

THE HAGIOTAPHITE ARCHIMANDRITE ANTHIMOS HAS SLEPT IN THE LORD

Before midnight on Thursday 20 August/ 2 September 2021, after an old age illness over the last few months, the elder Archimandrite Anthimos Theocharakis slept in the Lord at the age of 90. He was the Hegoumen of the Monastery of Men of Galilee on the Mount of Olives.

The Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, which the departed served so well according to his monastic vows, observed his funeral service under the lead of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos at the central Monastery in Saint Thecla's chapel at 4:00 p.m. on Friday 21 August /3 September 2021. Co-celebrants to His Beatitude were the Hagiotaphite Archbishops, Hieromonks and Hierodeacons, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece Mr Evangelos Vlioras and the participation in prayer of Monks, Nuns and representatives of the Arab-speaking flock from the Communities the departed served.

The eulogy was delivered by the Secretary-General His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina as follows:

"Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Reverend chorea of Hierarchs,

Mr Consul General of Greece,

Reverend Fathers,

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

In profound sorrow and contrition, we stand before the dead body of the yesterday-departed to the Lord, our elder brother,

Hagiotaphite Archimandrite Anthimos. We stand wondering, how did this mystery happen? How have we become one with decay? How did we mingle with death? How was the harmonious bond between soul and body broken? How was the soul violently separated from the body? The answer to our human thoughts comes from the Church hymnographer's words, 'the taste of the wood of old in Eden became sorrow for Adam'; meaning that man was cut off from the union of the source of life by his own free will and brought death upon himself.

Out of His boundless mercy, God did not suffer to see His creature in decay and perdition and became man in Christ, was made incarnate and received death, so that He may save His creature this way. Our consolation in this dreadful time of death, by God's Providence, is Christ our God, who assures us that "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25). Similarly, comforting is the assurance of the Church in its prayers that burying a dead body is not death to those who believe in Christ, but a translation from the temporary to the eternal life, from the earthly to the heavenly, from sorrow to gladness. It is the cherishing of the heavenly pastures not "through a glass, darkly; but face to face" (1 Cor. 13:12).

In the certainty of this faith, we surpass our human sorrow for the separation from our dear brother and accompany him to his last heavenly residence. We bring to our memory that he came to the Holy Land from Crete, where he was born, at a young age and devoted himself to our Holy Community. He joined our Venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and received the Monastic Schema, followed by the Office of Priesthood. Ever since, having love for his brethren, never judging anyone, being hopeful, condescending and pleasant, he served the Church of Jerusalem, the Mother of Churches and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood therein. He served in good faith, with zeal and Hagiotaphite, Pilgrimage and Pastoral devotion in various posts; as Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of the

Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, at the Monastery of Praetorion, at the Tomb of the Theotokos in Gethsemane, at the Great Martyr George in Lydda, at the Sarantarion Mount, at the Monastery of Elisha in Jericho by the sycamore tree of Zacchaeus. For the last twenty years, he had been the Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Men of Galilee (Galili Viri) on the Mount of Olives, where he kept weekly Services, as he did at the chapel of the Dormition. He renovated the Monastery, building a new wing at his own expense.

Accompanying him at his departure today with these pleasant memories, we entreat our merciful God to count these good words of his and forsake his wrongdoings, whether voluntary or involuntary and place his soul in Paradise, among the holy and the righteous, granting him the joy of the light of His three-sun Divinity. So be it.

May his memory be everlasting!"

The departed Archimandrite to the eternal dwelling places of the Lord was buried at the Cemetery of the Holy Zion.

May his memory be everlasting.

From Secretariat-General

**THE FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF
THE THEOTOKOS AT THE**

PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday, 15/28 August 2021, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Gethsemane at the Holy Church with the Tomb of the Mother of God.

On this feast, the Church reminds the faithful of our faith that the Theotokos conceived from the Holy Spirit and bore in the flesh our Lord Jesus Christ, she died and was buried in Gethsemane, but was translated by the hands of her Son in the heavens and her immaculate body was preserved. She stands on His right side, interceding unceasingly for the life and salvation of those who genuinely revere her as the Mother of God.

