

THE FEAST OF ST. GEORGE AT THE MONASTERY OF ST. GEORGE IN THE JEWISH QUARTER

On Saturday, April 28/ May 11, 2019, the commemoration of St. George the Great Martyr and Trophy-bearer was celebrated by transference at the Church of his Holy Monastery in the Jewish Quarter, in the Old City of Jerusalem.

The Divine Liturgy was led by the Most Reverend Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda and Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod, with co-celebrants among the Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Archimandrite Ignatios, Archimandrite Kallistos and Deacon Sophrony. The chanting was delivered by the Choir Leader of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos with the help of Monk Joseph from Mount Athos and the Patriarchal School Students, and the service was attended by a noble congregation honouring the Saint.

After the Divine Liturgy the renovator of the Holy Church Abbess Marianna offered a reception to the Episcopal entourage and the congregation at the Hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Church.

From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH

OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS OFFICIATES THE DIVINE LITURGY AT THE CHURCH OF THE DELEGATION OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF ROMANIA

On Wednesday, April 25 /May 8, 2019, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos officiated the Divine Liturgy at the Church of St. George in West Jerusalem, for the commemoration of the Holy and Glorious George the Great Martyr and Trophy-bearer.

Co-celebrants to His Beatitude were the Archbishops: Most Reverend Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, and the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, along with Archimandrite Ieronymos, the representative of the Patriarchate of Romania Archimandrite Theophilos and his helper Archimandrite John, Archimandrite Dometian and Archimandrite Athanasios of the Russian Missia, other Priests, Archdeacon Mark and Deacon Hader, and Deacon Ephraim from the Patriarchate of Romania. The chanting was delivered by a Church singer from Romania and the Nuns of the Delegation in Romanian and Greek, as the service was attended mainly by a Romanian speaking congregation.

Before the Holy Communion His Beatitude read the following Sermon;

“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall

bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning". "These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 15:26-27, 16:1-2) the Lord says.

Reverend Archimandrite Theophilos

Representative of H.H.B. the Patriarch of Romania Daniel at the Church of Jerusalem,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Noble Christians and visiting pilgrims

Today the glorious Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has shone forth, along with the commemoration of the Holy and glorious George the Great Martyr and Trophy-bearer. Therefore we are gathered in this Holy Church, dedicated to the Saint, in order to glorify in Eucharist the Holy Trinitarian God and the Resurrected Christ and our God. Moreover, in order to declare the unity in Christ of the brotherly Orthodox Christian Churches, namely of the Venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem with the Patriarchate of Romania, and bear witness to the faith of the martyr of blood of Christ, George the Trophy-bearer.

The luminous Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ was preceded by the impassive for His divinity Passion, His martyr's death on the Cross. The faithful martyr George became a communicant of this very impassive passion and of the resurrection of Christ, as well as a member of the Kingdom of Heaven. "For George's desire [for God] conquered his human nature, convincing him to head through death to the object of his desire, Christ our God and Saviour of our souls" the hymn writer says.

George's persecutors and murderers thought that they were

being offering worship to God, as the Lord said to His disciples: "the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2). It is a fact that many times the work of the devil was carried out under the garment of the deacon of God and of His Holy Church, and many times the most tumultuous opponents of the healthy teaching of Christ (1 Tim. 1:10) sat "at the Temple of God" (2 Thes. 2:4). Nevertheless the victory of truth was triumphant, as St. John the Evangelist witnesses in his book of revelation: "And they [the faithful martyrs of Christ] overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them" (Rev. 12:11-12).

Behold why the Church of Christ sings through the mouth of the hymn writer; "For meet it is that the Heavens should rejoice and that the earth should be glad, and that the whole world, both visible and invisible, should keep the feast; for Christ our everlasting joy hath risen".

The martyrdom of Christ's friend George has a special place in the chorea of the martyrs of the Church. And this is so because it does not belong to the historic time of death and corruption, but to the time of "another life, the eternal one" according to St. John Damascene – namely to the time of the death and the life-giving resurrection of our Saviour Christ.

The great and wise St. Paul calls upon the living witness of the martyrs of love and truth, namely of Christ, "I am the truth" (John 14:6) to the faithful members of the Church, so that we should face the struggle that is before us in patience. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set

before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1-2).

St. George is not only distinguished as being one of "so great a cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1) of the Church, but also from the ecumenical honour he receives, and especially in our contemporary era of the anti-biblical and anti-Christian Orthodox faith of ours.

