

HIS BEATITUDE AT THE 60TH BIRTHDAY OF THE HEAD OF THE RUSSIAN MISSIA IN JERUSALEM

On Wednesday evening, January 31/ February 12, 2020, the Head of the Russian MISSIA Archimandrite Alexander celebrated his 60th birthday.

First invited among other guests was His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, accompanied by Hagiotaphite Fathers, and He addressed Archimandrite Alexander as follows;

“Dear Archimandrite Alexander,

Your Eminences,

Your Graces,

Dear Fathers,

Beloved Monastics,

Members of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission,

Respected Guests,

We are delighted to take this opportunity, dear Archimandrite Alexander, to offer you sincere greetings to you on this blessed occasion of your 60th birthday.

We are grateful to you for gathering all of us together here at the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, for this gathering reflects the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious landscape that is at the heart of the true identity of this Holy City of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Indeed, the Russian Mission itself, which celebrated its 170th anniversary two

years ago, is a living testimony to this unique mosaic of cultures, ethnicities, and religious traditions.

We do not take this rich diversity for granted, and we would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to you and to all who work at the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission for your commitment to our common mission here. We are deeply aware of the pastoral care that you extend to the monasteries of the Mission, as well as the many thousands of pilgrims who come to the Holy Land from the Russian Orthodox Church, and we know how deeply the pious peoples of the Russian Church love and venerate the Holy Places, and most specifically the Holy Tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As the Psalmist says,

O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling (Psalm 42 [43]: 3).

So many follow the prompting of the spirit to come to this holy hill – to Jerusalem – which is the spiritual home of all humankind.

We wish you, dear Archimandrite Alexander, the happiest of birthdays, and we pray that God will grant you many years in the service of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as a worthy successor to your predecessors who served sacrificially and maintained the bond of the love of Christ and the harmonious relationship between the Christians of the Russian lands and the Christians of the Holy Land.

In token of our prayers and our Patriarchal blessing, we wish to present to you this pectoral cross.

Thank you”.

Ἐκ τῆς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς

THE VISIT OF HIS BEATITUDE THEOPHILOS III PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM TO WESTMINSTER- ENGLAND

29 January 2020: H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos met with The Most Reverend Justin Welby, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan. The two met as friends for conversation and prayer, and to discuss the challenges faced by Christians across the globe and especially in the Holy Land. Archbishop Welby exhorted all Christians to continue to hold their brothers and sisters in the Holy Land and across the Middle East in their prayers.

His Beatitude was then received by Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Special Advisor on Faith, Jonathan Hellewell, at Number 10 Downing Street, and also later met with the UK's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, Rehman Chishti MP, at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

His Beatitude addressed a meeting of Members of Parliament, Lords, and Lord Bishops hosted by Sir Desmond Swayne MP, at the Palace of Westminster, where he spoke of His gratitude for the steadfast support from those in the UK for Christians in the Holy Land. His Beatitude updated the friends and supporters in attendance on the situation of the Churches in the Holy Land, and answered many questions from those present. His Beatitude paid warm tribute to President Rivlin, His Majesty King Abdullah of Jordan and to President Abbas for their unswerving support for the Christian community across

the Holy Land.

Reflecting on his impressions of the visit, His Beatitude remarked:

“We have been greatly blessed by the friendship and interest shown to us in our short time in the UK. Christians in the Holy Land will take comfort from knowing that Christians in the UK are so faithful in holding us in their prayers and so determined to understand and support us in our circumstances. The UK Government understands the unique role of the Holy Land churches, not simply as historic buildings but as the living Church that plays such a vital role today. Our visit has enabled us to renew friendships, to greet new friends, and discuss how the UK can continue to support the ministry of the Church in the Holy Land.”

His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain hosted an official dinner in honour of His Beatitude on his visit to the UK. His Beatitude thanked the Archbishop for his kindness and generosity.

The unprecedented levels of support and interest in the Church in the Holy Land among UK political and church leaders is a result of growing understanding of the unique role and importance of the Christians in the region. This has translated into a strong determination to support the peaceful ministries of the Church in the Holy Land, and is reflected in the interest at the highest levels of the UK government. This follows on from the visit of His Royal Highness Prince Charles the previous week. His Beatitude offered a prayer for those he had met and for the United Kingdom.

