

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

On Friday, 23 April/ 6 May 2022, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of the martyrdom of the Holy Glorious Great Martyr George the Trophy Bearer.

On this feast, the Church commemorates that George's father was from Carthage and his mother from the Palestinian town Lydda. He was an army professional and exchanged his profession with that of martyrdom, the heavenly profession, confessing Christ and suffering a martyr's death during Diocletian's reign in Rome in AD 305.

The Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of this universally recognised Great Martyr at the following Monasteries and Churches:

1. At his Holy Monastery in Bejala near Bethlehem with Vespers and the Divine Liturgy led by His Eminence Archbishop Methodios of Tabor.
2. At his Holy Monastery in Jerusalem of the Hospital by Archimandrite Athanasios, under the care of the Abbess Nun Pansemni.
3. At his Holy Monastery in the Jewish Quarter with Vespers and the Divine Liturgy led by His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, by the care of the Abbess Nun Marianna.
4. At the Holy Church of Saint George, the Trophy Bearer of town Zababde in North Samaria, the Divine Liturgy and all festivities were officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Theophanes of Gerassa with the co-celebration of Archimandrite Klaudios and the Community Priest Fr Issa.

All services were attended by Monks, Nuns and faithful Christians from Greece, Palestine, Russia, Romania and others.

May the Saint's intercessions protect those who honoured him and all those tested by war.

**From Secretariat-General**

[https://youtu.be/h1E6c\\_BUYaE](https://youtu.be/h1E6c_BUYaE)

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# **THOMAS' SUNDAY AT THE PATRIARCHATE**

The Sunday 18 April / 1 May 2022 was celebrated by the Patriarchate as the second Sunday after Easter and Thomas' Sunday.

On this Sunday the Church commemorates that on the eighth day after His Resurrection, the Lord appeared to His Disciples in the upper room while the doors were closed when Thomas was also with them. The Lord urged Thomas to touch Him and when the latter did so, the Lord told him, "because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20, 24-31).

1. This event was celebrated in Cana of Galilee, along with the celebration of the miracle of the wedding in Cana, that is, the turning of water into wine and the blessing of the wedding. This is celebrated on Thomas' Sunday due to the gospel narrative about the wedding in Cana, which is read on the Monday after Thomas' Sunday.

The feast in Cana was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and

Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants their Eminences, Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, Hagiotaphite Hierodeacons and Arab-speaking Priests from the Galilee district.

Before the Holy Communion His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon:

“This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him” (John 2,11).

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

Noble Christians and pilgrims

The divine grace of the resurrected Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour, has gathered us all in this holy place of Cana in Galilee where Christ’s feet stood, but also His mother’s the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, so that we may boldly confess the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this, is because as Saint Paul preaches, “if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain” (1 Cor. 15,14).

Today and tomorrow’s gospel narrative refer to the signs Jesus worked before His disciples, so that both they and we, may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and by believing in Him we may have eternal life in His name (John 20,31).

In today’s gospel narrative according to the Evangelist John, we hear the Lord saying to Thomas: “because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20,29), while in the other gospel narrative we hear that “This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him” (John 2,11).

Saint John of Damascus refers to the need and power of faith for the comprehension of the mystery of the divine providence by saying: "the wonders are made manifest unto those who worship the mystery in faith" (Thursday of renewal week, Matins, praises, Troparion 1).

"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God" (John 20,26-28).

Interpreting these words, Saint Cyril of Alexandria says: "So we reasonably do the gatherings on the eighth day and if we need to say the most secret ... although we close the doors, Christ comes and appears to all of us, both invisibly and visibly; invisibly as God, and visibly again in the body. He also allows them to give His holy flesh to hold. Because we approach by grace with the coming of God through a secret blessing, we accept Christ in our hands so that we too may believe that He truly resurrected Himself as a temple ... So we abandon infidelity as destructive and after we touch Christ, we find ourselves to be very faithful and to have absolute confidence in our mind."

