy. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6,54) the Lord says. Our Holy Church of Christ is the place of "the Lord's Pascha", namely the place, or rather the empty tomb from which Christ God transfers us from the death of corruption and sin (= infirmity) to life eternal and from the earth to heaven, as the hymnographer says: "We celebrate the death of death, the destruction of Hades, the beginning of everlasting life. And with leaps of joy we praise the cause thereof, the only blest and most

glorious God of our Fathers" (Easter Sunday, Ode 7, Troparion 3).

Saint Paul scorns those who say "that there is no resurrection" (1 Cor. 15,12) saying that if Christ is not risen then the faith of us Christians is in vain. "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor. 15,14).

Pointing out the power of faith the Holy Apostles and Evangelists advice thus; Saint Paul says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving" (Col. 2,6-7). Judas, the brother of James the brother of God writes in his letter: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Judas 3). Saint John the Theologian preaches: "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5,4). No one can face our faith, which through works has gained the trophies for us, Saint Cyril of Alexandria says.

"We celebrate the death of death, the destruction of Hades, the beginning of everlasting life," the hymnographer says, paying heed to Saint Paul's preaching: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15,20). In other words, being perfect God and perfect man, Christ became the firstfruits of those who slept, because He was the first of men to tumble down death, just as our ancestor Adam entered the death of sin and became the firstfruits of the fallen, leading us to corruption, Saint Cyril of Alexandria says.

And according to Saint Gregory Palamas, "the Lord's resurrection is the renewal of the human nature, it is the reviving and renewal and restoration of the first Adam to the

eternal life, because he was devoured by death because of sin and through death he regressed to the earth by which he was created”.

Just like Eve was the first one to see Adam, likewise the first one to see the resurrected Christ was also a woman, Saint Gregory Palamas says. “First of all others was a woman that saw Him; the Theotokos received first the gospel of the resurrection, as it was befitting and righteous, and she saw Him resurrected before anyone else, and enjoyed His divine voice”.

Through His Resurrection our Lord and God Jesus Christ inaugurated the entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, therefore, we, my dear brethren, let us entreat the Most Blessed Theotokos, the Myrrh-bearing Women and Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus, who buried the Lord, that by their intercessions we may be deemed worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen. Christ is risen! Many happy and peaceful returns!”

The feast was organised by the energetic Hegoumen Archimandrite Niphon, who addressed the Patriarch and hosted a meal along with the Community Council. At the meal His Beatitude addressed those present as follows:

“Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands: Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious” (Psalm 66,1-2), that Christ is risen!

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brethren,

Respected President and honourable members of the Community Council,

Your Grace Archimandrite Niphon,

The grace of Christ’s secret disciple Joseph has led our footsteps to his hometown, the biblical Arimathaea, the

current Ramle, to celebrate along with our Rum Orthodox flock living here the Lord's Pascha, namely the three-day burial and the luminous Resurrection of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This event of our blessed Paschal gathering of both the clergy and the people shows the hypostatic power of the truth of our Christian faith, according to the true testimony of the Evangelist John who says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1,14).

This glory of "the only begotten of the Father" Who is immortal is preached and confessed boldly by the Holy Church of Christ and especially by the Mother of all Churches, namely the Church of Jerusalem, which is founded on this very place of Golgotha, the sanctified by the divine blood on the Cross, but also by the new and empty tomb, from which the true shone forth, the Light of the Resurrected Christ.

This unwaning light of the glory of the Resurrected Christ, namely the truth, peace, righteousness and love of His, as well as His infinite philanthropy, is served throughout the centuries in the Holy Land by the visible and invisible presence of the Church of Jerusalem, the Venerable Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, which always follows the Lord's commands, "Fear not" (Matt. 10,31), "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16,33). "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God" (1 John 5,4-5).

We say this because in our days the power of evil and lawlessness is active as Saint Paul preaches: "the mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2 Thess. 2,7). However, we, my dear brethren, are fortified by the divine light and the hope of the resurrection and neither worry nor flinch, because as

Saint Paul says, "God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2,13-14). Christ is risen! Many happy, blessed and peaceful returns!"

This feast was also celebrated at the chapel of the Myrrh-bearing Women within Saint James Cathedral, with the Divine Liturgy which was officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Theophanes of Gerassa. Co-celebrants to His Eminence were the ministering Priests of the Cathedral, Fr Farah Bandour and George Baramki. The chanting was delivered by Monk Joseph of Mount Athos and Fadi Abdelnour in Greek on the right, and by the Cathedral's choir under Mr Rimon Kamar in Arabic on the left. The service was attended by the parish members of this Cathedral.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, the Myrrh-bearing Women's association of the Cathedral's community hosted a reception at the Ouzud restaurant.

From Secretariat-General