“May God bless all those who have welcomed us with such warmth and joy these past few days. We pray for blessing on all those in the UK and wisdom for their leaders. We thank God for their steadfast friendship, and for this precious time together. Amen”

THE VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES AT THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY IN BETHLEHEM

At 11:00 a.m. on Friday, January 11/24, 2020, His Royal Highness Prince Charles the Prince of Wales visited the Basilica of the Nativity, accompanied by a delegation including His Excellency Mr. Philip Hall, the British Consul General of Her Royal Highness Elizabeth, Queen of England and the Agnlican Archbishop in Jerusalem His Eminence Souheil Dawani.

Upon His arrival at the courtyard of the Basilica, His Royal Highness the Prince was welcomed by the representatives of the Hegoumens of Bethlehem, Archimandrite Polykarpos, on behalf of the Orthodox and was led to the Gate of the Basilica. There the Prince was welcomed by the Hegoumens of Bethlehem; the Orthodox Patriarchal Representative Archbishop Theophylaktos of Jordan, the Franciscan and the Armenian Hegoumens, who led the Prince inside the Basilica.

In the middle of the Basilica the first to greet the Prince was H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, followed by the Custos of the Holy Land Reverend Francesco Patton and the representative of the Armenian Patriarch His Eminence Archbishop Sevan.

From there, His Beatitude led the Prince at the Catholicon, before the Ikonostasion, and standing by the Main Gate, extended to him a symbolic gift being the star of the Nativity made of pearls and addressed His Royal Highness as follows;

“Your Royal Highness, it is a great honour for us to welcome

you here in Bethlehem the birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the place that brought peace and justice upon the whole world.

Bethlehem is indeed a symbol of peace here, for Christians and Muslims, who live as a family and a united community, and the Church is also the place that is offering spiritual refreshment to thousands of pilgrims of all faiths and of all cultures and nationalities without any discrimination.

Your Highness's presence here is highly appreciated and heartfelt for our region, which is facing many challenges, and your pilgrimage here is a tangible sign of your commitment to promoting and advancing peace and justice in the very birthplace of peace.

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."

(Luke 2.14)

Please allow us to present to you on behalf of the church communities of the Holy Land this humble blessing.

Thank you."

From this point and through St. Nikolaos' chapel, His Beatitude guided the Prince to St. George's chapel, which is adjacent to the Basilica on the southeast side. There the Patriarchal Representative of Bethlehem, His Eminence Archbishop Theophylaktos of Jordan read the Gospel narrative of the Nativity of Christ in Greek, as per the custom on each Christmas Eve according to the Gregorian calendar by the Anglican Church, the Prince read the narrative of the Beatitudes according to chapter 5 of St. Mathew's Gospel, and each of the Heads of the Christian Churches, without liturgical vestments, read a prayer according to the printed schedule.

His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos addressed the Prince as per below;

“Your Royal Highness,

Your Eminences,

Your Graces,

Beloved Members of our Brotherhood,

Honoured Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your Royal Highness, we welcome you warmly to Bethlehem and to the Church of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we are delighted that you are in the Holy Land. Your presence among us is a great encouragement to the peoples of our region, and we are deeply grateful for the careful attention that you pay especially to the well-being of the Christian presence here. Whether we are meeting in London or here in the holy City of Jerusalem, we are always heartened by your commitment.

As you are fully aware, the Christian presence here is an integral part of our social fabric and is crucial in maintaining the historic multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious landscape of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Without a thriving Christian community in the Holy Land, this region would lose its essential character, and no longer be the living land of the divine-human encounter to which the Christian presence here is a living witness;

“You are the salt of the earth: but if the salt has lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?”

(Matthew 5:13)

The Church communities are no doubt facing challenges and the

Heads of the Churches and Christian Communities are united in our firm opposition to this threat, and we have been supported in this by leaders locally and from around the world both in government and religion. We have had particularly strong support from Her Majesty's Government and other British political leaders, as well as from His Grace, our dear brother, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

While we emphasise these challenges, we must also say that all the local authorities of the Holy Land have been working with us positively to help in dealing with these threats and challenges, and we are very grateful to all those who have joined in this effort;

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God"

(Matthew 5:9)

Together with the other Churches and Christian communities of the Holy Land, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem stand ready to partner with all governments and people of good will to ensure the well-being of all the peoples of our region; for this is our pastoral mission entrusted to us by the Divine Providence;

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind...Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself".