In other words, my dear brethren, our participation in the sacrament of the mystical blessing, namely the communion of the sacred body and blood of our Saviour Christ, is the true confession and remembrance that the Lord died and was resurrected for us in order to save us.

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage" (John 2,1-2).

Commenting on Christ's presence at the wedding in Cana,

Zigavinos says: "The One who established marriage by law came to honour the wedding and sanctify it by His presence". Saint Cyril of Alexandria references Saint Paul and says: "Being a friend of man, the Saviour honoured the wedding by His presence, as He is the joy and happiness of all so that He would distance the ancient curse of childbearing." This is because the one who is in union with Christ is a new creation. The ancient curse which the Law of Moses had created and the sin have passed away. Behold, everything has become new. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5,17).

According to the witness of Saint John the Evangelist, speaking about Christ, Saint John the Baptist presents Him as the bridegroom and says: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom" (John 3,29). Interpreting this verse, Saint Cyril of Alexandria refers to the spiritual wedding between humanity and Christ, which is accomplished through the Holy Baptism. And according to Zigavinos, the bride is "the faithful people, namely the Church which is mystically attached to Christ through faith".

"In the manner of a sunray did Christ's glory shine", Saint Cyril of Alexandria says, when "He did the beginning of the miracles in Cana of Galilee, in front of His Mother and Disciples" (ref. John 2,1-11). Among the many other signs Jesus did before His Disciples, is the touching of His side by the Apostle Thomas; His side which was pierced with the military spear.

Through His resurrection, my dear brethren, Christ conquered the death of corruption and sin and also dissolved the hatred between God and the people and granted us His peace "which passeth all understanding" (Philip. 4,7). "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph. 2,14) according to Saint Paul.

Our Holy Church calls upon this peace of Christ, namely the peace of the Holy Spirit, in every place and time. The confused and turbulent world is in need of this peace of Christ like never before. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14,27). These are the words that our Lord and God Jesus Christ, Who is risen from the dead tells us. Amen. Christ is risen! Many happy returns, blessed and in peace!"

At noon the Hegoumen Archimandrite Chrysostom and the Ecclesiastical Council hosted a meal, where His Beatitude addressed all present as follows:

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118,24), the psalmist proclaims.

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brethren,

Respected members of Churchwardens,

Reverend Archimandrite Chrysostom,

Dear brothers and sisters

The Holy Church of Christ rejoices today and is glad, especially the local Church of your city of Cana in Galilee, on this festal and Paschal day.

We thank our Triune God for the blessing He bestowed upon us, to gather in this place after the trial of the deadly covid disease.

The Passion on the Cross, the three-day burial and the Resurrection of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ are the fulfilment of the Divine Providence.

The living presence of the Christians in the Holy Land and in this holy shrine is a soundproof that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16,18), as the Lord said.

The preaching of the gospel of Christ is the preaching of righteousness, love, peace and divine philanthropy. "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9,13) the Lord says. This is confirmed by Saint Paul's words: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6,12).

Behold again, why Christ's resurrection is the fulfilment of the mystery of the incarnation of the Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor. 15, 26), Saint Paul preaches, calling upon the prophet Isaiah, who says: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15,54-55 / Isaiah 25,8).

My dear brethren, who live and visit the city of Cana in Galilee, where our Lord Jesus Christ worked His first miracle and revealed His glory; We have come along with our honourable entourage from the place of the resurrected Christ, our Saviour, the Holy city of Jerusalem, to exclaim the victorious greeting against death, "Christ is risen"!

Needless to say, We consider Ourselves personally a citizen of Cana and a member of your blessed Christian Community. For this reason, we tell you through the mouth of wise Paul; "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5,17).

Christ is risen! Many happy returns, fruitful in Christ."

