

# **PATRIARCHAL MESSAGE TO DR NIKOLAOS GOURAROS AS REGARDS THE CONFERENCE ON DIGITAL MEDIA AND ORTHODOX PASTORAL CARE**

Jerusalem, the 15<sup>th</sup> of April 2015

*To the Most Distinguished President of "St Maximus the Greek" Institute, and President of the PEMPTOUSIA online magazine, Dr Nikolaos Gouraros, beloved in the Lord child of our Mediocrity, by the grace and peace of God the Father.*

In response to your request set forth in an email dated 12 January 2015, the Patriarchate is represented at the First Conference on Digital Media and Orthodox Pastoral Care, taking place in Athens between 7-9 May 2015, by the General Manager of the Patriarchate's website, Dr Christos Nikolaou.

We hereby extend our congratulations to all participants in the Conference, invoking upon them the enlightenment of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrected from the dead, so that they be able to put contemporary online media to the service of His truth and that they proclaim His truth across the earth.

With Patriarchal and Paternal wishes and blessings from the All-holy and Life-giving Sepulcher.

In the Holy City of Jerusalem, 15 April 2015

Ardently Blesser in the Lord,

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of Jerusalem

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# EASTER MESSAGE OF HIS BEATITUDE PATRIARCH THEOPHILOS OF JERUSALEM

THEOPHILOS III

By God's Mercy Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem

and all Palestine,

to the entire flock of the Church

in grace and mercy and peace from the All-holy and Life-giving  
Sepulcher

of the Resurrected Christ.

*"Christ rose from the dead,*

*the commencement of the departed, the First-Born*

*of creation and Creator of all events*

*renovating in Him the cleansed nature of our genus.*

*Death, you shall no longer prevail. Because the Master of all*

*has overpowered your dominion".*

*(Sunday of third echos, of Invocation)*

Immersed in brilliance and praising God, the Church today

celebrates the glorious Resurrection of the Lord. It celebrates the fact that the Monogenes Son and Logos of God, Jesus Christ, our Incarnate Lord, who walked on earth, associated with humans and benefited them, He who offered Himself to His God and Father to be sacrificed by crucifixion for our sins, and was buried in this "new" tomb, *"where no one had ever been laid"* (John 19, 41) has risen from the dead.

Truly, Christ has risen. Hades and death had no authority over Him. They had not been able to detain Him. Hades thought he had received a mortal intended to be swallowed, and instead he met a God and human, he met a Theanthropos, a God-man, the Son of God and the Son of the Virgin. Hades was deceived and embittered, as God the Father brought His Incarnate Son back from the dead. Jesus Christ broke the shackles of Hades, was resurrected and rose over the earth, carrying within Him His incarnate human nature, making Adam and his whole race alive.

The Resurrected Lord robbed Hades of the dead. The descent of the Saviour into Hades had been foretold in divine economy by the decapitated John the Baptist. Christ liberated the prisoners of Hades. The darkness of Hades' torture and pain He transformed into light, joy and abundance of Paradise. Those were the first He received into His Kingdom after the thief he had pronounced a citizen of Heaven. *"Christ stood before those in Hades and called to them, come back to Paradise"*.

In this mystery as in other mysteries of the Bible, God had called on His Angels as accomplices. An Angel had removed the stone that sealed the Tomb. An Angel proclaimed this unprecedented mystery to the Myrophorae who thought He was dead and *"came to anoint Him with spices"* (Mark 16, 1). Having received word of this, His disciples *"saw the empty sepulcher and the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes but in a place by itself"* (John 20, 7).

Upon looking at the empty sepulcher, in spite of the angelic

vision and the news of the resurrection, sorrow, terror, wonder and ecstasy conquered their souls, *“for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead”* (John 20, 9). Their sorrow suddenly turned to joy, when *“the Lord said to them “Greetings”* (Matthew 28, 8); and when they were together *“with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”* (John 20, 19); when *“He walked with Luke and Cleopas and blessed their bread”* (Luke 28, 8); and when *“After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days”* (Acts 1, 3).

When He finished *“the work given to Him by His father to do”* (John 17, 4), the crucified and resurrected Lord ascended to Heaven, carrying with Him our human nature He had received during His Incarnation, and sat on the right of the Father and became god by grace.

From there he sent His Disciples His Holy Spirit. With the light and power of this Spirit, these twelve men went on to preach His truth across the world. They became the instruments through which Christ founded His Church in the world. He founded the Church as the beginning of His Kingdom. Church, as His body, performs on earth His salvaging work. The Church teaches, sanctifies, heals, comforts, feeds the poor, liberates the prisoners, heals the ill, pacifies, alleviates and relieves human pain, prevails over the world and death. Just like Christ *“had suffered these things to enter into His glory”* (Luke 24, 26), so will the Church *“must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God”* (Acts, 14, 22).