(Matthew 22: 37-39)

One of the prominent achievements of the growing body of international support for the Christian community in the Holy Land is the recent establishment of the International Community of the Holy Sepulchre [ICoHS];

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy".

(Matthew 5:7)

While at the moment this society is drawing membership and support mostly from the United Kingdom and the United States, our hope is for a truly international representation in membership. ICoHS is an intentionally ecumenical society, not bound to any one confession, with the active support of, among others, the Orthodox, the Roman Catholic, the Anglican and the Protestant communities.

This is the first such ecumenical society of its kind to be established from the Holy Land, and it is our dearest hope that it will be a major source for good, both in bringing Christians from different communities together in common support of the Christian presence in the Holy Land, and in strengthening international attention to the life and witness of the Christian community here.

Needless to say, Your Royal Highness, that we are deeply aware of your personal commitment to the Holy Land and to the Churches, here which keep and guard the holy places not as mere monuments but as places of worship, and we also understand that, in addition to your official and royal mission, you also come here as a pilgrim.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and the Sun of righteousness enlighten your mind and warm your heart.

Thank you."

Once this ceremony was finished, led by His Beatitude, the Prince went down St. George's chapel through the stairs of the Altar to St. Nikolaos' chapel. From there the Prince went down into the Cave and therein, by the star and the manger, He was addressed by the Custos of the Holy Land the Reverend Father Francesco Patton.

Thereafter, the Prince went up through the north gate of the Cave to the chapel which is used by the Armenians, and was received by the Armenian His Eminence Sevan. From this chapel, the Prince marched through the courtyard of St. Catherine of

the Franciscans, where a group photograph of the visit was taken.

Finally, His Royal Highness offered a reception hosted by the British Consul General to Jerusalem His Excellency Mr. Hall, at the Casa Nova the adjacent Guest House of the Franciscans.

From Secretariat-General

THE VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF HELLENIC REPUBLIC AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday morning, January 10/23, 2020, His Excellency the President of the Hellenic Republic Mr. Prokopis Pavlopoulos visited the Patriarchate. Mr Pavlopoulos came to Israel as a representative of Greece for the commemoration of seventy five years since the Jewish holocaust and was accompanied by his wife, the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos, the representative of the Embassy of Greece in Israel in Tel Aviv Mrs. Stavroula Deli, along with a group of his associates.

His Excellency the President and the delegation were warmly received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotaphite Fathers, as the President is the representative of Greece, a helper of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the guardian of the rights of our Nation in the Holy Land and a factor of reconciliation and peace in the

Middle East.

Replying, the President thanked His Beatitude saying; “Your Beatitude, we hope, referring to the prime example of the Church of Greece to your undivided support to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew for the representation and support of the Orthodox Christians all over the world, especially in our difficult and troubled time.”

For this visit, His Beatitude offered the President a beautiful icon of the Mother of God of Jerusalem for his protection, congratulating him for the completion of his Office as a President and also offered him a signed silver case.

Thereafter, His Beatitude left to meet with the President of Russia Mr. Putin and the Prime Minister of Israel Mr. Netanyahu and the President of Greece visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, accompanied by Geronda Secretary-General His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Archimandrites of the Patriarchate and Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos and was received by Geronda Sacristan His Eminence Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis at the Office of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

From Secretariat-General

**RECEPTION OF HIS MAJESTY THE
KING OF JORDAN ON THE**

OCCASION OF THE ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS

At noon on December 31,2019/January 13,2020, a Christmas reception at the “Royal Centre” at the Baptism Site was hosted by His Majesty the King of Jordan Abdullah Ibn Husein II with input from the Archdiocese of the Patriarchate in Amman under the care of His Eminence Archbishop Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis and the recently ordained Deacon Sophronios,.

Invited in this honorary reception were the Holy Land Heads of the Christian Churches and their entourages.