And we say this, because as a representative of "the cloud of witnesses", of the love and truth and righteousness of Christ, and ecumenically recognized, as well as being honoured by other doctrines and religions, St. George calls us and our brotherly Orthodox Churches, today in his annual festive commemoration, through St. Paul's command: "I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephes. 4:1,3) and through the unity of faith, for which St. John Damascene says in his hymn; "Your martyrs, O Lord, have been confirmed by faith and strengthened by hope. By the love of your cross they have been fortified in spirit and so have they overcome the anguish of suffering. They have obtained the crowns and together with the angels they pray for our souls".

Let us entreat St. George the Great Martyr to intercede the incarnate for our sake crucified and resurrected Christ, our God and Saviour, along with the Ever-Virgin and Most Blessed Theotokos Mary to grant us life eternal and peace to the world and in our region.

Many Happy Returns! Christ is Risen!

After the Divine Liturgy the Hegoumen and representative of the Romanian Patriarchate Archimandrite Theophilos offered a festal meal to the Patriarchal entourage and others.

During the meal His Beatitude addressed those present as follows;

Archimandrite Theophilos, dear Father,

Your Eminences,

Your Graces,

Beloved faithful of this Romanian congregation in Jerusalem,

Dear Pilgrims,

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Christ is Risen!

Hristos a inviat!

We greet you in the joy of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we give thanks to Almighty God for this blessed occasion on which we have celebrated the Divine Liturgy with you in this Church of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem.

Our gathering today is a visible sign of the common *martyria* of the Orthodox Church which the Church lives here as well as around the world. The Orthodox Church enjoys a cohesion of faith and life that is more important in our own day than ever before, especially in a world in which the predominant experience is one of division and enmity between peoples. The unity of the Church is a divine encouragement in our divided society.

We learn so much from the Great and Holy Martyr George, who holds genuinely ecumenical significance. For he is revered not just by the Orthodox Church, but also by non-Orthodox Christians, and even by non-Christians. Saint George lived in a different cultural and social context, in which there was so much division and difficulty, but he managed to keep the unity

of the faith as well as the unity of the Church.

As we sing in one of our services, the martyrs of the Lord, they were united spiritually with the love of your cross, and so they banished completely the tyranny of the enemy.

In the same way our beloved Orthodox Church must be a witness, inspired by Saint George, to the unity of the faith and the unity of the Church. Our unity is our strength, and the only way to withstand the assaults of our contemporary enemy. As Saint Paul tells us, our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places (Ephes. 6:12).

We guard the unity of the faith and of the Church with the witness of our conscience, again as St. Paul says: Indeed, this is our boast, the testimony of our conscience: we have behaved in the world with frankness and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God – and all the more toward you (2 Cor. 1:12). Just as the faith cannot be divided, neither can the conscience, and so we do everything in our power to ensure that we serve the unity of the Body of Christ, again as St. Paul says in the Letter to the Ephesians; making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3).

Our unity in the bond of peace, is at the heart of our life as the Orthodox Church, and we know that any kind of schism or division is a wound at the very depth of our common life. So on this blessed occasion, we take this opportunity to renew our commitment to the unity of the Church in spirit and in truth.

May the incarnate Logos, who is risen from the dead, warm our hearts and enlighten our minds, that we may ever serve the unity of our beloved Orthodox Church. May God bless you, dear

Archimandrite Theophilos, and your community, and May God bless the peoples of our beloved Romania and our beloved Holy Land.

Christ is risen!

Hristos a inviat!

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF ST. GEORGE THE GREAT MARTYR AND TROPHY-BEARER

1. In Acre, Ptolemais

The commemoration of St. George the Great Martyr and Trophy-bearer was celebrated before the ordained by the Church date, on Saturday April 21/ May 4, 2019 at his Holy Church of the Patriarchate in the town of Acre – Ptolemais.

On the aforementioned day the Divine Liturgy was led by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, with co-celebrants the Patriarchal Representative in Acre – Ptolemais, Archimandrite Philotheos, and the ministering Priests of the twelve villages belonging to the Holy Metropolis of Acre. The chanting was held by the Acre choir in Greek and Arabic, and many faithful from the town of Acre and its outskirts attended the service.

The Divine Liturgy was followed by a procession three times

around the Holy Church.

At noon the hard working Hegoumen and renovator of the Monastery Archimandrite Philotheos offered a meal to the Episcopal entourage and others.