The Dormition of the Theotokos is characterized as 'deathless' by the Church, for this, it sings: "On thy deathless Dormition, all the heavens are jubilant, and the hosts of Angels exceedingly rejoice, clouds caught the Apostles high into the air; and although dispersed throughout the world, they were brought to stand in one choir before thine immaculate body" (Matins, praises, troparia 1,3). And Saint John of Damascus says about this, "oh, best departure, through which life in God is granted".

For the feast of the Dormition, Vespers was officiated at the Theotokos' Tomb on Friday afternoon by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda. The Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with the co-celebration of their Eminences: Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, the Archbishops, Demetrios of Lydda, Makarios of Qatar, and Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, along with Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, and the Archimandrites, Isidoros, Meletios and Dionysios, Priest Farah, Archdeacon Mark and Hierodeacon Eulogios. The chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon and the Patriarchal School Students, as the

Service was attended by many local faithful Christians and the Consul General of Greece Mr Evangelos Vlioras.

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

“O strange wonder, great and marvellous! For the fount of life is laid within a sepulchre; a ladder to heaven’s heights doth the small grave become” (Vespers, Troparion 1), the Church hymnographer says.

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

Noble Christians

By the Grace of God, we are here at the Tomb of Gethsemane, where the glorious body of our Most glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary was placed to honour her sacred metastasis (translation).

The Dormition of the Mother of God is indeed a wondrous mystery, as the hymnographer says: “Thou didst conceive and bear without the seed of man; and thou didst fall asleep, yet incorrupt in death, as wonder met together with great wonder, O Theotokos. How thou, who didst not know man, being pure yet didst nurse a babe; how the Mother of our God, clothed in death, yet doth breath froth myrrh. For this, we cry to thee with the Angel: Rejoice, O Full of Grace” (Matins, Kathisma 3).

Rejoice, O Full of Grace, we cry again with the Angel, because in Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary we praise the divine and marvellous plan of God’s Providence, the Incarnation of God the Word and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The multitudes of the Angels in heaven and the people on earth bless the sacred Dormition of the Most Holy Virgin because she became Mother of the Creator of all things on the one hand, and the cause of our deification on the other, as the

hymnographer says; "For she that is of David's seed, she through whom we have been made Godlike, hath beyond all telling been translated with glory into the hands of her own Son and Master" (Vespers, Aposticha troparion 3).

"Oh, how the fount of life is translated into life through death! Oh, how the One who surpassed the limits of nature by giving birth now keeps the laws and succumbs to death while she has an immortal body. Because this body has to lay down mortality and be clothed in incorruptibility since the sovereign of nature did not refuse to suffer death".

Theotokos Mary is called 'the fount of life, because she became the Mother of God. And Christ is life, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6), the Lord says. Saint John the Evangelist preaches that the cause and the fount of life is Christ, the Son and Word of God: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

This means that due to the relation and union of the people with the old Adam, all his descendants die, so through their relation and union with the New Adam, the Resurrected Christ, all will be vivified, as Saint Paul preaches: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22).

The Mother of God, who received the Holy Spirit and the power of the Highest overshadowed her (Luke 1:35), is the beginning of those who are brought back to life. For this reason, the Dormition of Theotokos goes beyond the meaning of natural death, as this is proven by her Tomb, which is preserved and venerated to this day, while "it is empty, without a body in it". This event, which is beyond logic, the Dormition and translation of Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary is phrased by the hymnographer of the Church with the words: "The bounds of nature are overcome in thee, O Immaculate Virgin; for thy childbirth is virginal, and thy death is the espousal of life. O thou who after childbirth art virgin, and who after death

art living, do thou, O Theotokos, ever save thine inheritance” (Matins, Ode 9, troparion 1).

The Most Holy and most blessed Theotokos Mary, the Mother of our God and Saviour Christ, has become the Mother of all people, and especially of the Christians, as the psalmist says: “Blessed is the [Christian] nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance” (Psalm 33:12).

And we, my dear brethren, being grateful for the endless benefits we have received from the Most Holy Theotokos, let us thank and entreat her to intercede to her Son and our God for the salvation of our souls.

May the grace of the Sacred Tomb of the Mother of God be with you all. Amen”.

After the Divine Liturgy, the Hegoumen of the Shrine Archbishop Dorotheos of Avela hosted a reception for the Patriarchal Entourage, the Consul General and others.

