

# **THE RUSSIAN ECCLESIASTICAL MISSION (MISSIA) CELEBRATES 170 YEARS IN JERUSALEM**

On Friday 7th /20th October 2017, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos received the Delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate, consisting of Metropolitans, Hieromonks, monks and laity, on the occasion of the 170<sup>th</sup> foundation anniversary of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission (MISSIA) in Jerusalem. The Holy Nunneries of Oreini, Mount of Olives, Gethsemane, Hebron, Tavitha and others, belong to this Spiritual Mission.

This Mission was warmly received by His Beatitude, who referred to the brotherly relations between the Moscow and Jerusalem Patriarchates, recalling the days when He was a deacon to the memorable Patriarch of Jerusalem Benedict and He also served the memorable Patriarch of Moscow Poimena, as a guest in His Patriarchal residence in the Mount of Olives. Congratulating them on the celebration of this event, His Beatitude said that this is important for the Church of Russia and Missia, but also for the Christian Community in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, which over the centuries has been pastored by the Jerusalem Patriarchate, which represents all Orthodox Churches and all Orthodox Christians.

The Jerusalem Patriarchate is a member of the mystical body of Christ, the Church, whose member is the Russian Church too, which has received the wound of schism in its bosom, for which we pray continuously and ardently.

We are glad on your arrival, because we share a common witness of the Orthodox Church in the Holy Land. We do not have claims over this land, but we have claims over its holiness and spirituality.

We are going to demonstrate this on our co-celebration of the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Sepulchre tonight, and at the Church of the Holy Trinity of MISSIA on Sunday.

Consequently, His Beatitude wished the Russian Mission every success on the purpose of its visit, with the hope of the Resurrection of Christ, by which the Church has been living all along as the ark of salvation, safeguarding our spiritual, national, linguistic and theological identity.

We are especially rejoicing on the presence of the exquisite Hierarchs of the Russian Church, with whom we once cooperated during their ministry in MISSIA.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# **HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS III VISITS HIS MAJESTY KING ABDULLAH II OF JORDAN**

On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> October 2017, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III visited His Majesty the King of Jordan Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein.

During their meeting, which was also attended by HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, advisor to the King in religious and cultural affairs, His Beatitude referred to the good historic relations between the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Hashemite Kingdom. He also thanked His Majesty for the support given to the Patriarchate and to His Beatitude's efforts in the preservation of the "Status Quo" rules, especially regarding the Old City of Jerusalem. Over centuries, these rules have ensured the peaceful co-existence of the religious communities of the Holy Land.

His Beatitude also outlined his upcoming shuttle tour, backed by all Church leaders of the Holy Land, which aims to mobilize support from Church leaders, governmental and international officials, to stand in the face of a newly proposed law in the Israeli parliament, which threatens the freedom of the Churches to deal with their properties. Additionally, the tour will mobilize the international community's support for overturning the wrongful decision of the Israeli District Court in what is known as the "Jaffa Gate" case, in which it ruled against the Patriarchate in favor of a right-wing settlor group.

His Majesty thanked His Beatitude for his active efforts in the promotion and preservation of peaceful co-existence of all faiths in the Holy Land. He also reassured His Beatitude of the steadfast mission of the Hashemite Kingdom to protect the Muslim and Christian holy shrines in Jerusalem from any threat of change.

From Secretariat-General

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# **HIS BEATITUDE RECEIVES PILGRIMS FROM CRETE, RUSSIA AND SERBIA**

On Monday 19th September/2nd October 2017, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos received a group of young people dressed in the traditional Cretan clothes under the Reverend Archimandrite Melchisedec Ampelikakis of the Holy Archdiocese of Arkalochorion, who sang traditional Cretan songs for His Beatitude and the Holy Shrines which pleased His Beatitude and the other present pilgrims in the reception hall from Greece, Russia and Serbia.

His Beatitude blessed all pilgrims for the continuation of their pilgrimage to the places of the incarnate appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# THE METROPOLITANS KISSAMOU & SELINOY AND NEW KRINI & KALAMARIA VISIT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday, 23rd August /5th September 2017, three groups of Greek pilgrims under the Most Reverend Metropolitan Amphilochios of Kissamou & Selinou of the Church of Crete and the Most Reverend Metropolitan Ioustinos of New Krini and Kalamaria visited the Patriarchate after the veneration and procession of the ascend of the icon of Theotokos.

This numerous and distinguished group was warmly received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, and spoke to them about the help they receive through their pilgrimage, a part of which is today's procession on the occasion of the apodosis of the Dormition of Theotokos.

The leaders of the pilgrims Most Reverend Metropolitans Amphilochios and Ioustinos thanked for this visit on behalf of the pilgrims.

Then the Most Reverend Metropolitan Amphilochios of Kissamou & Selinou offered His Beatitude a copy of the Gospel of the Holy Monastery Gonias, where the Great Synod of Orthodoxy was met in June 2016 and the Most Reverend Metropolitan Ioustinos of New Krini & Kalamaria offered a copy of the Gospel of his Metropolis, which was brought from Asia Minor by refugees.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# **THE ISRAELI MILITARY ADMINISTRATION OF KFAR-ETZION VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE**

On Monday afternoon, 22nd August/4th September 2017, the Israeli Military Administration of Bethlehem district – Kfar Etzion visited the Patriarchate under Mr. Dani Sandler who has served in it for seven years and is now leaving the force, and under his current successor in this service Mr. Moshe Avi, along with their escort Mr. Kfir Rozén and Mr. Cezar Margieh, who is responsible for the department of Christian Affairs of the Ministry of Religion in Israel, and Mr. Saliba, former Deputy Manager of the Old City of Jerusalem Police.