His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III was accompanied by His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Hegoumen of Fuheis Archimandrite Ieronymos, Father Issa Mousleh, and Archdeacon Mark, as well as His Eminence Metropolitan Benedict of Philadelphia, His Eminence Archbishop Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis, the Hegoumen of Madaba Archimandrite Raphael and many Priests of the Patriarchate from Jordan.

His Majesty King Abdullah was escorted by HRH Prince Ghazi as well as other Governmental Officials and Imams.

In this reception the youth choir of the Archdiocese of Aman sang the National Anthem of Jordan, Christmas and traditional songs.

Our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos addressed His Majesty the King on behalf of all invited guests in Arabic, through His Eminence Archbishop Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis as follows;

الناس المرسدة. ي العبل وعل الأرض السالم وفي المجد هلل في ضة
صاحب الجالة الهاشمية الملك عبدهللا الثان ح ابن هلا ورعا
المعظم حفظه الحسي يلي و بن عبدهللا الثان يك ألم بالحسي ح ضة

صاحب السمو المل^٢ هلالا العهد المعظم حفظه ضة صاحب يك ألم ي غازي
بن محمد المعظم ح السمو المل حفظه هلالا يل والسعادة والنيافة
والسماحة، أصحاب المع والسادة، أياها السيدات الكريم، الحضور
ما أجمل أن يجتمع الأخوة د الميال دة أعياء معا، بمناسبة ال ن ي
مجيدة ورأ السنة وعي د الغطاس، هذا المكاف المقدس البشارة ال
يمانية المسيحية إبل "مكان المعمودية"، وانطالقة أرجا المعمورة،
وما وأبسه ء ما أروع ، أن يكون هذا اليوم وهذه المناسبة، ب
بوجودكم يا صاح الجاللة، ي حضورك يك فف م المل يم السا ،
مدلوات عميقة ورسائل عديدة، تحمل ي ف طياتها روح ش حضارت قية ر
نا ال ، ش بالدنا ي وثمار عي ك ف نا المشت ر المقدسة. 2 ي ح ي
فف^٣ بي العالم من حول وطأ ت ب نا تحت ة الأزمات والحرو ، ي و ال
جيج ن من نتائها إال ال موت و ال دمار جزأة، والت والتهج ت ش ق
وأبناء ر ف من المجهول ال خو ي يعيشون حالة ، والمدينة س
المقدسة، القد الحبية ض تتعر ألبشع أنواع المخاطر، من ه ة
التشوي خال ل حمل المستمرة والممنهجة لهويتها الدينية رن
والوطنية، لمالم ح وحها التاريخية، كل وبينما يحدث هذا من حولنا
، ب أنتم اليوم يا صاح الجاللة، ن ومن هذا المكاف المقدس، ترسلون
رسالة م ب العال ل لشعو ة وأم ب سالم ومحبه وقادت ، ونحن
اليوم ب ملتفي حول ة ة ، وضارع بكم بقلو مصلي ه إبل الل يل
القدير ب الع ، ء ضر السما والأر ، وكل ما فيها ، من أجل أن ي ع
م بال د السالم ي ش ف نا المقدسة، قنار العر الجري ح يب و م ش
والعال بأ ه ، ول يسكن السالم من لدن للا، العلوي^٤ ي ب ف قلوب ب
العال ئه. شعو و زعما شين ب صاح الجاللة، قبل عر عاما ، كانت
زيارتكم الأول س ك للمغط ب كمل ي ش بعد أن توليتم عر المملكة
الأردنية الهاشمية، وحينها أنتم وصاحبة الجاللة الملكة رانيا
العدللا المعظمة، زرعتم شجرة ء ب نخيل كرمز عطاء و خ ت وهو الأمر
" المعهود عنكم، ذلك أنكم ال تزرعون إل الخ ت والمحبة ما بادرتم
والعطاء كل و حيثما حللتم. 3 ط إن وجودنا نا عن ارتبا تعب تاي س
يأب ر ض المغط أري ف اليوم ض المباركة بهذه ألريخ الراسخ ة
الرو ، تقدست بمعمودي رن ي ال الذي ل من المسيحي ب أجيا بعد
بها أجيال ت ة ك ت المسيح، وت ن ا فيها الأديار ة ون وب ة وحية
ت ر ب أو اتخذوها واحا قصدوها حجا والمناسك، بالقداسة العابقة
الثرية والشواهد والماثلة ا، ن حول ي ح ه المسي ة التاريخ د عل
أصال ب شاه يه خ ت ل ال خ ت نا، حرن ل م القديس ي ن حولنا ،
نهر باعتمادك يا رب ف يرتلون معنا " ه هذا النهر بميا بارك ت ه
ل ك ي ذلك، فألردن ، وال عج ب ف الوردن" د سية ق س المقدس. إن
هذا المكان لي ب الوردن وخاصة ترا من س القريب، بل هو نابع أو