## 2. At the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

The feast was celebrated with Great Vespers on Saturday afternoon, with the veneration of the Deposition slate and the Holy Sepulchre, the incense offering, Great Entrance and the Blessing of Bread at the Catholicon, which was led by the Patriarchal Commissioner, His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios

of Kapitolias, along with Hagiotaphite Hieromonks. The chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon and the Typikon Keeper of the monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen Archimandrite Alexios, as the service was attended by many local faithful Christians and numerous pilgrims.

On Sunday morning the Divine Liturgy was held as a 'Small Parresia' at the Holy Sepulchre, officiated again by His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, with the co-celebration of Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Hierodeacons. The service was attended by local faithful Christians and numerous pilgrims and the chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon with the help of the Patriarchal School students.

After the feast, the Episcopal Entourage returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters.

There, the Patriarchal Commissioner wished the faithful Christians present, the light and the power of the Resurrected Christ.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE HOLY WEEK AND EASTER IN QATAR**

By the application of the eased instructions of the Ministry of Health, due to covid 19, and in the order of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Holy Services of the Holy Week and the Luminous Resurrection were observed at the Doha Cathedral.

The Services were officiated by His Eminence Archbishop



Makarios of Qatar with the ministering Priest Demetrios. The attendance of the faithful who participated in the Holy Communion with reverence and contemplation was the most numerous of the past years, having come from various cities of the Emirate and from Riyadh of Saudi Arabia.

These services were held in Greek, Arabic, Slavonic, Serbian, Romanian and English for the fullest participation of the multilingual flock. The Byzantine choir performed the hymns in a wonderful way and the Lamentations of Good Friday in Arabic, Greek and Serbian.

On the night of Good Friday and Holy Saturday, the Ambassadors of Greece, Russia, Moldova and a representative of the Embassy of Serbia in Qatar arrived at the Holy Services.

At the end of the Divine Liturgy of the Resurrection, the blessing of the Easter eggs followed and His Eminence distributed the blessed bread and red eggs to the faithful, wishing them the Paschal joy of the Resurrected Christ.

**From the Holy Archdiocese of Qatar**

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**MONDAY OF BRIGHT WEEK AT THE**

# **PATRIARCHATE**

On Monday of Bright Week, 12/15 April 2022, the Feast of Pascha was celebrated at the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood at its Holy Church of Saints Constantine and Helen.

The festal Paschal Liturgy was led in prayer by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with the co-prayer of the Hagiotaphite Fathers, High Priests, Hieromonks and Deacons, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras, members of the Greek Consulate General, the representatives from the Patriarchates of Moscow and Romania and many pilgrims, who had filled the Church.

The Divine Liturgy was followed by the reception at the Patriarchate Reception Hall, where His Beatitude blessed the pilgrims and gave them Easter eggs.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE SERVICE OF THE SECOND RESURRECTION AT THE PATRIARCHATE (VESPERS OF LOVE)**

In the afternoon of Easter Sunday, 11/24 April 2022, the Service of the second Resurrection, or Vespers of Love was observed at the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The High Priests and Priests came to the Patriarchate to His Beatitude, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and got dressed in their Paschal liturgical vestments, while the 9<sup>th</sup> Hour was being read.

Then the Patriarchal Entourage marched through the Christian Road to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, while crowds of faithful were standing on either side of the road.

The Vespers of Pascha began at the Catholicon once the Patriarchal entourage entered, and the entrance with the Gospel was followed by the reading of the Gospel narrative according to Saint John regarding the first appearance of the resurrected Lord to His Disciples, "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you...But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came..."(John 20,19-25).

This narrative was read in Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, English, and other languages, showing the universal character of the Gospel.

After Vespers, the Patriarchal entourage returned to the Patriarchate.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# THE LITURGY OF PASCHA AT THE PATRIARCHATE

The joyful Feast of Pascha was celebrated by the Patriarchate with an all-night Vigil at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on Sunday night 11/24 April 2022. After the cathode from the Patriarchate at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at midnight (summertime) the Canon of Holy Saturday was chanted at the Catholicon while the Patriarch, the High Priests, Priests and Deacons put on their liturgical vestments.