The feat of St. George was celebrated on the feast day, Monday April 23/ May 6, 2019 ,

- 2. At St. George Monastery “of the Hospital” in the Old City of Jerusalem,** at the Holy Monastery bearing his name, which is located north of the Patriarchate, adjacent to the Holy Monastery of the Archangels.

Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy on the morning were officiated by Archimandrite Demetrios, while the chanting was delivered by the Choir Leader of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos, Monk Joseph from Mount Athos and the Patriarchal School students, as the service was attended by a large congregation of faithful Christians honouring the Saint.

After the Divine Liturgy the Abbess of the Holy Monastery Reverend Nun Pansemni, who has worked on the preservation of the icons of the Monastery, offered a reception to the officiating Priest and the congregation at the Hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Church.

- 3. In Lydda,** were the empty tomb of the Saint and his historic Holy Church lie, the feast was celebrated with the Divine Liturgy, led by the Most Reverend Archbishop Theophanes of Gerassa.
- 4. At St. George Al-Hader (Beitzalla),** the festive Divine Liturgy was officiated by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF ST. GEORGE THE GREAT MARTYR IN DOHA

The Feast of St. George the Great Martyr who is celebrated at the Cathedral in Doha was officiated on Friday of the Bright Week by transference for pastoral reasons.

The service of Great Vespers with the blessing of bread was held on Thursday, April 18 / May 2, 2019, led by the Most Reverend Archbishop Makarios of Qatar with co-celebrants the ministering Priests of the Cathedral.

Matins and the Divine Liturgy were celebrated on Friday April 19/ May 3, 2019, with the participation of a large crowd of faithful Christians. His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr. George Katrougalos with his associates and the Ambassador of Greece in Doha Mr. Constantinos Orphanides came to the Holy Cathedral during the festive services.

The Divine Liturgy was followed by the procession of the Holy Icon of St. George and then a reception at the Reception Hall.

From the Holy Archdiocese of Qatar

THE FEAST OF THE LORD'S

MIRACLE IN KANA

On Thomas Sunday, April 22/ May 5, 2019, the Greek Orthodox Community of Kana in Galilee celebrated according to its order the commemoration of the Lord's miracle of turning the water into wine that happened in the ancient small town of Kana for the pleasure of the wedding guests, a wedding that the Lord Himself blessed being there with His Mother as guests too.

The Divine Liturgy for this feast was officiated by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants the Most Reverend Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Archbishop Methodios of Tabor, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, the Hegoumen of Tabor Archimandrite Hilarion, Archimandrite Sophronios and Archimandrite Modestos, under the chanting of the Kana Choir and with the participation of many Orthodox faithful of this parish and pilgrims.

His Beatitude addressed this congregation as follows;

“This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Kana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him” (John 2:11) St. John the Evangelist says.

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Noble Christians and pilgrims

The uncreated and unwaning Light of the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour has gathered all of us in this Holy place of Kana of Galilee, where the wedding to which the Mother of Jesus was present, and also “both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage” (John 2:2), in order to thank, glorify and bless the resurrected Christ unto the ages.

Two things happened with the participation of Christ at the wedding of his friend Simon of Kana, who was also called Zelotes (Luke 6:15); firstly, the sacrament of marriage took place and the woman was being set free from the curse of the Mosaic Law as St. Cyril of Alexandria preaches by saying: "the sacred marriage was sanctified and therefore the curse of the woman was lifted; for the children will not be born in sorrow any more, and this is so because the beginning of birth has been blessed by Christ". Secondly, He turned the water into wine, as St. John the Evangelist witnesses by saying: "When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;)" (John 2:9).

In this wedding Jesus revealed His glory, namely His divinity, for the first time. Moreover, He revealed that the God the Word came down from heaven to earth, in order to receive upon Himself the human nature by the way of the Bridegroom, considering the humanity is called the bride and Christ the Bridegroom, according to St. Cyril of Alexandria.

In other words, the wedding in Kana is the exemplar of the spiritual wedding of Christ the Bridegroom with the Church-Bride, as St. John witnesses in his book of Revelation by saying: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" (Rev. 19:7-9). And in more detail, let us be glad and rejoice, and let us attribute all the glory to Him, because the time of the wedding of the lamb has arrived, of the spiritual and eternal Bridegroom Jesus Christ, and His wife, the spiritual Bride, the Church, has made herself beautiful with ornaments. And she has been given a pure crimson garment

by God, which symbolizes the royal grace and holiness. Because the garment in crimson colour are the virtues of the saints of the triumphant Church, of the new Jerusalem, the eternal Bride of Christ. And the Angel said to me; Write; blessed are those who have been invited to the dinner of the wedding of the Lamb, who will participate at the eternal joy and beatitude; These words which confirm the beatitude of the faithful through their union with Christ, are true, they are the words of God.

