

THE FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday, November 21/ December 4, 2018, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos at the Temple, at the Holy Nunnery of Megali Panagia which is adjacent to the Patriarchate.

On this feast the Church celebrates the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos in the Temple when she was three years old. She was brought to the Temple by her parents and entered into the Holy Altar of the Temple of Solomon, where she was prepared as a chosen vessel in order to contain within her the One whom nothing can contain and incarnate the -until then without flesh- Word of God.

For this feast there was Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy was celebrated in on the feast day, led by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, with Hieromonks and deacons as co-celebrants. The chanting was delivered by Archimandrite Eusevios on the right and the Choir Leader of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos and the Patriarchal School students on the left, while the services were attended by many monks, nuns, laity, pilgrims and local faithful.

His Eminence delivered a Sermon before the Holy Communion, underlining the virtues of the Holy Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, who for many years endured silently the scorning of the Jews due to their being sterile, having steadfast faith in God. Moreover, he praised the character of Holy Prophet Zacharias, who having had the gift of prophesy and recognizing the future Mother of the Son of God, instead of keeping her in the girl's school near the Temple, he took her in the

forbidden sacred area of the Temple, the Holy of Holies, thus causing the rage of the Jews against him and putting himself into grave danger.

“We are able, therefore, to honour this great Feast of the Mother of God, imitating the great patience, the steadfast faith and the sacrifice of the Holy Ancestors of God, as well as the heroic character, which was manifested by the Holy Prophet Zacharias. And while they displayed such a virtue, living in the darkness of the Law and not knowing of the Resurrection of the Lord, we on the contrary, have the special blessing to live within the Church and with the Grace of the Holy Spirit, making only a small effort in order to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven”.

After the Divine Liturgy, the renovator of the Church of the Monastery and of its ancient icons, Reverend Nun Melanie, offered a reception to the Episcopal entourage and the congregation at the Hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Church.

From Secretariat-General

SECOND DAY OF THE FORMAL VISIT OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM IN ROMANIA

On Friday, November 17/30, 2018, the Patriarchal co-celebration of the Divine Liturgy on the commemoration of the

Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called (new cal.) took place at his magnificent newly-built Cathedral at the centre of the city of Bucharest, which was completed with the inspiration and under the initiative, guidance and custody of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel and by the contribution of the Romanian people.

This co-celebration was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, and the Most Reverend Archbishops, Aristarchos of Constantina and Geronda Secretary-General, Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis and Patriarchal Commissioner in Amman of Jordan, hundreds of Priests and Deacons, under the chanting of the choir of the Holy Cathedral. The service was attended by a large congregation which stood in much reverence and patience despite the very cold weather due to the snowfall earlier in the day.

After the reading of the Gospel, His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon;

“Again the next day after John [the Baptist] stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!... One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ” (John 1:35-37, 40-41).

Your Beatitude Patriarch of Romania Daniel,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

From the city of the Passion on the Cross and of the Resurrection of the King of kings, and the city of Saint James the Brother of God and its First Hierarch, we have come to the blessed land of the evangelic preaching of the Holy Apostle

Andrew the First-called. The first reason for this is to thank and glorify the Holy Trinitarian God on this God-pleasing event of the consecration of this magnificently-built Cathedral in honour of Apostle Andrew; on the other hand, along with St. Paul we may proclaim that: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:5-6).

It is precisely this "light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" what the commemorated Apostle Andrew preached by saying to his brother Simon Peter "we have found the Messiah", namely Christ. This way, our Apostle Andrew becomes the reason for the first meeting of the Lord with Peter, who became the chief of the Apostles, as well as [for His meeting] with Philip, his fellow citizen. And the calling of Andrew and Peter was made by the Sea of Galilee, when He found them and said to them: "And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him" (Matt. 4:19-20).

Apostle Andrew's zeal for God for his Master Christ, made him imitator of the martyr's passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as his hymn writer says; "Thou didst desire the Master and didst pursue Him, guided in His footsteps unto life, O supremely honourable Andrew, and thou didst truly emulate His sufferings even unto death."