After the Canon, there was a litany three times around the Sacred Edicule, which concluded with the reading of the Gospel narrative according to Saint Mark on the resurrection. This was followed by the chanting of "Christ is risen".

Consequently, the Canon of Saint John of Damascus was read, the 9<sup>th</sup> Ode, the Praises, the Glory and with "Christ is risen" changed three times the Matins was completed.

The Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom began at the Holy Sepulchre, officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, along with their Eminences, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, and the Archbishops, Theophanes of Gerassa, Aristarchos of Constantina, Theodosios of Sebastia, Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis and Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella. The service was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras and members of the Consulate General, and many faithful Christians who chanted joyfully and loudly the 'Christ is risen' in Greek, Arabic, Romanian, Russian and other languages.

Before the Holy Communion, the Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod read His Beatitude's Pascha message as per below:

"Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was

crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matthew 28, 5-6).

With these comforting words, the Myrrh-bearing Women were encouraged by "the angel that hath come down from heaven and moved the stone of the tomb", where the crucified Jesus Christ the Nazarene had been buried. The Myrrh-bearing Women, who bore the myrrh in tears, were astounded by the vision of the empty tomb, for this reason, the angel encouraged them with his presence and with the words: "fear not ye". Appearing "like lightning and white like snow", he was sitting at the tomb and said to the women: "I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen". And he was not ashamed to call Him crucified, for this was the good chapter", according to Saint Chrysostom.

The bright like lightning angel announced something unheard of and impossible for the people. He announced what could happen only by the providence, the will and the power of God. That Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son and Word of God, and crucified in the flesh, having been buried, was risen from the dead and co-resurrected the human flesh He had received along with the whole Adam, by a mighty hand. Out of love for man, Saint Chrysostom explains, "having risen from the royal thrones, God entered the earth and even Hades, and the devil became an opponent not to a naked God but to a God hidden within the human nature" and we see "death being released by death and the curse annulling the curse, and through these, the tyranny of the devil in all things he prevailed is now abolished". Indeed, through the Saviour's death, the tyranny of death has been abolished. "Through the Cross, joy came unto the whole world". Hades became bitter and therefore he was mocked, thinking that he received a common mortal. That is why, in the faith and power of Christ's Resurrection, the Apostle of nations rephrases the prophesy: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15, 54-55).

The Myrrh-bearing women experienced the Resurrection not only from the vision of the empty Tomb and the Angel and the hearing of his words but also from the vision of the Resurrected Lord Himself. "Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me" (Matthew 28, 9-10). Indeed, for forty days the Lord appeared many times as the Apostle Paul testifies, "And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles" (1 Corinthians 15, 5-7), speaking to them, confirming His crucified and resurrected body, receiving food and eating before them. Finally, receiving the worship of the eleven in Galilee, the mountain where Jesus had appointed them, He ordered them to go and teach all nations (Matthew 28, 16-19).

Fulfilling this command, the Apostles received the Holy Spirit and preached unto the ends of the world "the one they had seen with their own eyes and touched with their own hands", they enchanted the universe, becoming the twelve pillars of the body of the Church, while Christ is its cornerstone. The body of the Church that has been built by the Lord, for which He said "the gates of hell shall not overcome it" (Matthew 16,18), continues throughout the centuries His sanctifying and redeeming mission through His Disciples and their heirs, the Bishops and Priests. In its crucified-and-resurrected course in the world, the Church, vivified by the blood of the Cross, from which it was created, conveys power, hope and joy for the creation, maintenance, refreshment and restoration of man from the ruins and the ashes of wars, repeating the comforting invitation of Christ, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11,28).

