

# MONDAY OF THE BRIGHT WEEK

The feast of Pascha was also celebrated in the Holy Sepulchre Brotherhood internally in the monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen, on Monday of the Bright Week, April 23 / May 6, 2024.

Matins was followed by a solemn Divine Liturgy, presided over by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, as the service was officiated by the Typicon Keeper of the Holy Church, Archimandrite Alexios and Archdeacon Mark.

The Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem, Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos, the Consul, Mrs Anna Mantika, and the representatives of the Orthodox Churches, namely the Patriarchate of Moscow, the Russian Church of the Diaspora and the Patriarchate of Romania, attended this Liturgy as well as many pilgrims.

After the Divine Liturgy with the chanting of "Christ is Risen", the Patriarchal Entourage dressed in the Liturgical vestments went up to the Patriarchate Reception Hall, the Polychronion of His Beatitude was chanted and followed by a festive treat, the Paschal greeting and the distribution of Paschal eggs by His Beatitude to the Fathers and the pilgrims, while of the choir of the Russian Pilgrimage Mission to Jerusalem (MISSIA) was chanting the resurrection hymns.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# THE CELEBRATION OF THE SECOND RESURRECTION AT THE PATRIARCHATE

Around noon on Easter day, April 22 / May 5, 2024, the Service of the Second Resurrection took place in the Patriarchate.

It started in the Patriarchal Hall with the psalm of Christ Risen in slow Byzantine music and in the reading of the 9th ode of Pascha, until His Beatitude and the High Priests and Priests were clothed in their celebratory vestments.

After the 9<sup>th</sup> ode, the Patriarchal Continuity marched to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the bells ringing and the Priests holding their lit candles, chanting continuously Christ Risen through the Christian Way, where many people were waiting to the right and left.

At the courtyard of the Church of the Resurrection, a prayer was offered and the Vespers of the Second Resurrection were celebrated in the Catholicon, presided over by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos. Co-celebrants were the Holy Sepulchre Fathers, as the service was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos and the Consul Mrs Anna Mantika.

After the Great Entry, the Gospel of the Lord's appearance to the disciples was read on the first day of the Resurrection "that day, the first of the Sabbaths" (John 20:19) and on the eighth day, "when Thomas was with them'" (Jn. 20,21) in many languages □□for the declaration of the universality of the Gospel message to the world.

At the end of Vespers, the Patriarchal Entourage returned to the Patriarchate.

# THE FEAST OF PASCHA AT THE PATRIARCHATE

The feast of the Holy Pascha, the feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, was celebrated on Sunday, April 22 / May 5, 2024, at night in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

In the beginning, the Resurrection Canon was chanted in the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, until His Beatitude, the High Priests and the Priests were clothed.

Then the litany began around the Holy Sepulchre three times, then the Second Matins Gospel from the Evangelist Mark was read "on the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene..." and "Christ is Risen" was sung from the interior of the Holy Edicule by His Beatitude and the Byzantine choir, ten times.

The service continued with the chanting of the Resurrection Canon of Saint John of Damascus after the prayer in each ode. In Louds, His Beatitude, the High Priests, and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem, Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos and the Consul Mrs Anna Mantika venerated the Holy Sepulchre.

After the Doxology, the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom began, the faithful chanting "Christ is Risen" in many languages, Greek, Arabic, Russian, Romanian, Polish and others.

The Liturgy was officiated by His Beatitude, with the co-celebration of their Eminences, Metropolitan Isychios of Capitolas, the Archbishops, Theophanes of Gerash, Aristarchos

of Constantina, Theodosios of Sebasteia and Philoumenos of Pela, the Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios first in rank of the Holy Sepulchre Hieromonks, Archimandrite Vassianos from the Moscow Patriarchate, Archimandrite Ioannis from the Romanian Patriarchate, Priests from other Churches, Archdeacon Mark and Hierodeacons Eulogios and Dositheos. The chanting was delivered by Mr Eustathios Tsoumanis and Priest Ioannis Antoniou leading the choir, as the service was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos and the Consul Mrs Anna Mantika.

Before the end of the Liturgy, the Secretary of the Holy Synod Hierodeacon Simeon read the Pascha 2024 Message of His Beatitude and then the prayer of Saint John Chrysostom.

After the Liturgy, the Patriarchal Entourage returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters and received Easter eggs and cheese.