As far as the miracle of the turning of water into wine is concerned, this is not only the revelation of the glory of Jesus, but also the exemplar of the new drink in Christ which we are called to drink as the hymn writer says: "Come let us drink a new drink, not one marvellously brought forth from a barren rock, but the Source of incorruption, which springeth forth from the grave of Christ, in Whom we are established".

We, my dear brothers and sisters, being named after the name of Christ, which is above all names, (Philip. 2:9), henceforth drink from the "new drink" which gushes out from the Life-giving Tomb of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who is the unceasing spring, the spring of incorruption; a spring which offers us the rebirth of the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And we ask ourselves, what exactly is the "new drink"? It is the sacred and living blood of Christ, "which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). It is our participation in the Eucharistic dinner of the Lord's body and blood, in which we foretaste the eternal life and our resurrection. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:54) the Lord says. Interpreting these words, St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "marvel at approaching St. John the Evangelist who said: "and the Word became flesh" (John 1:14); not therefore that He became "in flesh", but that He became "flesh" in order to declare the union. And each of the two

remains as it is in nature, one of the two is Christ, and the Word is united with the same flesh in a manner unspeakable and beyond human comprehension”.

Jesus, my dear ones, and His glorious resurrection, are the foundation of the Christian faith as St. Paul preaches by saying: “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11). And elsewhere he says: “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain” (1 Cor. 15:14).

Moreover, Apostle Thomas the Twin confirms through his faithful unfaithfulness the resurrection of Christ as St. John the Evangelist says: “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. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:27-29).

“A sacred Pascha hath been shown forth to us today; a new and holy Pascha, a mystic Pascha...a Pascha that hath opened unto us the gates of Paradise” the hymn writer of the Church proclaims. And this is because today is the second Sunday since Pascha, and we celebrate the inauguration of Christ’s resurrection.

And this inauguration refers to our liberated human nature in Christ through Christ, from the corruption of the death of sin, a human nature that has been deified in His resurrection and this way it is henceforth able to participate in the unwaning day of the Kingdom of the Lord. “But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom” (Matt. 26:29).

Let us entreat the Mother of our God and Saviour Christ, the

Most blessed Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, along with the bridegroom and Apostle Simon of Kana, to intercede for us to our Saviour Jesus Christ, the resurrected from the dead, to deem us worthy to participate at the Dinner of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Many Happy Returns! Christ is Risen!

After the Divine Liturgy there was a procession three times around the Church and the Gospel narrative of the miracle in the wedding of Kana.

After these, the teenagers of the parish danced traditional Palestinian dances at the courtyard of the Church and finally the hospitable Hegoumen Archimandrite Chrysostom offered a meal, during which His Beatitude addressed all present as follows;

“O great and most sacred Pascha, Christ; O wisdom and Word and Power of God! Grant that we partake of Thee fully in the unwaning day of Thy Kingdom” the hymn writer of the Church proclaims.

Today’s feast of the Wedding in Kana of Galilee is also a feast of the historic town of Kana, which is steadfastly joined with the spiritual jurisdiction of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Needless to say, that the people of this town, both Christians and Muslims co-exist in harmony and social cohesion.

We personally had had the indeed blessed opportunity to serve in this holy shrine as a Hegoumen and spiritual guide, a fact that linked us both with the holy place and its people.

Our company with you today is not only a pastoral one. It has a special meaning to us. And this is so because among the people present today, I recognize the new generation – without of course ignoring the older one – which [the new generation] has been nurtured with the traditions of Romiosyni and the

love of the land of their parents and forefathers.

We have to admit that the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate is the one who on the one hand has protected and preserved the holiness and the universality of this place throughout the ages. On the other hand, it has been the guarantee of the preservation of the religious and traditional identity of the Christians who live here.