حرن ألم اليوم ن وليد وجدا ها منذ ت س مار الكنيسة وم العصور
أقدم ، فقد لجأ المسيحيون ب د ألوائل بسبب الضطها نهاي ل
إبل ف القرن الميالدي ألوش ق ر إبل طبق ة نهر الأردن، وتحديد
ف حل، حرن جاز القول، إن ن تراب ألرد ؤ أن يبل احتض الغا ويل
الجماعات المسيحية. ي وف ث ق سيا الحدي ة هذه البالد ، عن قدسي
فقد أ قر آباء الكنيسة القديسون المجمع ي ي في المسكوب الرابع،
الم ي ق د نع ف د ة وواح ة خلقيدونيا ، مائ أربع سنة وخمسي
للميالد، حدود الكنائس ي ة أم ة المقدسي البطريركي ، ة الرومي
لتشمل ضي ألرا ل ؤ ك فلسطين ي المقدسة ف وألردن وسيناء. 4
ألصلي للا إنه ف ، ا اه ب رن ي ح لهذه البالد المباركة ال يه
إل اختيار ض أرن السماوية لتكون ألديا ل ؤ ك ي ة الرفيع ة ف
بهذه المكان ة والعدل والسالم. القداسة والمحبة الحبين
ردن ؤ أ عن القول، إن ن ي غ والاستقرار، بألمن ليتمتع ة ة
رفيع ة عالمي ة بمكان ي ويح ، ة ف ج نمود ؤ ه من أ ق دم بما
ؤ ي حكم ة ت الحضارية، بفضل ك والنجازا ش المشت ر الوحدة والعلي
ك ت وؤي م ور ؤ ك اللت ج م المستنتة، إنه أن يكون ليستحق ، ة قبل
ء العالم، أرجا من كل حجاج ؤ ال ذلك أن لد ب ر زخ نا ي بالمواقع
ة التاريخ ة الديني والمسيحية ة ي المقدسة ، روي السالمي ت رني
ال خنا حكاية تاري م بالوحدة والتنوع المفع بول آلخروق .
وإنها عل عات تقع ق لمسؤولية نا جميعا، هذا البلد رسالة ت ز أن
ن راته عل ت العظيم محافظي وب الثم ي الخالد، وهذا يتطل لتاري
خ الالنتماء هذا البلد ، ط المبدع والخالق والتخطي ه ض ل حا ه
ومستقبل ، ة ه كأشة ه وبنات ة بسواع د أبناء ة ، أردني ة واحد
تعمل به عل الذي يليق الموقع وأبدا ن دائما لألرد عل أن يكون
الخارطة العالمية. 5 صاحب الجاللة، ت يم أسم آيا م السائ ؤ مك
إبل مقارفع ن إننا إذن الوال ة والعرفا ، لن ي ثم م ؤ ك شيفر
م وت ؤ ك ضور ح عالينا ، الذي ي دم ؤ عل حرصك ل ألكي د عل ال
وجود يحي المسي والحضور والمثمر الفاعل له، ي من مجتم عنا
ألردب ؤ ال يتجزأ ة كجزء ، وهذه تاري خ من نسيج الأمة، هال ها
ومستقب ض ومن حا ، عن هذا ال تم ت ف فقد ع موق ة الدولي المحافل
كلي العر ، من يب ألصيل ف حاك ي وج ه ما ي ف ت تسع ة ت
دخيلة ة تنا الجامع ة بطروحا ه هوي مؤامرا إبل تشوي ن بأي صلة
ألديا ة ت م خنا ي ومطرفة ال ت ، تاري ها ف ولم نعهد شق،
فكنتم، يا صاحب الجاللة، خ ت الحضاري من ر م ؤ ال م ؤ ك قب نا
تصدى لها بم النبيلة، م الرشيدة ؤ وبقيات ، م ك ؤ ك خطاب وب
الحضاري المشهود، عن صوت العقل الذي يع ت ، والضم ت يح ال ي
إبل الكث ت من الحكم ة النساب ، قر فت ي م بات ي عال في س ف