From Secretariat-General

THE PROCESSION OF THE ICON OF THE DORMITION TO GETHSEMANE

The Procession of the icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos to Gethsemane took place at dawn on Wednesday 12/25 August 2021.

The ceremony was held according to the Typikon order of the Church of Jerusalem, and at 5:00 a.m. the Procession of the icon of the Dormition began from the Metochion of Gethsemane, opposite the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where it is kept all year round.

The Hegoumen of Gethsemane His Eminence Archbishop Dorotheos of Avela, carried before his chest the icon of the Dormition, surrounded by Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Monks, as a large procession of Nuns and pilgrims marched ahead, preceding the procession.

The Procession stopped for small prayers before the Holy Monasteries of Saint Alexander Nevsky, Saint Charalambos, Praetorion, Saint Anna, the First Martyr and Archdeacon Stephen and concluded at the Church of the Dormition in Gethsemane, where the Holy Tomb of the Theotokos lies.

The icon was placed in the Epitaph behind the Tomb and in front of the Icon of Platytera after a short prayer and then the Services of the Day, Matins, Paraklisis and the Divine Liturgy followed.

The Holy Icon will remain there for the Lamentations of the Eve of the Dormition, for the Divine Liturgy on the Day of Dormition up until August 23rd (old calendar) when it will be returned in procession again at the Metochion of Gethsemane.

From Secretariat-General

EPISCOPAL DIVINE LITURGY IN BEER SHEVA FOR THE FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

With the occasion of the Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord, when all the Prophets and the Righteous of the Old Testament through the Prophets Moses and Elijah the Thesbite confess our Lord Jesus Christ as the Light-giver Lord of Glory, the Russian-speaking parish of the Righteous Patriarch Abraham in Beer Sheva celebrated this feast on Saturday 8/21 August. The Episcopal Divine Liturgy was officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Qatar, with the co-celebration of the ministering Priest of Beer Sheva Father Alexander Yasevitch, while the Hegoumen, His Eminence Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba led the parish members as a solid choir, chanting in Greek and Slavonic.

After the Divine Liturgy there was a reception where His Eminence Makarios addressed the faithful in admonishing words encouraging them to remain steadfast in the Orthodox Faith, and refrain from bad doctrines and tales of fallacy which flood the internet and confuse the common people.

From Secretariat-General

**THE FEAST OF THE
TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD**

AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday, 6/19 August 2021, the Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ was celebrated by the Patriarchate at the Holy Monastery of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, the place where this event happened.

On this Feast, the Church follows the Gospel narrative by which before His Passion, our Lord Jesus Christ took Peter, James and John, His Disciples, and revealed to them the Glory of His Divinity, as much as it was possible for them to comprehend. His face shone and his clothes were brighter than the sun, while a bright cloud overshadowed them and Moses and Elijah appeared next to Him, talking about His Passion, which was about to happen in Jerusalem. At the same time, the voice of the Father was heard from the heavens saying: "This is my beloved Son," in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him". After this vision, Jesus again took His disciples and went down the mountain and told them not to tell anyone about what they had witnessed before His Resurrection.

For the commemoration of this event, by which the Lord revealed to His Disciples and to us the first beauty of man before Adam's fall, and the possibility to regain it through the Transfigured Christ, the Divine Liturgy was officiated in an All-night Vigil by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos. Co-celebrants to His Beatitude were their Eminences; Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Archbishop Makarios of Qatar, Archimandrite Parthenios, and Priests from the Galilee district. The chanting was delivered by Archimandrite Philotheos and his choir in Greek and Arabic, as the Vigil was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras, and not many faithful Christians due to the covid restrictions.

Before the Holy Communion His Beatitude delivered the

following Sermon:

“And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light” (Matt. 17:1-2).

Beloved Brethren in Christ,
Noble Christians

The grace of our Saviour Christ has gathered us all in this high mountain of Tabor to celebrate the great and wondrous event of the utmost philanthropy of God the Father, namely the Transfiguration of Jesus before His Disciples, Peter, James and John, and also the prophets Moses and Elijah. This event happened forty days before Christ's Passion.

Apostle Peter refers to the irrefutable witness of his presence on Mount Tabor when he wants to prove that the teaching of Christ, which the Disciples preached, was not based on human imagination and mind, and says about his personal experience: “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount” (2 Peter 1:16-18).

