

THE CONSUL GENERAL OF GREECE IN ADELAIDE VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday morning, August, 28/ September 10, 2019, the Consul General of Greece in Adelaide, Mr. George Psiahas, son of the late Dionysios Psiahas, Diplomat at the Consulate of Jerusalem and graduate of the Patriarchate School of Zion, visited His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, escorted by his mother and wife. Mr. Psiahas asked His Beatitude's blessing for the christening of his daughter at the God-receiving Cave of Bethlehem on the evening of the same day.

Mr. Psiahas thanked His Beatitude for this blessing of the visit and christening of his daughter and offered Him a bottle for the keeping of myrrh, while His Beatitude offered him a silver painting of Jerusalem. Mr. Psiahas continued his pilgrimage at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Christening of the daughter of the Consul General of Greece in Adelaide

On Tuesday afternoon, August 28/ September 10, 2019, the christening of the daughter of the Consul General of Greece in Adelaide Mr. George Psiahas took place at the God-receiving Cave of Bethlehem, according to the Status Quo right of the Greek Orthodox Christians.

The christening was held by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina after the Patriarch's appointment, along with the ministering Priest of Bethlelehm Fr. Spyridon, and the Deacons Eulogios and Patrikios, at the presence of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos, the christened Laura's parents Mr. George Psiahas and Mrs. Eleni Psiaha and other relatives along with

her godmother.

His Beatitude and His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, who held the christening and used to be Mr. Psiahas' teacher at the School of Zion in the 80s, wished the newly christened girl spiritual and physical health.

From Secretariat-General

VISITS AT THE PATRIARCHATE ON THE OCCASION OF THE DORMITION

On Thursday morning, August 16/29, 2019, a 45-member group of doctors from Thessalonica, led by the Lung specialist Professor of Theageneio Hospital Mrs. Theodora Tsiouda, visited the Patriarchate.

This exquisite group was received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

Speaking to the group members on the importance of the pilgrimage in Jerusalem, whose land has been watered by the redeeming blood of the Righteous One, and which has held His three-day burial, His Beatitude thanked Mrs. Tsiouda for the diversified medical assistance to the Hagiotaphite Fathers and others who need treatment.

Later, on the same day, His Beatitude received a group of thirty graduates of the Patriarchal Seminary of the Holy Zion, who came on an organized pilgrimage by the former school student Mr. Michael Trivizadakis.

His Beatitude praised them for their return to their former boarding school and they thanked Him for all things they received from the school. Then they were guided by the Managing Director of the school of that time and current Librarian to the central Library of the Patriarchate.

Finally, His Beatitude received a group of 105 pilgrims, led by Metropolitan Timotheos of Thessaliodida and Fanariofersala and the Hegoumen of the Holy Metropolis Agathoniko.

From Secretariat-General

USAID ADMINISTRATOR VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE TO MEET WITH COUNCIL OF HEADS OF CHURCHES

On August 8/21st, 2019, Mr. Mark Green, administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), visited the Patriarchate together with other representatives of USAID and the United States administration.

The delegation was received by H.H.B. our father and Patriarch Theophilos along with other members of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and members of the Council of Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, including Bishop Ibrahim Sari from the Lutheran Church, Secretary of the Council Fr. Husam Naom from the Anglican Church, as well as the former Mayor of Bethlehem Mrs. Vera Baboun.

During their meeting, H.H.B. Patriarch Theophilos thanked

USAID for its contribution to the region, especially in Gaza, where the humanitarian situation especially impacts the growth of young people. The multi-faceted Christian contribution to the community at large, irrespective of religious or ethnic background, is vital to the everyday lives of individuals and families, as well as for reconciliation in the region.

It was emphasized that the quality of life in Jerusalem and the Palestinian Territories could be significantly improved through meaningful projects and aid in the areas of education, housing, and employment, especially until lasting political solutions are found. The Churches of the Holy Land look forward to working with USAID to this effect. While the Churches have for centuries supported the community through their own infrastructure of schools, hospitals, community centers, and outreach to the needy, they bear a burden that is increasingly heavy.

The continued vibrancy of Jerusalem and the Holy Land is dependent upon the Christian presence being able to thrive in its ancient birthplace. Bishop Sari, Fr. Husam, and Mayor Baboun gave illustrations as to how the Christians of the Holy Land, the "little flock" to which the Lord said, "Fear not," and as the "small piece of yeast," which "made the whole flour leavened" (Luke 13:21), is worthy of the support of Christians around the world in order to remain in the cradle of Christianity. A lasting peace in the region must also include the Christians presence in the Holy Land.

From Secretariat-General

THE ANGLICAN BISHOP REV. SOUHEIL DAWANI VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE WITH A GROUP OF BISHOPS & PILGRIMS

On Thursday noon, August 2/15, 2019, the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem Most Reverend Souheil Dawani visited the Patriarchate, escorted by a group of the Anglican Church Bishops from various continents and a group of Anglican pilgrims.