And today's Paschal Feast is a steadfast proof and witness of this fact. Therefore we conclude our speech with the words of the hymn writer of the Church, St. John Damascene, who says: "It is the day of Resurrection, let us be radiant for the festival and let us embrace one another. Let us say O Brethren even to those that hate us; Let us forgive all things on the Resurrection; and thus let us cry: Christ is risen from the dead, by death hath He trampled down death, and on those in the graves hath He bestowed life". Amen.

From Secretariat-General

THOMAS SUNDAY AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thomas Sunday, April 22/ May 5, 2019, the Patriarchate celebrated the event of the touching of the Lord by Thomas in the Upper Room on the eight day after the Resurrection, when the Apostles were gathered and when he cried out "My Lord and my God" and the Lord replied "Thou hast believed because Thou hast seen me; blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe".

This event was celebrated with Parresia at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the evening with welcoming, incense offering and veneration at the Holy Deposition and the Holy Sepulchre, under the chanting of “the Tomb was sealed” and with Great Vespers at the Catholicon, led by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias. The chanting was delivered by the Choir Leader of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos and Archimandrite Demetrios, while the service was attended by the remaining Pascha pilgrims and those newly arrived.

In the morning the celebration continued with the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Sepulchre, led by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, with co-celebrants Hagiotaphite Hieromonks with first in rank Archimandrite Mattheos and visiting pilgrims, under the chanting of the Choir Leader of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos and his helpers.

At the end of the Paschal Divine Liturgy at the Holy Sepulchre, the Episcopal Entourage returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters.

From Secretariat-General

THE HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA IN QATAR

The Holy Services of the Holy Week and of the Luminous Resurrection were held with especial brilliance and according to the Typicon order of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem at the Holy Cathedral in Doha.

The Services were officiated by the Most Reverend Archbishop Makarios of Qatar with the Priests Demetrios and Stylianos. A large crowd of faithful Christians from various towns of the Emirate participated in the Holy Communion in reverence and contrition.

The Services were held in the Greek, Arabic, Slavonic, Serbian, Romanian and English languages for the greater participation of the multi-lingual congregation. The Byzantine choir singers delivered the hymns in a marvelous way and the choirs did the same with the Lamentations of Holy Friday in the Arabic and Greek languages.

On the nights of Holy Friday and Holy Saturday the Consul of Greece and the Ambassador of Moldavia in Qatar attended the Services. A group of Scouts from the congregation escorted the processions of Palm Sunday and of Holy Friday with the relevant music. At the end of the Paschal Divine Liturgy there was the blessing of the Easter eggs and His Eminence distributed the blessed bread and the read eggs to the faithful, wishing them accordingly.

From the Holy Archdiocese of Qatar

THE FEAST OF THE SECOND RESURRECTION AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Easter Sunday afternoon, April 15/28, 2019, the Resurrection of the Lord was celebrated with the Service of the "Second Resurrection" or Vespers of love.

This began from the Patriarchate with the reading of the 9th Hour of Easter, during which His Beatitude the Archbishops and the Priests put on their Liturgical vestments while “Christ is Risen” was being chanted in slow Byzantine music.

After the completion of the reading of the 9th Hour, the Patriarchal entourage went down to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in official Procession.

Upon their arrival to the Holy Courtyard, there was a prayer, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos.

Then there was the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Procession passed by the Deposition and the All-holy Tomb inside the Catholicon.

The Vespers of the Resurrection followed, during which the Gospel narrative according to St. John “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week” (John 20:19-25) in many languages, so that the preaching of the resurrection of Christ will be proclaimed in many nations for their salvation and for the glory of God.

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

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF EASTER MONDAY AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Easter Monday morning of the Bright Week, April 16/29, 2019, the Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord was celebrated as the feast of the Brotherhood at the Monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen.

The Feast was celebrated with the Paschal Divine Liturgy, with the participation in prayer of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, the prayers of the Hagiotaphite Fathers and Archbishops and Monks, and a very large crowd of pilgrims glorifying the Resurrected Lord.

After the Dismissal of the Divine Liturgy everybody went up to the Patriarchate Reception Hall, escorting His Beatitude in formal procession, under the chanting led by the choir leader of the Central Monastery Archimandrite Eusevios of "Christ is risen" and "It is the Day of the Resurrection".

Aft the Patriarchate there was the Paschal brotherly osculation and His Beatitude distributed Easter eggs to the numerous pilgrims who received His blessing by kissing His hand.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE LUMINOUS RESURRECTION OF THE LORD AT THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

The Feast of the luminous Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ was celebrated before the dawn of Sunday April 15/28, 2019. For this Feast, the Patriarchal entourage came down to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre after midnight of Saturday April 14/27, 2019, and officiated the Service of Matins with the Canon of Holy Saturday.