During His Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, the Lord revealed to His Disciples, firstly His power, which was shown to them [the disciples] by God the Father, through the glory of His Only-Begotten Son. And this glory is no other than the energy of the inaccessible Divine Light. “God is light” (1 John 1:5), the Evangelist John preaches. “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12), the Lord says. This truth is clearly phrased by the hymnographer who says: “O changeless Light of the Light of Thine unbegotten Begetter, today, O Word, have we now seen in Thy Light's manifestation the Father

and Holy Spirit as Light on Tabor, guiding with light all creation" (Exapostilarion, Matins).

Secondly, [the Lord revealed to His Disciples] His presence. This means that the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ on the high mountain is a visible and tangible foretaste of the future glorious Kingdom of God, as the hymnographer also says precisely: "Clearly showing the exchange that Adam's mortal race shall make with Thy glory at Thy dread and second coming on the earth, Thou wast transfigured, O Saviour, upon mount Tabor" (Matins, Kathisma 1). And in more detail, our Saviour Christ, You were transfigured on Mount Tabor to prove and guarantee the expected glorious and dreadful Second Coming of Yours, and also the change that will happen then to the faithful and reverend Christians, which is their eternal glory.

Both the power and the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in His Transfiguration, which was made known to us by the Holy Apostles the Evangelists, refer mainly and primarily to the strengthening of the Disciples' faith, that Jesus Christ "is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased", as per the voice inside the cloud (Matt. 17:5). This very truth we hear from the hymnographer with the words: "On the mount Thou was transfigured, and Thy disciples, as much as they could bear, beheld Thy glory, O Christ our God; that when they should see Thee crucified, they would know Thy Passion to be willing, and would preach to the world that Thou, in truth, art the Effulgence of the Father" (Kontakion).

Christ's glory, which the Disciples saw, is also enjoyed by all the saints who have registered as citizens of the heavenly city, "the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven" (Hebrews 12:23).

This glory of Christ is also enjoyed by the pious and righteous Christians in the Kingdom of God. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43), the Lord says.

The Holy Deacon Stephen beheld this glory of Christ, as he was "full of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5). He looked up in heaven

and saw the glory of God and Jesus sitting at the right of God (Acts 7:55). And Saint Paul preaches that all men who live in Christ reflect the Lord's glory: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).

Interpreting these words, Saint Chrysostom says: "Just like the pure silver before the sun rays reflects the rays itself...in the same manner, the man's soul that is purified and has become brighter than silver receives a ray from the glory of the Holy Spirit and reflects that ray".

In other words, my dear Brethren, we are called to live a life in Christ, which means to actively participate in the holy sacramental life of the Church as faithful and genuine children of its Body, namely Christ. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God" (Psalm 50:23) the psalmist proclaims. This means that the path to salvation lies only on sincere reverence, namely to our transfiguration in Christ.

Let us pray to our Saviour Christ who was Transfigured on this mount, that by the prayers of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, He may "shine upon us sinners His light ever-unending" and lead us to our transfiguration. Amen."

After the Divine Liturgy, there was a reception by the renovator of the Monastery Archimandrite Hilarion and a meal at lunchtime.

For this feast there was also a festive Divine Liturgy in Gethsemane and Ramallah, under the hospitality of the Hegoumens, Archbishop Dorotheos of Avela, and Archimandrite Galaktion respectively.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY MACCABEES THE MARTYRS IN BEER SHEVA

On 1/14 August 2021, the commemoration of the Holy Martyrs Maccabees was celebrated at the Russian-speaking parish in Beer Sheva.

The Divine Liturgy was officiated by Reverend Archimandrite Ignatios, Hegoumen of Beit Jala and Beit Sahour. The Russian-speaking flock of south Israel chanted in Russian and Greek under the lead of His Eminence Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba.

After the Divine Liturgy, there was a fasting meal for the congregation.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF THE HOLY FIRST MARTYR AND ARCHDEACON STEPHEN

On Saturday 1/14 August 2021, the Patriarchate celebrated by transference one day earlier, the commemoration of the

translation of the relics of the Holy First Martyr and Archdeacon Stephen.