The blood of the martyr's passion of Apostle James the Brother of God and of Andrew the First-called as well as that of all the Apostles are the seal of our healthy Orthodox faith, and also the strong foundation on which the Church of Christ has been built, as Apostle Paul preaches;

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and

prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:20-21).

And the holy temple in the Lord are the faithful members of the mystical body of Christ, namely the Church, as St. Paul preaches: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). Interpreting these words, Origen says; "We become a temple of God, if we make ourselves a dwelling place for the Spirit of God". While Theodoritos Kyrou says; "It is befitting to point out that he named temples of God those who are the dwelling places of the grace of the Spirit; and the word witnesses that the All-holy Spirit [is] God".

We should also point out that each earthly temple as a place of "the logical worship of God" (Romans 12:1), depicts the temple of the spiritual city of the living God, that is the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22). And the earthly Jerusalem is named "the dwelling place of God" – according to St. John of Damascus – because our Lord Jesus Christ walked on it, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col. 1:19-20 / Col. 2:9).

The Patron Saint of your blessed country, Apostle Andrew, as well as that of Jerusalem, the First Hierarch James the Brother of God, have gathered all of us in this Holy Cathedral in order to confess that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). And this is so because "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (1 John 4:2).

This witness of the "Incarnate and God-made-man, God the Word, through the pure blood of the Ever-Virgin Mary the Theotokos

and Mother of God, our Lord Jesus Christ", of the light, the truth and the righteousness of the world we also confess, the ones who minister and safeguard the All-holy Shrines, which are the irrefutable and historical witnesses of our faith in the Crucified and Resurrected Christ, but also the guarantee of the unity of our salvific faith, which has been preached by the Holy Apostles and secured by the Holy Ecumenical Synods. "By keeping a steadfast faith you will reach the safe path, the much loved harbour in security", St. Ioannis the New Hozevite, the fruit of the Romanian land, says in his poetic verses.

Today's double festal participation of ours in the consecration of this beautiful Cathedral and in the Eucharistic Synaxis along with our dear Brother and Pastor, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, on the sacred commemoration of the Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called, calls us to hear the advice of St. Paul who says; "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ... that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Philip. 1:27-29); to Who belongs the glory and the might unto the ages of ages.

May the grace of the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb be with you all. Amen."

At the end of the Divine Liturgy and during the exchange of gifts, which were an icon of the Nativity of Theotokos by the Patriarch of Jerusalem and a mosaic icon of the Apostle Andrew by the Patriarch of Romania, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem said the following few words;

«Your Beatitude, dear Patriarch Daniel,

Your Eminences,

Your Graces,

Respected Governmental and Civil Leaders,

Honoured Guests,

Reverend Fathers,

As we celebrate the consecration and inauguration of the great National Cathedral with you, dear Patriarch Daniel, the Church of Jerusalem, which is the Mother of all the Churches rejoices with our Sister Church of Romania and all the people of this land. We are happy to be here again at your kind and fraternal invitation.

Our greatest joy is to bring with us the blessings of the Holy City of Jerusalem and of the Holy Land, and to assure you, Your Beatitude, of the prayers of the Christians of the Holy Land. May the blessings of the Holy Places, which are the tangible signs of our sacred history, be an encouragement to you and to the Romanian People.

The Romanian Church is the spiritual guardian of the Romanian people, and the new National Cathedral which is appropriately known as "The People's Salvation Cathedral" is a visible expression of this important and providential role of the Church. You have brought to fruition at last a long-held dream for a national cathedral, which was first expressed after Romania gained its independence in 1877, and the presence of the cathedral in the heart of the capital city, near the Parliament, is a testimony to the fact that the Church must be at the heart of the nation.

We hope and pray that the Church in this land may continue to fulfil its spiritual mission to the Romanian people, and be a sign of hope and inspiration at this critical time of human history.

We take this opportunity to thank you, Your Beatitude, for your gracious hospitality to us, and we also wish to thank all those who have made this celebration possible. We also acknowledge all the civic and governmental officials who supported this project during the building of this great cathedral.