For this reason the persecuted Church prays for its persecutors, holds its peace when provoked, tolerates when slandered, teaches with its words, sanctifies through its sacraments and pours oil and wine into the wounds of humans; attends to their spiritual needs without neglecting the material ones. It offers the bread of life for the forgiveness

of sins and the eternal life, but also provides the daily bread to those made poor and deprived by the unjust economic system of this deceiving century.

The Church of Sion performs this salvaging work of Christ on the sites of His appearance, indeed the land of His crucifixion and resurrection. These sites it guards as witness to His presence on earth. From these lands, especially the Horrendous Golgotha and the Hallowed Sepulcher wherein the Lord resurrected, we generously offer Patriarchal wishes and blessings to the entire flock in Israel, the Palestinian State, Jordan and Qatar, welcoming you, pious pilgrims surrounding the Holy Sepulcher and concelebrating with us this redeeming and brilliant night, as we supplicate for mercy, life, health, progress, wellbeing and salvation on your behalf, exclaiming the joyful salutation "Christ Has Risen!"

In the Holy City of Jerusalem **EASTER 2015**

Ardently Blesser in the Lord

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of Jerusalem

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# **MESSAGE OF H.B. THEOPHILOS III, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM, ON CHRISTMAS 2014**

Monday, 22 December 2014.

*Today the angels in the sky dance*

*and rejoice.*

*And the whole universe delights*

*in the birth of the Lord and Saviour in Bethlehem.*

*Because every fallacy of idols now ceases*

*and Christ shall rule for all time.*

(Nativity Verses for Christmas Procession)

The Orthodox Church of Christ celebrates, today and for all twelve merry days of the *Dodekaorton*, an event miraculous and sublime, mystic and paradoxical, an event transcending every human sense and perception. It experiences, asserts and proclaims for its members and the entire world to hear an event initiated by God in heaven and offering great joy to men on earth.

This event rests on the choice of the benign and beneficent God to reunite Himself with His creation, man: man deceived by the devil and drawn away from Him through sin, misled and wandering, lethally wounded and damaged.

For this divine and salvaging work, according to the Apostle Paul, "*when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship*". (Gal., 4, 4). God sent forth His Son and "accepted man" (Rom., 15-7). Upon the choice of God the Father, His Age-Old Logos and Son was incarnate, became human through the Holy Spirit and the Ever-Virgin Mary. According to the Evangelist of love, "*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us*" (John 1, 14). The fleshless Logos was incarnate. The ever-virgin Mary bore God in the flesh. God in His power elevated her to Theotokos,

Mother of God. Through His incarnation, the Son of God also became the Son of man and revealed himself to us not as god-bearing man but as flesh-bearing God, as Theanthropos, as the new Adam of grace, carrying within Him His dual nature, both divine and human, in a single hypostasis. This, according to Father Cyril of Alexandria, does not mean that *“the nature of the Word was transformed into flesh, nor that the Word was made human of soul and body, but that the Word united Himself as flesh carrying soul and mind, thus indescribably became man and served as Son of man”*.

This mystery of man's reception by God did not happen seemingly but truly. Christ received the human nature in its entirety, humanity in all its poorness and weakness. Christ marked the beginning of time. He was born as man of the ever-virgin Mary *“when the days were accomplished that she should be delivered”* (Luke 2, 6) during the rule of Ceasar Octavian Augustus in Bethlehem, Judea (Luke 2, 1-4).

Taking share in every human manifestation, even following death by the cross, through which He reached the Resurrection, Christ was born in a cavern, lay in a manger and was wrapped in cloth, guarded from Herod's murderous mania not by force but through escape to Egypt.

In his single hypostasis and dual nature, Christ was glorified by angels in the sky of the blessed Village of the Shepherds, with the hymn *“Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace”* (Luke 2, 14). He was venerated by shepherds and the wise men but He was also persecuted by Herod and fled to Egypt.

Today, just like then, men's attitude towards Jesus Christ differs. By some, as were the angels, shepherds and the wise men, Christ is believed, venerated and glorified; by others, as was Herod, He is rejected and hunted. Christ is persecuted, His message on earth reproached – the message of mutual friendship, peace and reconciliation. Those believing in Him

are persecuted too, Christians and other innocent men, all those, regardless of faith, called by Christ "the least of His brothers". Denial of Christ's figure and work is the cause of violent and hideous crimes in various regions of the earth, Syria, Iraq, Gaza and elsewhere in the Middle East.