This event was celebrated in the ruins of a Byzantine church dedicated to the First Martyr Stephen. Above the preserved ruins the hardworking Hegoumen of Ramallah Archimandrite Galaktion has built a new chapel.

The Divine Liturgy was celebrated in this chapel by His Eminence Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, with the co-celebration of Archimandrite Galaktion, Priest Yacub and Hierodeacon Eulogios, at the chanting of the Ramallah Community choir. The service was attended by the parish members.

After the Divine Liturgy, Archimandrite Galaktion, who is responsible for the renovation of this holy ecclesiastical site, guided His Eminence with his entourage to the ancient building complex and hosted a refreshing reception.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF SAINT JOHN THE NEW HOZEVITE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday, 28 July/ 10 August 2021, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of Saint John the new Hozevite, who came from Romania and lived in asceticism at the Brook of Chorath in the Holy Monastery of Hozeva in the 20th century. He was canonized a Saint by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem in 2015. His holy relic is kept incorrupt in the Monastery of his

repentance.

In honour of this Saint, an all-night Vigil was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with the co-celebration of their Eminences; Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Hieromonks Chrysogonos and Marcellus, Archdeacon Mark and Hierodeacon Patrikios, while the chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon and the Monastery Monks.

His Beatitude was welcomed by the renovator of the Monastery Hegoumen Archimandrite Constantine with the following words:

“Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Along with Your Reverend Entourage,

We celebrate again the commemoration of Saint John the new Hozevite, whose incorrupt relics is treasured in the Holy Monastery of Hozeva. Our heart is full of joy and sadness at the same time!

Joy, because we celebrate the victory of one of us against the passions and the “world”. The victory of one man just like us, a Hieromonk of Hozeva who reached the height of holiness by the Divine Grace; Saint John the new Hozevite, who came from Romania.

Sadness because we march along a period of unbearable and significant testing. In the midst of an incredible unleashing of morals and unrepentant life worldwide, for a year and a half, the terrible pandemic of COVID plagues humanity, and millions of victims fall every day. And recently, high and greedy flames engulf houses, forests, the lungs of oxygen ...

Difficult years and we all ask for consolation.

And where else will we find refuge, if not in God, the Theotokos and all the Saints?

In a letter of Saint John, we read the following words of consolation which, dissolving sorrow, give strong hope and firm optimism to all of us:

“Therefore, we are not strangers at all, although we live far away. The spiritual bond between us is very close, even if we do not realize it. I am neither a teacher nor an Abbot, and the Lord knows that I do not want such a thing. Your situation, however, is not indifferent to me. The modesty of your life is also for me an honour, an occasion of consolation...

Think that we are living in the most challenging years and the most dangerous for the soul's salvation. Think that we have all been left as orphans, far removed from our homeland and deprived of spiritual food. Think that the enemies of our faith have multiplied more than ever, and our salvation is in greater danger. If we have a wounded soul, there is no one to heal us, and if we fall, there is no one to lift us up. Now there is a need for more unity and brotherly support. Now there is a need for more unity and brotherly support. Although we are not all together, at least spiritually to be united and to bear the weaknesses of each other with mercy...

Let us stand well; let us stand after fear in the Holy Faith and show mercy with peace to all, by the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Your Beatitude, Father and Master,

Pray that the Good Lord, through the intercession of the Most Holy Theotokos of Hozeva, and our Holy Father John the new Hozevite, will lead all the people and us to a safe harbour and path of repentance and salvation. Amen.”

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

“Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is

gracious and full of compassion, and righteous" (Psalm 112:4), the psalmist exclaims.

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

The light of the Lord dawned today with the holy memory of our Holy Father John of the new Hozevite in the shadow of death caused both by the incurable infectious corona disease and by the ongoing earthquakes, disasters, fires, and other signs of the divine rage.

Therefore, we are gathered in this biblical place of our Holy Father John's asceticism, to honour in eucharist the holy man of God according to the words of the psalmist: "O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts" (Psalm 96: 1,8). "It is not of the ungodly but of the righteous to sing praises unto the Lord", Theodoret the interpreter says.