May God bless you, Your Beatitude, in your primatial ministry, and may God grant abundant fruit to the mission of the Church in this land, to God's glory, and to the well-being and spiritual nurture of all the people of our beloved Romania.

And so we wish to raise our glass in a toast to you, Your Beatitude, and wish you many years.

Thank you».

There was a formal festal lunch at noon. During the meal His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem delivered the following address:

Your Beatitude, dear Patriarch Daniel,

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Your Graces,

Respected Governmental and Civic Leaders,

Honoured Guests,

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And so we wish to raise our glass in a toast to you

Your Beatitude, and wish you many years.

Thank you.

On Friday evening, November 17/30, 2018, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos travelled from Bucharest to the city Alba Julia, escorted by His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, by plane and then by car. A hundred years ago in this city there was the proclamation of the union among Transylvania, Bessarabia and Vukovina with Romania, in one united country. This historic event for the unity and peace of the Romanian people was celebrated with various festivities during its centennial anniversary.

Upon their arrival, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, were received by the Metropolitan Lavrentios of Transylvania and the Archbishop Eirinaios of Alba Julia, who has served as the representative of the Patriarchate of Romania in Jerusalem, along with many Hierarchs, hundreds of Priests dressed in their liturgical vestments, and a large crowd of pious people who were gathered to receive the blessing of the All-holy Tomb from His Beatitude's hands.

The welcoming reception was held at the Holy Trinity Cathedral, bearing witness to the reverence of the Romanian people and its devotion to its long-term tradition of faith.

It would have been impossible even for the hardest of souls to remain untouched by the manifestations of faith, reverence, joy and jubilation by the pious people of the city of Alba Julia who were present.

In the evening the Patriarchal entourages dined together and His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem offered the Archbishop Eirinaios of Alba Julia and icon of the nativity of Theotokos.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF ST. PHILOUMENOS THE HAGIOTAPHITE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday, November 16/29, 2018, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of the Holy Hieromartyr Philoumenos the Hagiotaphite, who suffered a martyr's death at the old Shrine of Jacob's well in 1979.

The Holy Hieromartyr Philoumenos, from the village Orounda of Cyprus, served the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood in various posts, the last of which was the Hegoumeneia of Jacob's well in Nablus of Samaria. During Vespers one evening he was attacked and murdered by a fanatic Israeli man. In 2009, by the decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem he was canonized among the Saints of the Orthodox Church, while his commemoration was set to be celebrated on 16th November every year.

In honour of St. Philoumenos, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at Jacob's well and in the magnificent Church of St. Photeini, which has been built by Hegoumen Archimandrite Ioustinos, with the help of reverend faithful Christians. The Service was officiated by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, with co-celebrants Archimandrite Kallistos and Arab-speaking Priests, along with visiting Priests and Hierodeacon Demetrios. The chanting was delivered

by Archimandrite Leontios and the Community choir, while the service was attended by monks, nuns, local Arab-speaking Orthodox Christians from the neighbouring areas of Zababde, Toubas, Toulkarem, and Rafidia, along with pilgrims from Greece, Russia, Ukraine and Romania.

After the festal Liturgy the hospitable Hegoumen of the Shrine Archimandrite Ioustinos offered a reception and a festal meal.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE SYNAXIS OF THE ARCHANGELS IN JOPPA

On Wednesday, November 8/21, 2018, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Synaxis of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel and of all the heavenly hosts in Joppa, at the Holy Monastery of the Patriarchate dedicated to Archangel Michael. The Church of the monastery had been completely destroyed by a fire and it was then rebuilt from its foundations by the Hegoumen Most Reverend Archbishop Damascene of Joppa.

Through this Feast, the Church calls its members in a Gathering, in order to honour the Holy Angels, who when Archangel Lucifer protested against God and thus he fell and God made him the devil, joined forces with God, remaining liturgical spirits in ministry, sent to the salvation of the

people; Archangel Michael gathered the angels and said "Let us stand right, stand with fear with God the Most High and our Creator".