The Elder Sacristan with the Holy Sepulchre Fathers, the Elder Dragoman and the Eder Secretary-General remained at the Holy Sepulchre until the morning for the protection of our right to have our guard present inside the Sacred Edicule for the welcoming of the Coptic and Syriac communities.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE CEREMONY OF THE HOLY LIGHT AT THE PATRIARCHATE**

On Holy Saturday, April 21/May 4, 2024, the Ceremony of the Holy Light took place at the Patriarchate.

In accordance with the Status Quo and the Standard of the

Patriarchate of Jerusalem, His Beatitude arrived on the 12th noon winter time at 13.00 p.m. summer time from the Patriarchate through the stairs of the Cathedral of Saint James the Brother of God to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Then, having venerated at the Holy Deposition, He went to the Holy Altar of the Catholicon and the three communities of Armenians, Copts and Syrians came and received the blessing to receive the Holy Light.

Then His Beatitude put on his full uniform and the litany began chanting the "Oh joyous light" and "Your Resurrection, Christ Saviour", for three rounds around the Holy Sepulchre. In the third round, the representative of the Armenian Patriarchate was brought to the Angel's Stone.

His Beatitude entered alone into the interior of the Holy Sepulchre, and while praying, he transmitted the Holy Light from the southern door of the Holy Edicule to the Priest of the Cathedral of Saint James.

Priests, monks and people received with joy and rejoicing the Holy Light through their candles and applied it to their lips, eyes, and foreheads asking for the above strength and illumination from the Risen Christ. Transmitting the Holy Light from the Entrance of the Holy Edicule, His Beatitude entered the Catholicon and from the Catholicon to the Holy Altar and then to the Sacristy.

After the sound of the bells, His Beatitude ascended to the Patriarchate and passed the Holy Light to the delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who had come from Greece, to pass it on to Greece and also to the delegation of other Churches, which arrived for this reason.

The Delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Kotsiras and the Church of Greece under the Most Reverend Metropolitan Maximos of Ioannina.

# THE EPITAPH SERVICE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Good Friday night, April 20/ May 4, 2024, the Epitaph Service took place at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The canon of Holy Saturday was sung at the beginning of the service until the Patriarch and the High Priest would get dressed in their mourning liturgical vestments.

At the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ode, the Patriarchal Entourage came out of the Catholicon and went up to the Horrendous Golgotha via all the Shrines outside the Catholicon at each of whom there was a stop with a supplication.

Then the 7th Gospel of the Holy Passion was read, which narrates the Lord's Cross (Mat. 27:33-54), and there was a prayer followed by veneration, with the participation of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos and the Consul Mrs Anna Mantika, under the chanting of the Choir of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

After the narrative, four Archbishops took the silk corporal which symbolizes the body of Christ, and placed it on the slab of the Holy Deposition, having completed three circles around it, and the Patriarch read the Gospel of Deposition, according to St. John.

This was followed by the procession three times around the Holy Sepulchre, with the Archbishops holding the silk

corporal. After the procession, the silk corporal representing the Body of the Lord was placed on the slab of the Holy Sepulchre.

At the end of the procession, the three stasis of the Epitaph Lamentations began;1. "Thou who art the Life was laid in a tomb Oh Christ..." 2. It is right to magnify Thee, Giver of Life..." 3. "Every generation, O my Christ, offers praises at Thy burial..." with the Patriarch starting the first one, the second His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Capitolas, the third His Eminence Archbishop Theophanes of Gerash and His Eminence Dorotheos of Avila. Participants in the prayer were the Holy Sepulchre Hieromonks and Priests from the Orthodox Churches.

The sermon of the day was delivered by Geronda Secretary-General, His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina as follows;

"I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste" (Isaiah 28,16).

Your Beatitude, Father and Master,

Reverend Chorea of Hierarchs,

Your Excellency, Consul General of Greece,

Reverend Priests,

Pious pilgrims,

This luxurious and chosen stone, the cornerstone and honourable, through whom the prophet Isaiah foretold that God would place Him in the foundations of Zion, is the same whom Simeon the God-receiver recognized as "the salvation of God" and said, " is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against" (Luke 2,

30-34). The fall of those who deny Him and the resurrection of those who accept Him. It is He through whom the Apostle of the Nations says, " God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5,19) and that "in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2, 9).