Saint John is classified among the many sons of God, who has elevated them to the status of Christ's glory, as Saint Paul says: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Hebrews 2:10-11)

Interpreting these words of Saint Paul, Saint Theophylactos says: "The Father made it worthy of His philanthropy that the firstborn of all the future sons would enjoy His glory more brightly than the rest, proving his worth through his sufferings, to show to the rest in which way they should strive".

Our Father John, as his biographer mentions, endured many sufferings since his early youth and many temptations during his monastic life in the surroundings of the River Jordan and

in the desert of Hozeva, where he became a faithful witness of the passions and the striving of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Martyrs are not only those who receive death for their faith in Christ but also those who die for the keeping of His commandments," Saint John of the Ladder says. And Saint Paul says: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Romans 8:35).

Interpreting these words, Saint Chrysostom says: "When Paul talks about tribulation, he talks about prison cells, and bondage, and slander and exile and all other afflictions; and he refers to all the human sufferings with a single word".

These "all the human sufferings" did the Hieromonk of obedience and patience John endure, for the love of the Chief of men's salvation, our Lord Jesus Christ. Being guarded by the power of his faith in God, the humble in heart John also had the certainty of the guarantee that his hope would not be dashed, and he became a participant of the inheritance which is kept in heaven, as the Chief of the Apostles Peter preaches: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:3-4).

We have before our eyes the guarantee of the heritage in the heavens that is incorruptible and immaculate and does not wither. And that guarantee is no other than the incorrupt and fragrant relics of our Holy and wonder-worker Father John the new Hozevite from Romania.

In other words, the body of our Holy Father John, which became incorrupt and fragrant by the Holy Spirit, is an indisputable and irrefutable testimony of the resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ, but also our living hope.

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints” (Psalm 116:15), the psalmist says. This means, my dear Brethren, that we did not come here today in the feast of Saint John to honour him, but rather to participate in the honour the Lord does to him, who is His Saint. Moreover, we came to be taught the ordinances of the true life in Christ by him, Holy John the new Hozevite and the multitude of the Saints of Hozeva before him.

Our Holy Father John indulged unceasingly in the holy scriptures according to the word “I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways” (Psalm 119:15) and became a faithful disciple of Saint Paul, applying in both words and actions his redeeming advice: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:1-2).

This Paul’s advice, “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2), is what Saint John says to all of us, as he has boldness before God along with all the Saints and our Most-Blessed Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary. Saint John gives this advice to us, my dear brethren, “that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7). Amen. Many happy returns!”

During the Vigil, His Beatitude prayed for the salvation of our fellow men, the fire victims in Euvoia of Greece.

A monastic meal followed the Divine Liturgy.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF SAINT PANTELEIMON AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Monday, 27 July/ 9 August 2021, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Holy glorious martyr and healer Panteleimon at the Holy Monastery dedicated to him, on the south-west of the Patriarchate, inside the walls of Jaffa Gate.

On this feast, the Church honours Saint Panteleimon, who was called Pantoleon at first and came from Nicomedia. He was the son of an idolatrous father named Eustorgios and a Christian mother named Euvouli, who taught him the faith in Christ. He was baptised and studied medicine, but practised it for free, and this became known from some blink man that the Saint healed. For this reason, he was tortured and suffered a martyr's death; he was beheaded during the reign of Maximin in AD 305.

In honour of Saint Panteleimon, Vespers on Sunday afternoon and the Divine Liturgy on Monday morning were officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella, with the co-celebration of Archimandrite Isidoros, Priest George Baramki and Archdeacon Mark. The chanting was delivered by Hierodeacons Simeon and Eulogios, as the services were attended in contrition by monks, nuns, and laity faithful from Jerusalem and pilgrims.

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

After the Divine Liturgy, the good keeper of the Monastery who

also decorated the Church with frescos, Nun Charitini offered a reception to the Patriarchal and Episcopal entourages and all the congregation.

From Secretariat-General

DEISIS AT THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM FOR THE FIRE VICTIMS IN GREECE

On Tuesday 27 July / 9 August 2021, the feast day of the Holy great martyr and healer Panteleimon, at the Monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos prayed during the Divine Liturgy to our merciful God for the extinguishing of the catastrophic fires in various places of Greece and the help and comfort of the fire victims.

A similar prayer was also read by Geronda Sacristan of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, His Eminence Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis during the All-night Vigil at the Holy Tomb.

From Secretariat-General