The Church of Jerusalem, appointed by the Resurrected Christ Himself to serve at the places of His appearance in the flesh, being under pressure, especially recently, by radical extremist and hostile to it elements, however, not crushed by them, fights bravely in one accord and unity for the rights of the Christian presence and its flock in the Holy Land and welcomes the pious pilgrims during their pilgrimage as its own flock and sends to them and its pious flock all over the world the Paschal greeting "Christ is risen from the dead, by death He hath tumbled down death and to those in the grave He hath given life!"

In the Holy City of Jerusalem, Pascha 2022

Fervent supplicant for all before God,

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem

When the Priests received the Holy Communion inside the Edicule, the crowds of the people also received the Holy Communion around the Catholicon.

Before dismissal, the Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom was read.

Finally, bells tolling, the Patriarchal entourage returned to the Patriarchate, where Easter eggs and cheese were offered.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# THE SERVICE OF THE HOLY LIGHT AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Holy Saturday afternoon, 10/23 April 2022, the Service of the Holy Light was observed according to the Status Quo of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

At 13.00 o'clock (summertime) His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos left the Patriarchate Headquarters after the welcoming reception of the Greek delegation and went down to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre through the staircase of Saint James Cathedral.

Inside the Church, the representatives of the Armenians, Copts and Syrians came to receive the blessing by His Beatitude the Greek Orthodox Patriarch to participate in the ceremony and receive, each according to their right, the Holy Light.

Immediately after that the Procession three times around the Sacred Edicule began, under the chanting of "Thy Resurrection Christ Saviour" and "Joyous Light".

After the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the litany, the Greek Patriarch entered the Edicule along with the representative of the Armenians who stood by the Angel's stone.

His Beatitude prayed asking the mercy and compassion of God and to offer our repentance, received the Light from the Holy Tomb, the Light of the incarnate, crucified and Resurrected Christ, as His blessing for the waiting crowds, who received it in gleefulness, sanctifying their faces, hands, glorifying God.

Holding the candles of the Holy Light, His Beatitude left the Holy Sepulchre and marched to the Sacristy through the Catholicon, and from there He returned to the Patriarchate Reception Hall, along with His entourage, bells tolling.



The Service of the Holy Light was followed by the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great, which was officiated by His Eminence Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis.

At the Patriarchate, His Beatitude gave the Holy Light to the leader of the Greek Delegation, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Andreas Kastaniotiis and to the Exarch in Athens Archimandrite Raphael to transfer it to Greece by a private flight for the blessing of the Greek people.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE EPITAPH SERVICE AT THE PATRIARCHATE**

At 9.00 p.m. (summertime) on Good Friday evening, 9/22 April 2022, the Epitaph Service was held at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

On this feast, the chanting began with the Canon and Matins of Holy Saturday, at the Catholicon of the Church of the Resurrection.

During the chanting of the Canon His Beatitude, the Archbishops and the Priests were dressed in their mourning liturgical vestments.

Then the litany began from the Catholicon, marching on the right from the "touch me not" chapel, towards all the shrines outside the Catholicon, offering an entreaty at each of them.

At the Horrendous Golgotha, the Gospel narrative of the Crucifixion was read and the Archbishops received the silk

corporal of the Epitaph from the Altar, which they placed on the Deposition Slate, below Golgotha, and the Gospel narrative was read.

Then there was a litany three times around the Sacred Edicule with the silk corporal being held by the Archbishops, which they placed on the Tomb and the 3 stasis of the Lamentations began.

The officiator of the Service, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos recited the 1<sup>st</sup> stasis, and the rest were read by the High Priests.