In this Holy Monastery the Divine Liturgy 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 Damascene of Joppa, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis and the visiting Most Reverend Metropolitan Ioustinos of Nea Krini and Kalamaria, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Archimandrite Ieronymos, the Hegoumen of Fhes in Jordan, Archimandrite Niphon, Hegoumen in Remla, and Archimandrite Andrew, Arab-speaking Priests, Archdeacon Mark and Deacons Sophronios and Eulogios. The chanting was delivered by the Choir leader Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos and the Patriarchal School Students in Greek on the right, and the hagiographer of the H. Church and choir leader in it Mr. Martinakos and the Community choir, in Greek and Arabic on the left, while the service was attended by a large congregation of Arab-speaking, Russian-speaking and Romanian-speaking faithful, and the Ambassador of Greece in Tel Aviv.

His Beatitude delivered the following sermon to this congregation;

"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" St. Paul preaches in the epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 1:13).

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Noble Christians and pilgrims,

Our Holy Orthodox Church honours and venerates today the holy Synaxis of the Marshals Michael and Gabriel and of the other Bodiless and heavenly hosts, namely of the Angels of God. According to the biblical witness, these Angels are

ministering spirits, which do not act on their own initiative, but are sent by God to the ministry of those who are destined to inherit the eternal life. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14).

The Angels are known to us from our Lord Jesus Christ himself, who proclaims their existence on the one hand; and on the other, from their liturgical, namely their ministering role. "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me... of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).

During the earthly life of the God-man, our Saviour Jesus Christ, the angels appear as His servants and ministers, praising and glorifying Him and bearing witness of Him. Similarly, Archangel Gabriel evangelizes the nativity of Jesus to the Ever-Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26), "the Angel of God" appears to Joseph (Matt. 1:20) and to the shepherds (Luke 2:8), a multitude of heavenly hosts along with the angel glorify the Most High on the nativity of the Saviour (Luke 2:13,15), others minister Him in the desert after the end of the temptations; "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him" (Matt. 4:11). An Angel strengthens Him on the Mount of Olives before His Passion on the Cross "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him" (Luke 22:43). Angels conveyed the message of Christ's resurrection to the myrrh-bearing women "two men [Angels] stood by them in shining garments" (Luke 24:4). And two Angels talk to the disciples about the second coming during Christ's Ascension; "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go

into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11).

Apostle Paul commemorates the Angels, who are distinguished in orders, which are called, principalities, powers, might, dominions, thrones, angels and archangels (Eph. 1:21/3:10/6:12, Col.1:16, 1 Thess.4:16, Jude verse 9). According to St. Dionysius the Areopagite, a special position is held by the orders of the six-winged Seraphim and the many-eyed Cherubim, which unceasingly chant the thrice-holy hymn of victory; "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord Sabaoth; the heaven and the earth are filled with Thy glory; Hosanna in the Highest; blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the Highest".

Distinguished among the Angels are the Marshals Michael and Gabriel. Angel Michael is considered the most preeminent Commander of the bodiless Hosts, in both the Old and the New Testament. And this is so, because the all-famed Michael, as his synaxarist says, having safeguarded the gratitude towards God the Master as a faithful servant, and having displayed the guardianship of the people, he was granted the first place among the noetic archangelic orders by God the Almighty. For having seen the apostate, namely the angel Satan fallen, he gathered all the chorea of the Angels and saying "Let us give heed", he praised the Lord of all in a loud voice saying; let us give heed, we who are created, to what happened to those among us who existed as light up to now but are turned into darkness hence forth. This gathering therefore, was called Synaxis of the Angels, namely, caution, concord and unity.

Let us also hear the melodist of the Church saying: "The Marshal of the Hosts on high, Michael, the leader of the divine orders, who daily walketh at our side preserving all from every assault of the devil, calleth us today to a festival. Come therefore, ye that love the feasts and that love Christ, and gathering the flowers of the virtues, with pure thoughts and an upright conscience let us honour the Synaxis of the Archangel. For he standeth continually in the presence

of God, and singing the thrice holy hymn, he intercedeth that our souls be saved”.