للكنائِ والسالم والعدالة. وإنا كرؤساء القدس و الأردن، من از،
لنلتفِ واعت ر فخر وبكل هاشميا كال م م ك ول ح ، ا د وقائ ما
له م ، ا ي حان وأبا ، وإن ننس، م بالقدس ° ك فلن ننس اهتمام
يض والأماكن المقدسة، المسيحية والسالمية كو ء أم ي ش يعي ر
عليها، وأنتم خ ت م م ء آباؤك عل عن حماها كما ف ود ذ ن ي م
الهاشميون ء ك وأجداد العرب. 6 الختام ي وف ن إبل لال ضع يل
القديرع ، أن يحفظ الأردن آمنة ومزدهرا وقويا ، ي ظلي ض فة ت ح
جالل كم ونكر ر شكر نا الجزيل، وتقدير ل نا الكبت، يم لهذا
الاحتفام الساء فك شي ر علت ، وكل ء عام أجمع ب والعالم نا
الحي و

After the reception, His Majesty King Abdullah greeted all invited guests and hosted them for a traditional Jordanian meal.

From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE LIGHTS UP THE CHRISTMAS TREE OF THE ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF FUHEIS IN JORDAN

On Thursday evening, December 6/19, 2019, day of the commemoration of St. Nicholas, the Rum Orthodox Arab-speaking Community of Fuheis, a town near Amman of Jordan, held a ceremony of the Christmas tree lighting.

This very well-organized ceremony by the Mayoralty of Fuheis and the Hegoumen Archimandrite Ieronymos with the Priests, commissioners and other associates of his, took place at the specially prepared courtyard of the City Hall.

Present at the ceremony were members of the Parliament of Jordan, while the Mayor of Fuheis Mr. Jamil Hatar and the member of Parliament Faouzi Dawud welcomed His Beatitude and underlined the importance of the Patriarchate's mission to support Christianity in Jordan and its peaceful coexistence with its Muslim counterparts.

His Beatitude arrived from Jerusalem for this reason, escorted by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, and was welcomed by a large crowd of people, motorcyclists and the Patriarchal Commissioner in Amman Most Reverend Archbishop Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis. His Beatitude lit up the beautifully decorated Christmas tree, wishing a joyful period of the Twelve Days and a happy and peaceful New Year for the Royal Family, the Government of Jordan, the Community of the Patriarchate in Fuheis and all the Christian Communities and all the flock of Jordan, along with all other people of Jordan and also thanked for the donation to the Patriarchate of 10 acres of land for the construction of a new Holy Church.

The Mayoralty of Fuheis on this occasion offered His Beatitude honorary plaque.

After this festive ceremony at the City Hall area, His Beatitude visited the Holy Church of St. George of the Patriarchate, the Christian bazaar, lit up the Christmas tree of the Rum Orthodox Church and attended supper which was offered for many by the Rum Orthodox Military Doctor Mr. Abu-Omar-Mahamre.

From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM AWARDS THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE METROPOLITAN OF ANEA

On Thursday afternoon, October 4/17, 2019, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos received at the Patriarchate Reception Hall many pilgrims from the Holy Metropolis of Nea Ionia under the lead of Archimandrite Epiphanius and groups of pilgrims from Bulgaria and America.

In this meeting His Beatitude spoke to the pilgrims about Jerusalem as a Holy City, which has been watered with the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, and about the sanctification of the pilgrims through veneration.