The exquisite group was warmly received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and Hagiotope Fathers. His Beatitude welcomed and informed the guests for the mission of the Patriarchate and the cooperation relations it holds with the Anglican Church in England and elsewhere.

His Beatitude also added the role of the Patriarchate for the preservation of the religious and Christian character and Status Quo of the Old City of Jerusalem.

Thanking Him, Bishop Souheil Dawani stressed the good relations of the Patriarchate with his Church, as it is made clear by the meetings of all the Churches at the Patriarchate by the care of H.H.B. and the Mass Services that the Anglicans hold by the permission of the Patriarchate at the chapel of the Monastery of Abraham next to the Horrendous Golgotha and on their Christmas Eve at the chapel of St. George next to the Basilica in Bethlehem.

Finally, His Beatitude offered souvenirs from Jerusalem as blessings to the members of the group.

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM AWARDS THE JOPPA SCHOOL GRADUATES WITH THEIR SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATES

On Saturday evening, June 23/ July 6, 2019, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos awarded the "Archangel Michael" Joppa School Graduates with their School Leaving Certificates. His Beatitude was escorted from Jerusalem by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos, the Patriarchate Representative for the Arab-speaking M.M. Priest Issa Mousleh, Archdeacon Mark, and from Joppa the Most Reverend Archbishop Damascene of Joppa and the Priest of Joppa Fr. Constantine.

The Graduation Ceremony was well organized and took place at the School building which belongs to the Patriarchate well before 1948. The building was used for a while by the Israeli army but has again been returned to the Patriarchate.

The Graduation ceremony included a parade of the seven School Graduates, each one escorted by their mother, the address of the Manageress of the School Mrs. Natzla Hanhan, who stressed the good education offered to the School students, which enables them to continue their higher education and have a good career, and also mentioned the material and moral support

of the Patriarchate to the School. The ceremony also included addresses from the School students, one in Arabic, one in English and one in Hebrew. In the, the students thanked their teachers and parents for their twelve-year support in their education.

The ceremony also included Arabic dances and traditional Arabic songs, bouquet offering to the students' mothers, honorary distinction to the teachers who showed professional educational consciousness in their work, handing over the baton to the final year high school students of the next school year and raising the flag of the School.

The ceremony came to an end with the address of H.H.B. read by Presbyter Father Issa Mousleh, accompanied by a financial offer to the School and was sealed by the award of the title to each one of the Graduates with the wishes "congratulations," "good luck", "good career".

From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM AWARDS THE RAMLEH SCHOOL GRADUATES WITH THEIR SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATES

On Saturday evening, June 16/29, 2019, His Beatitude our

Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos visited the School of the Greek-Orthodox Community of Ramleh, the ancient Arimathaea of Israel, escorted by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Most Reverend Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella, the Hegoumen of Ramleh Archimandrite Niphon, the Hegoumen of Fuheis, Archimandrite Ieronymos, Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos and Archdeacon Mark.

This town is currently inhabited approximately by seventy thousand citizens of Israel and Palestinians who did not immigrate in 1948.

The Community of the town founded a School in 1990, during the Patriarchal Office of memorable Patriarch Diodoros, with the moral and financial support of the Patriarchate.

His Beatitude visited the School for the Graduation Ceremony of the 24 male and female graduate students.

The ceremony included entertaining students' acts, the addresses of the Manageress Mrs. Ihlam Mahoul, of the President of Jamaeye Mr. Fayz Mansour, of the Israeli Mayor of the town and of His Beatitude. His Beatitude's address was read in Arabic by the Most Reverend Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella and was followed by the awarding of each one of the students with their School Leaving Certificates, expressing the warm wish for their Academic and Professional success.

From Secretariat-General

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS OF HUNGARY VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday evening, May 22/ June 4, 2019, on the eve of the Apodosis of Pascha, the Minister of Social Affairs and vice Minister of Human Resources of Hungary Mr. Zoltán Balog visited the Patriarchate, escorted by the representative of Hungary in Ramallah Dr. Mihail Rada Csaba and his associates.

The representatives of Hungary were received by His Beatitude and Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In this meeting His Beatitude and the Minister recalled the days of His Beatitude's visit in Hungary and the financial aid of Hungary for the renovation of the roof of the Basilica of Bethlehem and of the Sacred Edicule of the Holy Sepulchre and underlined the need to support the principles of the Christian Civilization and the persecuted Christians especially in the Middle East.

This initiative has been undertaken and promoted by the country of Hungary and wishes to continue it with the cooperation of the Churches.

In remembrance of this visit and the expression of the support of Hungary for the flock of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, His Beatitude offered the Minister an icon of the city of Jerusalem.

From Secretariat-General

THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM PARTICIPATES AT THE SEMINAR OF THE IMPERIAL ORTHODOX PALESTINIAN SOCIETY

On Thursday afternoon, May 3/16, 2019, a Seminar under S.V. Stepashin, Chairman of the district and foreign departments of the Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society, took place at Sergei Hotel which is adjacent to the Russian MISSIA of the Moscow Patriarchate, on the occasion of the two-hundred-year anniversary of the diplomatic support of the Russian presence in the Middle East. Sergei hotel was seized in 1948 by the State of Israel and has been recently restored to the jurisdiction of the Russian Church.