Our Holy Church honours especially the commemoration of the Angelic orders, because the Angelic powers are the invisible heavenly Church. The Incarnation of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ and through it, the grace and truth that have been given to the people (1 John 14:17), make the link and the unity of our humankind and our visible creation with the invisible and spiritual immaterial world.

In other words, the Angels in general, and today's celebrated Archangels Michael and Gabriel, being liturgical spirits of God the Father, minister as well the earthly Church of Christ. For this reason the hymn writer of the Church invokes their help and protection saying; “Supreme Commanders of the Hosts of the Heavens, we, the unworthy, importune and beseech you that by your supplications ye encircle us in the shelter of your wings of your immaterial glory, guarding us who now fall down and cry to you with fervour: Deliver us from dangers of all kinds, as the great marshals of the heavenly hosts on high”.

Archangel Michael is distinguished among all the Angelic orders, because, seeing the fall of angel Lucifer and of his team, as the result of his conceit, pride and selfishness, he intervened and called out “Let us give heed”, thus he halted the generalization of the apostasy and established the position of the Angelic orders. In the book of Revelation, Archangel Michael and his Angels appear fighting the dragon and his fallen angels: “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Rev. 12:7-9).

The festively celebrated commemoration of the Synaxis of the Holy bodiless and heavenly hosts and especially of their Marshals Michael and Gabriel, calls us who participate in the mystical body of Christ, namely His Church, to vigilance, or better say, to watchfulness, namely to concord and unity, by the prayers of the Most Blessed and Ever-Virgin Mary, our Lady Theotokos, and the intercession of Holy Archangel Michael to God. Amen."

After the Divine Liturgy there was a reception at the hegoumeneion and finally the Hegoumen Archbishop Damascene offered a festal meal in honour of His Beatitude and others.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE ARCHANGELS IN JERUSALEM

On Wednesday, November 8/21, 2018, the commemoration of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel and all the heavenly Bodiless Hosts was celebrated at the Holy Monastery of Archangel Michael of the Patriarchate, which is located a stones-throw away North-west of the Patriarchate.

Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy in the morning were led by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, with co-celebrant Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, as the Archimandrites Kallistos, Porphyrios, Klavdios, Priest Haralambos, Hierodeacon Demetrios, while the chanting was performed by Archimandrites Demetrios and Eusevios, with the help of the Hegoumen of the Monastery Most Reverend Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda. The services were attended by a large

congregation of pilgrims and local Christians, who prayed for the protection of the Archangels in contrition and reverence.

After the Divine Liturgy, the renovator of the Holy Church of the Monastery, Hegoumen, Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod, Most Reverend Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda offered a reception at the hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Church of Archangel Michael.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF ST. GEORGE THE GREAT MARTYR IN JERUSALEM

On Friday, November 3/16, 2018, the commemoration of the deposition of the relic of St. George the Great Martyr and Trophy-bearer was celebrated in Jerusalem.

1. At the Holy Monastery dedicated to him within the Old City of Jerusalem and next to the Holy Monastery of the Archangels, with Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy in the morning, led by the Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod Most Reverend Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda, with co-celebrants Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Deacons and under the chanting of Archimandrite Philotheos and Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos, with the participation of a large congregation.
2. Likewise, at the Holy Monastery of St. George in the Jewish Quarter, Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy in the morning were officiated by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, under the chanting of Abbess Anna, with

the participation of many noble pilgrims.

After the Divine Liturgy the renovator of the Church with murals and construction works, Abbess Anna, offered a reception to all present at the Hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Monastery.

From Secretariat-General

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DEPOSITION OF THE RELICS OF ST. GEORGE THE TROPHY BEARER IN LYDDA

On Friday, November 3/16, 2018, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of St. George the Trophy-bearer and the consecration of the Church dedicated to him in Lydda, in which his tomb is kept in the crypt below the Church.