Then Geronda Secretary-General, His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina delivered the following Sermon:

*"Your Beatitude, Father and Master,*

*Respected chorea of Hierarchs,*

*Your Excellency, Consul General of Greece,*

*Reverend Fathers,*

*Noble pilgrims,*

*Great and sacred is this day of Holy Friday and Holy Saturday. It is the day of commemoration of the Cross and burial of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Church chants in joyful mourning; "Today, He who suspended the earth in the waters is suspended on a cross. The Bridegroom of the Church is fixed with nails to the cross. The Son of the Virgin is pierced with a spear" and "You, O Life, were buried in a tomb, O my Christ, and angelic hosts were struck with astonishment, glorifying Your ineffable descent" and "The almighty Master is observed to be dead. He is laid within a new, unused sepulchre, He who emptied many graves of those who died".*

*About this event of Divine love, compassion and conciliation, Saint Chrysostom wonders in awe: "how, having risen from the*

royal thrones, God entered the earth and even Hades, and how the devil became an opponent not to a naked God but to a God hidden within the human nature and how death is released by death and the curse annuls curse, and through these, the tyranny of the devil in all things he prevailed is now abolished" (Homily 2 ch.1 on the Gospel according to Matthew).

This happened indeed, Christ our God went down to Hades, conquered its powers and released from it the centuries-long bound ones in fetters and slavery therein because He willingly accepted the Cross. We went down to Hades by the power of the humility of His Cross. Until the incarnate presence of His Son, God the Father granted righteousness and the salvation of people through His Law, which He wrote by His own hands, on mount Sinai and gave it to His servant Moses (Exodus 31,18). This Law was not abolished, because the Lord said "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil the law" (Matthew 5,17), and because Saint Paul says that "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. 3,17); however, it becomes insufficient since the "the fulness of the time was come" (Gal. 4,4), ever since "Christ our God is the fulfilment of the law and the prophets", as Saint John the Baptist revealed in the River Jordan, He became "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1,29), and "by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9,12). He sacrificed Himself (Hebrews 7,27) and with the red colour of His own blood, He signed the New Testament of Grace. Since then, as the Apostle of the nations says, "man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2,16). "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5,6), "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3,11).

This word of the Cross, the par excellence word of the Holy

and Great Friday, became "foolishness" for the ancient Greek philosophy, it is a "scandal" for the rabbinic theology, however, for Saint Paul, the twelve Apostles and the Church, it is the "power of God leading to salvation". Just as Christ entered Hades through the sign of His Cross, likewise, the Church, embracing the Cross, entered the world and enchanted it through the teaching of the Crucified Christ. Through the power of the sign of the Cross, the Church opposed the invisible evil forces and conquered them. It raised millions of martyrs, who considered death as nothing, thousands of ascetics and righteous, confessors Fathers, who lived like angels on earth and like heavenly people and illumined the minds of the people in the Holy Spirit through the decisions of Councils, to comprehend the Revelation in Christ and decorated their morals and created the Christian civilization. The Church honours and venerates the Holy Cross and projects it as a weapon against the devil in all the manifestations of its life. Through the Cross, it sanctifies the sacraments, such as the Baptism, the Holy Eucharists, the Unction, the Sanctification of the water, it sanctifies the whole creation and exorcises every evil action from it.

Non the less, even pious emperors vanquished great armies of their enemies by the Cross of Christ. First among them with the sign "conquer in this" of the Cross was the pious emperor Constantine the Great, who conquered the opposing armies of the irreverent Maxentius. Following this, he believed in Christ and was baptised, offered freedom in the Christian faith through the decree of Mediolams in AD 312 and became equal to the Apostles, inaugurating the reigning city as the capital of the Rum Orthodox tradition. He also projected this place of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord through the construction of this magnificent Church of the Resurrection, the beauty of which the hymnographer compares to that of the heavenly firmament. Until the end of times, this Church remains the most sacred, pan-orthodox and pan-Christian Shrine, shelter, shield and protection of the inhabitants but

also of the pilgrims of the Holy Land in their religious life and its difficulties, and above all the boast of the Church of the Holy Zion. By the power of the Cross also, the pious emperor Herakleios conquered the Persians in their homeland and returned the captive Patriarch of Jerusalem Zacharias and exalted the Sacred Cross in its initial position in the Horrendous Golgotha. The Church of Jerusalem has kept like the pupil of the eye this place, which was sanctified once and for all with the divine blood of Christ, and is everyday sanctified through Christ's blood in the Holy Eucharist. This is proven by the Sacred Edicule, the work of Kalfa Komninos from Mytilini, which was constructed over difficult times of bitter bondage by our noble nation, as written herein is "a possession and offering to Christ of the Rum Orthodox in 1810". It was renovated and beautified in the year of our salvation 2017 by the initiative and care of the Primate of the Church of Jerusalem and officiator of this Epitaph Service, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III.