On the night of the Resurrection, April 15/28, 2019, the Divine Liturgy was festively celebrated at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, at the Life-giving Tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ, where He was buried and raised from the dead, at the Catholicon, and with a litany three times around the Holy Sepulchre.

Immediately after the litany, the Officiator of the Feast read the Gospel narrative of the Resurrection and then the Choir Leader Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos and his helpers chanted the Canon "it is the day of resurrection" of St. John Damascene.

After the end of the Matins the Divine Liturgy began inside the Life-giving Tomb, led by His Beatitude and with co-celebrants the Most Reverend Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, the Most Reverend Archbishops; Theophanes of Gerassa, Aristarchos of Constantina, Methodios of Tabor, Theodosios of Sebastia, Philoumenos of Pella and the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, many Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Priests from other Orthodox

Churches, Archdeacon Mark and Deacon Eulogios. The Service was attended by a very large crowd of faithful Orthodox Christians.

Before the Holy Communion, the Paschal Message of His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem was read by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina as follows;

By the Mercy of God Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem
and all Palestine

to all the members of the Church, grace and mercy and peace
from the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb
of the Resurrected Christ.

“Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him” (Mark 16:6).

The Myrrh-bearing Women who came on the morning of the first Saturday to anoint Jesus with myrrh, heard this joyful and hopeful words from the luminous angel who was sitting by the tomb.

The angel’s words were confirmed with the sight of the empty tomb, with the “the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself” (John 20:7). Moreover, they were confirmed with the vision of the resurrected Christ. Christ went down to Hades through the cross but Hades did not hold Him. With His descend in Hades, the Lord removed and retrieved from it those who had been bound in hell for centuries, “He stood and cried aloud to those in Hades, enter again Paradise”. “ For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God” (2 Cor. 13:4), He was risen from the dead by His Divine-Human

power and appeared to the Myrrh-bearing women and to His disciples many times. He appeared to them at the Upper room on the first and on the eighth day after His Resurrection (John 20:19 & 26), on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:15), in Jerusalem "the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them" (Luke 24:33), "not as a spirit, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones" (Luke 24:39), but with His illumined and glorified body with the signs of the nails in His hands and feet" (Luke 24:40), asking them "Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them" (Luke 24:41-43).

"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days" (Acts 1:3), He was then ascended to heaven in glory from the Mount of Olives, He sent to the gathered disciples in the Upper room "another Comforter" from the Father, the Spirit of truth, and through them captivated the whole world, founded and established the Church in it.

The Lord established the Church as the witness of His truth and continuer of His mission. The Church, in the Holy Spirit teaches and preaches Him to be Incarnate, Crucified and Resurrected. It teaches through the word and manifests the teaching through works, while it sanctifies through the Sacraments. It conveys the Divine Grace, transforms the morals, the life and the whole being of the people. It becomes both paradise and heaven, as the troparion says "as we stand in the temple of Thy glory we think we are in heaven". The Church is an earthly oasis, a spring of living water, of truth and of peace, of righteousness, of brotherhood, of reconciliation, of rapture, and of fulfilled happiness. It deters wars, dispels enmity and unites the nations. The Church preserves and protects the environment and the planet as the creation of God for the habitation of the humankind.

The Church of Jerusalem, as the Mother of Churches, works its

pilgrimage, pastoral and salvific mission at the divine dwelling places, at the places that have been sanctified through the grace of the Incarnate, Crucified and Resurrected from the dead, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. From them, and especially from the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb, through the offering of the bloodless sacrifice "on the salvific and bright night of the luminous day of the Resurrection" we pray for the peace-making of the whole world, and especially for the troubled Middle East, for the cessation of the schisms of the Churches and for the unity of the Orthodox Church in the bond of peace, and greet our reverend flock in all parts of the world along with the noble pilgrims, and wish to all, the joy, the power the hope and the light of the Resurrected Christ.

Christ is Risen!

In the Holy City of Jerusalem PASCHA 2019

With Fatherly wishes and Patriarchal blessings

Fervent Supplicant for all before God

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

Afterward there was the Holy Communion, the reading of the speech of St. John Chrysostom, the Dismissal and the return to the Central Monastery with the offering of Easter eggs and cheese for the joy of the Feast.

From Secretariat-General