This Feast was celebrated as the commemoration of the deposition of his holy relic in his home town Lydda, and his burial therein. The holy relic of the Saint was transferred from Rome, the city of his martyrdom, and St. Helen built a magnificent Church in his honour, among the other Holy Churches she built on the All-holy Shrines.

The Divine Liturgy for the celebration of this event was led by the Most Reverend Archbishop Damascene of Joppa, with co-celebrants Hieromonks and Deacons and with the participation of a full congregation. Present at the service was also the

Ambassador of the Greek embassy in Tel Aviv Mr. Demetrios Bikas.

The Hegoumen of the Shrine and the Community Council offered a reception to the Episcopal entourage and the others at noon on the Feast day.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF ST. DEMETRIOS THE GREAT MARTYR AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday October 26/ November 8, 2018, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of St. Demetrios the Great Martyr and Myrrh Bearer, at his historic chapel, which lies between the building of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and that of St. Demetrios School on the south east side.

The Church honours St. Demetrios of Thessalonica who is also the patron Saint of the city as encouraging the Holy Martyr Nestor to put shame on and win over Lyaïos in the arena, and as the one who martyred for Christ during the reign of Emperor Maximian who persecuted the Christians.

In honour of the Holy and Great Martyr Demetrios, the protector of the Christians who sacrificed his life for Christ and all humanity, at the aforementioned chapel there was Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the morning of the Feast, led by the Most Reverend Archbishop Methodios of Tabor, with co-celebrant Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Archdeacon Mark and deacons, with the

participation of many faithful Christians honouring the Saint.

After the Divine Liturgy, the School Principal and the teachers of the adjacent to the chapel School of St. Demetrios, received the Episcopal entourage at the School Reception Hall for the festal reception.

From Secretariat-General

DIVINE LITURGY AT THE CHAPEL OF THE FORTY MARTYRS

On Tuesday October 24/November 6, 2018, one day after the commemoration of St. James the Brother of God and First Hierarch of Jerusalem, there was Vespers and the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at the Chapel of the Forty Martyrs, which is adjacent to St. James Cathedral and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The services were officiated by the Most Reverend Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella, with Hieromonks and Deacons as co-celebrants.

The Divine Liturgy was celebrated in commemoration of the founders of the Holy Church of St. James the Brother of God and of the Chapel, and in commemoration of the many memorable Patriarchs of Jerusalem who are buried therein. A memorial service was held for the repose of their souls.

After the Divine Liturgy, the Priests and the Stewards of St. James' Cathedral offered a reception to the Episcopal entourage and the congregation.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF ST. JAMES THE BROTHER OF GOD AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Monday, October 23/ November 5, 2018, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of St. James the Brother of God at the Cathedral bearing his name, which lies between the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood Headquarters and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and also serves as an internal passage between them.

The Church celebrates this glorious Saint as the Brother of God, namely the brother of our Lord in the flesh, because he was Joseph's son in the flesh, who according to the law was considered to be the father of our Lord Jesus Christ and Theotokos' fiancé.

The Church also celebrates St. James as the first Bishop of the Church of Jerusalem, as the writer of one epistle in the New Testament, as the Chairman of the Apostolic Synod in 49 A.D. and as a righteous man, murdered by the Jews because he was preaching that Jesus is the Christ.

The feast was officiated in both Vespers in the evening and in the Divine Liturgy in the morning by His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella and the Most Reverend

Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Arab-speaking Priests, the ministering Priest of the Cathedral Fr. Farah Bandour, Archdeacon Mark and Deacon Hader.

After the Divine Liturgy, His Beatitude returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters fully clad in His Patriarchal Liturgical vestments and escorted by the Hagiotaphite Fathers. The procession went via the Monastery gate where everybody received the traditional small loaf of bread by the responsible for the bakery, Nun Seraphima.

At the Patriarchate Reception Hall there was a special prayer and after the wishes for many happy returns, His Beatitude addressed those present as follows;

“The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever” (Psalm 37:29) the psalmist proclaims.