Present in this meeting with the group of the Metropolis of Nea Ionia was the Most Reverend Metropolitan Makarios of Anea of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

His Eminence the Metropolitan of Anea was honoured by His Beatitude with the medal of the Grand Commander of the Order of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, in recognition of his respect and support to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, as well as in recognition of his long-term work as a Bishop's Assistant (of Lampsakos then) in the Ecumenical Patriarchate Centre of Sambesy, helping all who joined in the work of the preparation of the Holy and Great Synod of Orthodoxy, in love, simplicity, brotherhood, hospitality and genuine humility.

Emotional, the Most Reverend Metropolitan of Anea thanked His Beatitude for the honorary distinction, referring to his bond with older Hagiotaphite Fathers in his student life in Halki, who were, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Kornelios of Petra, the memorable Metropolitan Palladios of Ptolemais, the

memorable Metropolitan Basil of Caesarea and the memorable Archimandrite Sophronios.

From Secretariat-General

UNITED STATES CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS MEET WITH PATRIARCH THEOPHILOS AND HEADS OF CHURCHES AT THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

On Wednesday, Oct. 2nd, 2019, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem, together with representatives from the Council of Patriarchs and Heads of Churches, welcomed a United States Congressional delegation (CODEL) to the Patriarchate in order to discuss the role of the Churches in Jerusalem and some of the current challenges they face, including threats to the Status Quo of the Old City and its the multi-religious and multi-cultural character, such as the Jaffa Gate properties case.

Joining the CODEL were Senator Roger Wicker (R-Mississippi), Representative Alcee Hastings (D-Florida), Representative (R-South Carolina), and Representative Andrew Harris (R-Maryland), together with several staff members. Present with His Beatitude from the Heads of Churches were His Eminence Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo, Auxiliary Bishop of the Latin Patriarchate, and the Very Revd. Dr. Hosam Naoum from the Anglican Church, Dean of Saint George's Cathedral and Secretary of the Council of Patriarchs and Heads of Churches.

His Beatitude discussed the long-standing role of the Christian Churches in Jerusalem in protecting the Holy Sites for Jews, Christians, and Muslims, the importance of maintaining the Church's independence, which is being challenged today by particular radical groups and individuals who seek to undermine its vital role in the Holy Land, and the significant work of the Churches for all people throughout the region.

The CODEL declared its enthusiasm to engage with the Churches in their historic and on-going work, learning more about the movements that threaten the Christian presence such as the Jaffa Gate case, which could potentially endanger the pilgrimage route to the Christian Quarter and Holy Sepulchre Church, and deepening channels of communication between the United States and the Churches in Jerusalem.

To this effect, the International Community of the Holy Sepulchre (ICOHS), which has been instrumental in facilitating contact between the Churches in Jerusalem and the representatives of the US government and other organizations, will continue its work in the United Kingdom and other countries, bridging parties and taking the lead on projects of common concern.

Upon completion of the meeting, representatives from the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the US Embassy escorted the CODEL to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where they venerated the sites of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From Secretariat-General

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE MR. ANTONIOS DIAMANTARIS VISITED THE PATRIARCHATE

On Friday morning, September 21/ October 4, 2019, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr. Antonios Diamantaris visited the Patriarchate, as part of his agenda in his visit in the State of Israel, escorted by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos.

Mr. Diamantaris was warmly received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos and other Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In this meeting the Minister was informed by His Beatitude on the Status Quo of Jerusalem and the place of the Christians of the Holy Land in the areas of the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate, whose historical role is the long term preservation and safeguarding of the All-holy Shrines, as a follower of the Byzantine Empire.

As a pilgrim in the Holy Land, Mr. Diamantaris said he is happy for this visit and meeting and conveyed the wishes and respect of the Prime Minister of Greece to His Beatitude. Moreover, the Minister was committed to continue his undivided and real interest for the multifaceted and precious mission of the Patriarchate.

In appreciation of his support to the Patriarchate, His Beatitude honoured Mr. Diamantaris with the medal of the Grand Commander of the Order of Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, and offered him blessings from Jerusalem, while seeing him off to continue his pilgrimage at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

HIS EMINENCE MAKARIOS THE NEW ARCHBISHOP OF AUSTRALIA VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Monday morning, September 3/16, 2019, His Eminence the new Archbishop Makarios of Australia visited the Patriarchate, escorted by his associate Bishop Seraphim of Apollonia and a group of fifty pilgrims from various Australian cities; Professor Giangos of the University of Thessalonica was also present.