He is God's Only Begotten Son and Word, incarnate by the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin. He is the one who receives our human flesh, the one who brings us together as God and man, as God-man. He is the one witnessed by John the Baptist as "the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Joh, 1, 29). The Father Himself, when Christ was baptized in the Jordan, revealed Himself through a voice from above, "You are my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased" (Mark. 1, 10) and the Spirit "descending upon Him in the form of a dove (Mark. 1, 10) anointed with the "Theurgical oil of rejoicing".

Anointed with the oil of the Holy Spirit by the Father's grace, He took upon His shoulders the salvation of us humans. "In His person, the human race saw the Father (Jn. 14, 8). He is, as He assured us, "the way and the truth and the life" (John 14, 6). He taught us the true way of life, as a life of offering and love to the neighbour, even to the enemies. He healed the deaf and dumb, braced the dead limbs of the paralyzed, gave sight to the blind, healed those possessed by unclean spirits and raised the dead, including His friend Lazarus the four-day dead, "confirming the general Resurrection before His passion".

Out of immeasurable mercy and unspeakable philanthropy, He concluded with the sacrifice on the Cross for us. He willingly accepted the Cross for us. According to the apostle Paul, "Yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die" (Rom. 5, 7). "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5, 8). In free and self-willed obedience, He undertook "to finish the work that the Father gave him"(John 17, 4). The Lord experienced His death as a cup, saying "This cup, which the Father has given me, do I not drink it?" (John 18, 11). He



absolved our death by His very death. Death was “overcome by death”, as the Church sings day and night. His death was true. It was dishonourable, shameful, painful and bitter. The Lord cried out loud from the Cross, “I thirst”, but mankind, in the person of the descendants of the sons of the law and the sons of the nations, offered Him “vinegar mixed with gall” (Jn. 18, 29) ” and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink” (Matt. 27, 34). In the philanthropy of God, the man returned inhumanity, because according to the approved Theologian, the blessed Elder George Florovski “the whole outburst of rage against Christ was inhuman and demonic”.

Through the Cross, the Lord descended into Hades, however, the immaculate body of the redeemer of our souls “did not see the grave and corruption”.

By His own power, as God, he released from Hades those under his eternal bonds, saying “Enter again into paradise”, that is, enjoy without suffering in joy and rejoicing the eternal life. Because of this, from the Cross of the Lord and from here, as the Church proclaims on the day of Pentecost, “there is no death when we leave the body and depart to the Lord, but the transition from the saddest to the most useful and memorable and rest and joy”. “Behold, joy has come to the whole world through the Cross.” His life-giving blood, God’s blood, as the dogmatic theology of the Church sings and as it is written on the slab of the Holy Altar of Golgotha, flowed when the stones of nature, of the Place of the Skull, split and through their cracks His immaculate blood flowed and washed away the pollution of our forefather buried in here and of all his descendants.

On His blood, the Lord founded the Church, His Body, so that “the gates of Hades will not have power over it” (Matt. 16,18). By the red dye of His holy blood He signed His New Testament, the Testament with all the peoples of the earth, ” which did not come to destroy, but to fulfil the Old (Matt. 5, 17), saying “This is my blood of the Covenant, (Matt. 26, 28)

and "this cup is the New Testament in my blood" (Luke 22, 20). From the death of the Cross sprang life for man, a force of life uncatalyzed, fountains of life and salvation. The blood of Christ, shed once upon a time on Golgotha, is poured into the blood of the Holy Eucharist, for the life and salvation of the world, enlivening and sanctifying our souls and bodies.

Through the Cross of His Son, God answered the Greeks who failed to know Him "through wisdom" and the Jews through the request for a "sign". God promised to save both, Jews first and then Greeks through the sign of the Cross.

In the Church founded on His blood and the New Testament signed by Him, He united the two worlds, the Jewish and the Greek. Those who believe in Him, Jews and Greeks, are one in Christ, because "in Christ there is no longer Jew and Greek, barbarian, Scythian, free man". Christ was willingly crucified for them and everyone is saved in him, even those who crucified Him. If this is a "scandal" for the Jews and "stupidity" for the Greeks, for those who have received it in faith it is "the power of God and the wisdom of God".