On this meeting there was a discussion on the matter of the permit for the unhindered access of the members of the congregation of the Patriarchate from the towns of Bethlehem, Beit Sahour and Beit Jalla to Jerusalem, the Patriarchate and the Holy Shrines and a mutual desire was expressed for the continuation of this cooperation for the benefit of the congregation and its cooperation with the Patriarchate.

On the occasion of this visit, His Beatitude offered Mr. Dani Sandler and his successor Mr. Moshe Avi a ceramic disc with a depiction of the city of Jerusalem.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# THE RUSSIAN CHURCH OUTSIDE RUSSIA (ROCOR) VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday, 11th/24<sup>th</sup> August 2017, His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos received at the Patriarchate the Most Reverend Metropolitan Hilarion , Head of the ROCOR (Russian Church Outside Russia), who was escorted by Bishops of that Church and the Most Reverend Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and all Germany, and Archimandrite Romanos, Head of the Monastery of the Olive Grove and Gethsemane, and gave them His blessing to participate at the Services of 15th August.

## **From Secretariat-General**

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# **HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS PERSONALLY RECEIVES METROPOLITAN THEOLOGOS OF SERRES**

On Monday 8th/21st August 2017, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, received the Most Reverend Metropolitan Theologos of Serres, who led a 50-member group of pilgrims from his God-saved Metropolis, alongside a small group of pilgrims from the Holy Metropolis of Thebes and Livadia.

His Beatitude welcomed these groups, underlining the importance of the strength derived from the pilgrimage-vision at the All-holy Shrines, which ensure the identity of our nation, the nation of Christ, of the Church, which is being unjustly fought against by the current forces, especially that of Globalization.

The Most Reverend Metropolitan of Serres thanked His Beatitude on behalf of the pilgrims for receiving them and for His words of wisdom and experience in the Church of Zion and the All-holy Shrines, to which He has dedicated His life since His early youth.

His Beatitude thanked the Metropolitan of Serres for his words, as well as for the hospitality the camp sites of his Holy Metropolis have offered the youngsters of the Patriarchate Congregation, and requested, if possible, to send students to the reorganized School of Holy Zion from his Metropolis.

**From Secretariat-General**



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# **THE VISIT OF THE MOST REV. METROPOLITAN IERONYMOS OF MOUANZA**

On Wednesday, 3rd/16th August 2017, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Ieronymos of Mouanza in Tanzania visited the Patriarchate, escorted by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, a Priest and a small group of pilgrims.

The Greek-speaking Metropolitan Ieronymos of Mouanza was warmly received by His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with Whom he conversed and exchanged gifts.

His Beatitude then blessed the Most Reverend Metropolitan Ieronymos for the continuation of his pilgrimage in the Holy Land.

## **From Secretariat-General**

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# THE NEW ABBESS OF THE RUSSIAN MONASTERY IN THE OF THE OLIVE GROVE ASKS THE BLESSING OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

On Monday 25th July / 7th August 2017, the new Abbess of the Nunnery named of the Olive Grove on the Mount of Olives, Nun Barbara, escorted by the representative of the Russian Orthodox Church Expatriates, which has been in communion for several years with the Moscow Patriarchate, and by her daughter in the flesh who is also a nun in that Monastery, visited His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, in order to receive His blessing on her election and appointing as the Abbess of the aforementioned Monastery, replacing the so far appointed Abbess who is gravely ill.

His Beatitude blessed the Abbess Nun Barbara and wished her a good service for the forty nuns of her Monastery in strictness and fatherly distinction and in the humility of Christ, because the devil fears Christ's Cross, as the Lord humbled Himself in it for the sake of our salvation.

**From Secretariat-General**

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# THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE OF SERBIA VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Monday evening, 11th/24th July 2017, the Minister of Defense of Serbia Mr. Aleksandar Vulin visited the Patriarchate, escorted by his associates and by the Deputy Head of the Embassy of Serbia in Israel Mr. Dejan Blagojevic.

His Excellency the Serbian Minister of Defense and his escort were received by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos together with Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos, Archdeacon Mark and Fr. Nikitas.

On this visit, Mr. Aleksandar Vulin expressed his joy for his visit to the Jerusalem Patriarchate for one more time.

His Beatitude referred to the relations of the Patriarchate with the Church of Serbia, to which Kosovo belongs, and which has been split into different parts by the mighty nations of this world, nevertheless, "the gates of Hades will not overpower it" according to the word of the Lord.

The Jerusalem Patriarchate, promoting the reconciliation and togetherness in the Holy Land, supports the ascending course of the Church and the nation of Serbia.

The Jerusalem Patriarchate keeps the Judaic and Christian shrines as places of worship of God, spiritual refreshment and regeneration of the people.

On this visit, the Minister of Defence of Serbia offered His

Beatitude the icon of St. Savvas of Serbia, while His Beatitude offered the Minister and icon of the Theotokos and a medal of the 2000 years of Christianity, as He also offered the members of his escort blessings from Jerusalem.

### **From Secretariat-General**

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