The recently elected and established Archbishop Makarios and his group of pilgrims were received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotaphite Fathers. His Beatitude expressed His joy for this visit which reflects the long-term close relations between the Archdiocese of Australia of the Ecumenical Patriarchate with the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

As a token of His appreciation for the Archbishop of Australia Makarios' visit and author's work, His Beatitude honoured him with the medal of the Grand Commander of the Holy Sepulchre and offered Reverend Archbishop Seraphim of Apollonia an egolpion, pectoral crosses to the Priests and blessings from Jerusalem to the pilgrims.

Emotional with the visit and the honorary distinction, the Most Reverend Archbishop Makarios of Australia thanked His Beatitude with the following address;

“Your Beatitude and Most Holy Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos,

In awe and deep emotion, from our Most Holy Archdiocese of Australia ,the Reverend brother, Bishop Seraphim of Apollonia and all of the noble pilgrims, both clergy and laity escorting my mediocrity, have come in gleefulness and with a contrite heart to the Holy City of Jerusalem and the seat of the venerable Throne of Saint James the Brother of God, which Your Beatitude has been ministering with merit, in order to venerate the Empty Tomb of Christ and receive the Grace of the Holy Sepulchre and the Patriarchal blessing of Your Beatitude.

We wholeheartedly glorify the Resurrected Lord for this blessing and honour and gracefully thank Your Beatitude for the reception and hospitality, as well as for the valuable time which You have most willingly offered the shepherd and pilgrims of the fifth continent.

During the small period of my ministry in Australia, I have realized that our reverend people have always set the noetic eyes of their hearts towards the All-holy Shrines and frequently visit the Holy Land, in order to walk on the places where Christ walked, and receive the mystical grace and spiritual empowerment. And there used to be a tradition, that our faithful Christians should annually visit the All-holy Shrines under the lead of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, always combining their visit with a pilgrimage to the sacred centre of Orthodoxy, our Ecumenical Patriarchate. We considered it worthy and fair, Your Beatitude, to also continue this holy tradition, which strengthens our faithful in the Resurrected Christ, but also proclaims with our presence here the unity and the close spiritual relationship between the two Patriarchates; of Constantinople and of Jerusalem.

As You surely are very well aware, Your blessed predecessors the Patriarchs of Jerusalem had been guests in Constantinople

for centuries and always marched side by side with the memorable Patriarchs of Constantinople for the defense of the Orthodox Doctrines and the valuables of our noble nation. This, moreover, is witnessed by their frequent participation to the Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate with the participation of many Bishops who were in Constantinople, as verified by many Patriarchal Acts which are co-signed and in full agreement among them with significant issues of the Orthodox Church.

Today, Your Beatitude, we boast, and personally my mediocrity boasts in the Lord, because this tradition of the cooperation and togetherness between the two venerable Patriarchates is being continued on the same basis and becomes even more powerful and stable with Your glorious Patriarchal Office, as a capable captain of the vessel of the Church of Jerusalem, as this has been obvious in the past with many important issues of the Orthodox Church, with dominant that of the convocation of the Holy and Great Synod of Crete, where the God-inspired presence of Your Beatitude was catalytic.

We are sure that our unity of purpose and thought on the significant matters of the Church will continue in the future, for the glory of Christ and the salvation of the faithful Orthodox Christians.

I convey, Your Beatitude, the brotherly osculation and deep love of H.A.H. the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and I assure You, that the Leading and Suffering Church of Saint Andrew the First-called will always be a helper and a supporter of the Church of Jerusalem, of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and of course, of Your Beatitude, the venerable, humble and worthy Primate of this Church.

I join my humble prayers with those of His All-holiness my Patriarch Bartholomew and of the children who escort me from Down Under and gratefully and reverently, thanking Your Beatitude for one more time for the reception and hospitality,

I wish that the Resurrected Christ may grant You health, longevity and success in the governing of the vessel of the Church of Jerusalem.

Many happy returns, Your Beatitude”.

...and offered His Beatitude a pastoral rod.

Receiving the blessing of His Beatitude, the Most Reverend Archbishop of Australia began his pilgrimage, guided by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias.

From Secretariat-General