In the group of the peaceful tribes and peoples who accepted the crucified Christ as their leader, He included our Greek nation. When the Apostle of nations according to the vivid narrative of Saint Luke the Evangelist was called to speak at the Areopagus in Athens, the Athenians listened to him until the point of the resurrection of the dead. In a polite manner, they then said "we shall listen to you again". However, there were those who believed and were baptised, such as "Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them" (Acts 17,34). Along with Lydia the Philippian, they are the beginning of the dough of Christian Hellenism. They are its originator ancestors. Later on, Hellenism as a manner of thinking and life accepted the Revelation. It was named after the name of the Divinity of Jesus Christ. It lived up to its calling, which was petitioned when "the Greeks asked to see Jesus" (John 12,20-21). Then Jesus said, "the hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified" (John 12,23). This

*phrase is an honour and blessing along with the calling of our nation. Its mission continues to be the glory of the Son of man through its manner of living, through the course of history. Our nation has carried out this mission throughout the centuries, not hiding the lamp below the stand, but placing the lamp and transmitting the light of Christ to the Slavonic people through Saints Cyril and Methodios and Photios, and to the ends of the world through the Orthodox mission.*

*Gratefully attributing its rebirth to God, our nation is the Lord's "people, and inheritance and regime", and it is again called by both the auspicious and ominous current circumstances "to keep the good things which it has been taught" the consignment of Christ, of faith, hope, freedom, equality, equity, righteousness, conciliation and peace-making, the care of the sick, refugees, and the needy, chanting in its Churches "Lord, Thou hast given us Thy Cross a weapon against the devil", "Thy Cross we venerate, O Master and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify". Deem us worthy, O Lord, to venerate Your Holy Resurrection in peace."*

During praises, the High Priests venerated the silk corporal with the immaculate Body of the Lord and received the blessed rose petals.

The service concluded with the procession of the Epitaph around the Altar of the Catholicon and its placement on the Altar.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# GOOD FRIDAY VESPERS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Good Friday afternoon, around 3.00 pm on 9/22 April 2022, the Service of Vespers took place at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in commemoration of the deposition from the Wood of the Immaculate Body of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ and His burial at the place nearby.

The Service was led by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, who came down from the Horrendous Golgotha staircase wearing an engolpion and the High Priests wore epanokalymafhon. The Vespers Service was attended by many pilgrims who heard the chanting in contrition.

**From Secretariat-General**

<https://fb.watch/cyCxt3RD4u/>

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# THE ROYAL HOURS OF GOOD FRIDAY

On Good Friday morning, 9/22 April 2022, the Royal Hours were read at the Church of Praetorion, the place of the prison and the trial and the condemnation to the crucifixion of the Lord.

The service was followed by the Procession through Via Dolorosa to the Horrendous Golgotha by His Eminence Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, accompanied by Priests, Deacons and pilgrims, carrying crosses in remembrance of the Lord's march

toward Golgotha.

The Procession was led by His Eminence Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella, who carried the cross, followed by Hieromonks, Monks and Nuns, the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangleos Vlioras and the Consulate staff, along with many faithful Christians who participated in this marching towards the Lord's Passion.

Upon their arrival to the Holy Courtyard, His Eminence Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba delivered a Sermon and then everybody went up to the Horrendous Golgotha where the Royal Hours were read at the attendance of many pilgrims.

**From Secretariat-General**