This mystery, this free gift, this benefit, is offered by Christ through the Church to the world. He offers this through His death, saying "Take courage I have overcome the world". The Cross is the glory of Christ. Through the Cross, the Lord entered His glory. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24, 27). The Cross is the glory of Christ and the boast of the Church, "I did not boast, lest in the Cross of the Lord" says Paul. The Cross is the strength of the persecuted and those at war. With the symbol, the banner of the Cross, Byzantine emperors defeated barbarians. In this place, the emperor Heraclius brought back the Patriarch of Jerusalem Zacharia from Persian captivity and raised the holy Cross. With the power of the Cross, our ancestors freed our nation from bitter slavery. The power of the cross highlighted a multitude of martyrs and new martyrs

and preserved the Roman Orthodox identity of our nation.

With the power of the holy cross, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre Brotherhood under its Hegoumen, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, Primate of our feast, gives its fight for the protection of the undeniable Pilgrimage rights of our people against foreign fraudulence and appeals for the cessation of all hostilities and the maintenance of a spirit of reconciliation and peace in the Holy Land and the world as a whole.

On this reverend and holy day, mourning in joyful mourning, the cross of Christ according to the Holy Triodion already “illuminates the dawn of the Resurrection of Christ”, of which may everyone be worthy to rejoice in health. So be it.”

The service continued with the “evlogitaria”, praises, readings, intercession and dismissal. The return to the Patriarchate was done under the mournful bell tolling.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **GOOD FRIDAY VESPERS**

On Good Friday afternoon, April 20/ May 3, 2024, the Vespers of the Deposition was held at the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, presided over by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos. The contrite hymns of the day were perfectly delivered by the Byzantine choir of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, under the lead of Hierodeacon Simeon and Mr Eustathios Tsoumanis.

After Vespers, His Beatitude received at the Patriarchate the

Delegation of the Foundation of Saint Andrew of Russia and members of the Russian-speaking Churches, and there was a supplication for peace in the Holy Land and the whole world.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# **THE ROYAL HOURS OF GOOD FRIDAY AT THE PATRIARCHATE**

On Good Friday, April 20/ May 3, 2024, the Royal Hours of Good Friday were read at the Patriarchate.

1. At the Monastic and Patriarchal Church of Saints Constantine and Helen, in the presence of His Beatitude, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Holy Sepulchre Fathers.
2. At the Praetorion, where the procession of the Cross began, marching through Via Dolorosa. The procession was led by His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Capitolias, who carried the cross on his shoulders, followed by many faithful Christians. When the procession reached the courtyard of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, there was a supplication and His Eminence delivered a sermon. The Royal Hours were read then in the Horrendous Golgotha, as the fathers ministering there had opened the door of the Church as per our right on this day of the year.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# **THE SERVICE OF THE PASSIONS AT THE PATRIARCHATE**

On Holy Thursday evening, April 20/ May 3, the service of the Passions was held.

In it, the twelve Gospel narratives were read, with the relevant hymns chanted in between. The first Gospel narrative was read by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, and the rest by High Priests and Archimandrites of the Patriarchate. The service was attended by many faithful Christians, the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos, and the Consul Mrs Anna Mantika.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# **THE SERVICE OF THE WASHING OF THE DISCIPLES' FEET**

On Holy Thursday morning, April 19/ May 2, 2024, the Divine Liturgy at Saint James Cathedral was officiated by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with the co-celebration of their Eminences, the Archbishops, Aristarchos of Constantina, Theodosios of Sebasteia, and Philoumenos of Pella. Immediately afterwards, the service of the Washing of the Disciples' feet was held at the courtyard of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, attended by many

pilgrims, the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Dimitrios Angelosopoulos and the Consul Mrs Anna Mantika.

In this service, His Beatitude washed the feet of twelve Hieromonks, imitating the Lord, Who washed the feet of His disciples, showing humility as the perfect way.

**From Secretariat-General**

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## **THE HOLY UNCTION AT THE PATRIARCHATE**

On Holy Wednesday afternoon, April 18/ May 1, 2024, the Sacrament of the Holy Unction was held after the service of the Small Compline at the Church of Saints Constantine and Helen. The service was presided over by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos along with six High Priests, so that they would be seven in total according to the order of the Church. The service was attended by monks, nuns and faithful Christians for their sanctification in their participation in the Holy Passion of Christ and the Holy Pascha.

**From Secretariat-General**