In this Seminar the Patriarchate was represented by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina and Secretary-General, who read the following address of our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos;

“Mr. Chairman,

Respected Members of the Council,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Christ is risen!

We greet you with the joy of this Paschal season with the greeting that is also the triumph of our Orthodox faith. From this Holy City of Jerusalem, the light of the resurrection has spread to the whole world.

We welcome this seminar as you meet in Jerusalem. You meet at a time when our Christian witness is so important in support of the Christian presence in the Holy Land and the Middle East, and when the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate is playing a leading role in promoting deeper relationships among the Christian communities here. Such deepening relationships are crucial for the well-being of a vital, vibrant Christian presence.

The Patriarchate is also promoting important interfaith dialogue, and above all we are maintaining the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious character of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

The Church of Jerusalem, which is the Mother of all the Churches, is the guarantor of the unity of the Orthodox Church. We acknowledge especially the role that the Russian Orthodox Church has played down the centuries, and especially during the Ottoman period, in supporting the Church of Jerusalem politically, diplomatically, and of course, financially. But we need to acknowledge that there were also difficult times that tested our relationship; we must learn from them and work towards strengthening our Orthodox unity.

In the spirit of our Orthodox unity, we must learn from the past. We must always speak and act in ways that support the life and mission of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem in this region. We are the one, holy catholic and apostolic Church, and we are under a moral as well as a spiritual obligation to ensure that the identity and witness of the Orthodox Church in the Holy Land and the Middle East rests on the unshakable foundation of our Orthodox unity.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to His Excellency the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, for his material support for the restoration of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and for his unwavering support for the mission of

the Patriarchate.

We wish you, Mr. Chairman, and this seminar, every success in your deliberations, and we look forward to hearing about the fruits of your deliberations.

Christ is risen!"

From Secretariat-General

HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM RECEIVES A GROUP OF GREEK SUPERIOR MILITARY OFFICIALS

On Saturday morning, April 28/ May 11, 2019, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos received a 50-member group of Greek Superior Military Officials, with their pilgrimage guide Army-Priest George Apostolakidis.

On behalf of the group, former Minister of Public order and citizen protection and Chief of National Defense General Staff Mr. Xinofotis expressed his feelings for the pilgrimage experience they had with Fr. George and his thanks for His Beatitude's welcoming reception.

In reply, His Beatitude blessed the members of the group and stressed the importance of the Holiness of Jerusalem as it has been washed by the blood of our crucified Lord Jesus Christ and the importance of the Patriarchate as the guardian of such a holy land.

Paying their respects, the retired Military Officials received His Beatitude's blessing along with an icon of Theotokos and of the Holy Sepulchre.

From Secretariat-General

THE CEREMONY OF THE SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATES FOR ST. DEMETRIOS' SCHOOL GRADUATES

The ceremony of the school leaving certificates for the graduates of the Patriarchate School of St. Demetrios, took place on Friday afternoon of the Bright Week, April 20/ May 3, 2019.

The Patriarchate kept the Priest's School under that name too, until the year 1970, when it was moved to the building of the Holy Zion at the Monastery of the Holy Trinity.

In the year 1988, the memorable Patriarch of Jerusalem Diodoros founded in the same building of the School for Priests a Nursery School, a Primary School, a High School and Lyceum, with the name St. Demetrios, for the children of the Arab-speaking flock. Since then, the School has been operating successfully, offering a high standard education. This year, with the aforementioned ceremony the Patriarchate honoured the 15 Lyceum graduates.

The ceremony was honoured by the presence of H.H. Beatitude, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, Who was escorted by the Greek Consul Mrs. Katherine Tzima, the Most

Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the Dragouman and Chairman of the School Board Archimandrite Mattheos, the Dean Priest Issa Musleh, and Mr. Ode Kawas, the Financial Director of the Arab speaking School of the West Bank.

The ceremony began with the on stage presentation of the 15 graduates, with the prayer "Christ is risen" "Our Father" and the Palestinian and Greek anthems.

Then the School Manager Mr. Samir Zananiri spoke about the School activities during the school year 2018-2019 and about the building renovations at the classrooms. A Greek dance performance by three young pupils followed, and of three nursery school pupils, Palestinian traditional dances, then the addresses of the students' representatives in the Arabic, English and Greek languages, which referred to their education at this School of the Patriarchate in the City of Jerusalem, with thanksgiving to the Patriarch, their teachers and parents.

The ceremony was sealed by His Beatitude's address, which stressed the importance the Patriarchate attributes to the education of the youth in these schools and at the end of the address, the School offered His Beatitude a thank you board.

Finally, His Beatitude and the School Manager gave the School Leaving Certificates to the 15 graduates, wishing them every success and a prosperous career.

From Secretariat-General