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Noble Christians and Pilgrims,

We have come in this sacred Church in gleefulness today, in order to honour the commemoration of the Holy Martyr and Apostle James the Brother of God and First Hierarch of the Church of Jerusalem.

Being righteous, St. James became the heir of the sacred land of Palestine and through his successors, namely the Bishops and Patriarchs of the Church of Jerusalem, he became its eternal inhabitant, “forever and ever”.

His apostolic ministry as the first Hierarch of the Church of Jerusalem and as a permanent dweller in the Holy Land throughout the ages, was sealed by his martyr’s blood for the love of Christ. Moreover, the salvific preaching of the incarnation of God the Word, Jesus Christ, is witnessed by the God-inspired epistle, written by St. James, the content and teaching of which has as a source and a peak the temptations

and patience.

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience” (James 1:2-3) St. James writes. And in more detail; you will rejoice in these sorrows and temptations, when you have the knowledge that the testing of your faith through sorrows, creates as a result a patience that is safe, complete and steadfast.

Interpreting these words, St. Ecumenios says; “It is not without trials by both the world and God that we become worthy of the crowns of glory”. In extension of this interpretation he quotes the words from the wisdom of Sirach: “My child, if you aspire to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for an ordeal” (Wisdom of Sirach 2:1). He also adds the Lord’s words: “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). And; “strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life” (Math. 7:14).

According to St. James, faith should not be confined only to its “trial”, namely the sorrow and patience, but also to performing good and God-pleasing works; “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?” (James 2:14).

Commenting on these words, St. John Chrysostom says; “[St. James] named faith after work. Therefore, the fact that you have believed and have surrounded your faith with works, does not mean that faith lacks works, but [on the contrary] faith itself is full of good works. The works come from people and are directed to people, while faith comes from people and is directed to God. And while faith should be completed with works, it is necessary to be clad in faith before works are performed”.

In other words, my dear Brothers, works are those which vivify faith. And this is so, because, just as the body without the

soul is dead, likewise faith without works of virtue is not a living faith, but a dead one, as St. James teaches; "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26).

St. James, who talks about prestige and authority throughout his epistle, was considered to have been "the pillar of the church" according to St. Paul's witness in his letter to Galatians (Gal. 2:9).

Undoubtedly, St. James the Brother of God remains "the pillar" and "the founding stone" of the Church and especially of the Church of Jerusalem, because he became communicant of Christ's martyrdom on the Cross, namely of His redeeming blood, on which the founding stone of the Church was placed.

In other words, St. James is the founding stone of the sacred institution of the Apostolic Succession which was set by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as St. Paul says; "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles..." (1 Cor. 12:28). And the immediate successors of the apostles are the Heads of our Orthodox Churches all over the world.

This means that the institution of the "Apostolic Succession" is the guarantee of the safeguarding of the natural and spiritual borders within which the mystical body of Christ, that is the Church, lives and exists. "He is the head of the body of the Church" (Col. 1:18) St. Paul preaches.

Our contemporary St. Porphyrios says; "we are true Christians, when we feel deep inside that we are members of the mystical body of Christ, of the Church, in a continuous relationship of love; when we live in union with Christ, namely, when we feel the unity in His Church, feeling that we are one. For this reason Christ prays to His Father saying "that they may be one" (John 17:11-12). This is the deepest meaning the Church holds. This is where the mystery lies; that all people may be united as if they were one person in God".

The institution of the Apostolic Succession is vivified through the Holy Spirit which is active in the liturgical life of the Church, in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. For this reason St. James urges the faithful to pray. "Pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). As proof of the power of prayer, St. James sets Prophet Elias as an example, saying; "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months" (James 5:17).

Let us who honour St. James commemoration today and hearken to his words: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16), entreat him and along with the hymn writer say: "Thou didst set forth the law of life for the Church of Christ, ordaining and proclaiming it in the life-creating Spirit. Intercede with Christ our God that forgiveness of our transgressions may be granted to us, and His peace will be sent forth to the Churches. Amen.

From Secretariat-General