From the holy Cavern where Christ was born, and from the manger where he lay, and from the Basilica of the Nativity, guarded through the centuries by the Church of Sion as the apple of the eye, we send forth festive greetings for the Dodekaorton, the gospels of joy and peace of the Lord of peace, to the flock entrusted by God to us, the flock residing in the Holy Land and everywhere across the earth, and to pious pilgrims visiting the holy shrines, wishing for everyone the blessing, grace and reinforcement of God Incarnate, born in the flesh by the Ever-Virgin.

In the Holy City of Bethlehem, CHRISTMAS 2014

Ardently Blesser in the Lord,

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of Jerusalem

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**H. B. THE PATRIARCH OF  
JERUSALEM PERFORMS MEMORIAL  
SERVICE FOR THE LATE  
METROPOLITAN VOLODYMYR OF**



# KIEV

On the morning of Monday, the 24<sup>th</sup> of June/7<sup>th</sup> of July 2014, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, in the framework of a divine liturgy commemorating the birth of John the Baptist at the monastic church of Sts Constantine and Helen, performed a memorial service for the repose of the soul of Metropolitan Volodymyr of Kiev and All Ukraine, who passed away on Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> of July 2014.

On the dormition of the late Metropolitan Volodymyr of Kiev, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem sent the following letter of condolences to Patriarch Kyril of Russia, see link: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2014/07/05/7922>

as well as the following letter of condolences to Metropolitan Onuphrius of Chernovtsi and Bukovina, locum tenens of Kiev and all Ukraine:

*To the Most Reverend Locum Tenens, Metropolitan **Onuphrius** of Chernovtsi and Bukovina, our beloved brother in the Lord, co-officiating with Our Mediocrity.*

*With great sorrow we have been informed of the dormition of the grey-haired Prelate Volodymyr, the late Metropolitan of Kiev and all Ukraine, our dearest co-officiating brother.*

*Profoundly participating in the mourning of the pious flock shepherded for years by the departed, we earnestly pray to our immortal king, Christ, who holds power over the dead and the living, for the repose of his soul in the land of the righteous and for the consolation of Your Holiness personally and of the entire Christ-loving people of the Holy Bishopric of Kiev and all Ukraine.*

*In the Holy City of Jerusalem, 22 June 2014.*

*Beloved brother in Christ,*

***THEOPHILOS III***

*Patriarch of Jerusalem*

**From the Secretariat-General**

<http://youtu.be/BPHy1IWMW6A>



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**H. BEATITUDE'S CONDOLENCE  
MESSAGE TO PATRIARCH OF  
MOSCOW FOR THE DORMITION OF  
METROPOLITAN OF KIEV  
VOLODYMYR.**

Holy City of Jerusalem, Saturday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014

His Holiness Kyrill,

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia,

Moscow

The Russian Federation

Your Holiness, dear Brother and Concelebrant in the Lord,

We have learnt that His Eminence Volodymyr, Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine, fell asleep in the Lord this morning. We knew that he had been suffering for a long time from debilitating illness, and he has always been in Our prayers. We remember his visits as a pilgrim to the Holy Land over the years, and We hold in special affection Our time with him when We were in Kyiv for the 1025<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Baptism of the Rus' last year.

Metropolitan Volodymyr was a bishop of deep devotion to his Church and his people, and a faithful pastor in challenging times. He lived his archpastoral calling with humility and prayerfulness, and was an inspiration to many younger monks, priests, and bishops. A leader of stature has passed from among us, and We know that his people will miss him very much.

May Metropolitan Volodymyr rest with all the saints, and may his memory be eternal.

With deep condolences and with fraternal love in Christ, We remain,

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of Jerusalem

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# THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM CONDEMNS TERRORIST ACTS IN VOLGOGRAD

On Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> of December 2013, His Beatitude Theophilos, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, sent His Holiness Cyril, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, the following epistle:

*Your Holiness **Cyrl**, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, in Christ the Lord, dearest brother and co-officiator of Our Mediocrity. Brotherly embracing Your Holiness in Christ, we gladly address You.*

*Dwelling in the holy Jerusalem and the Horrendous Golgotha, and serving the Lord's Life-giving Sepulcher, already gazing towards the holy Bethlehem in order to celebrate the feast of the Nativity in flesh of the Angel of the great will of God, the Lord of peace, in the plain Cavern and the Village of the Manger, it is with profound sorrow and sacred indignation that we learned of two atrocious terrorist attacks in Volgograd, South Russia, which caused the death of three hundred peaceful citizens, our innocent fellow humans, and severe or deathly injuries of tenths of others.*

*We categorically and irrevocably condemn these criminal and atrocious acts, and extend our profound condolences to Your Holiness and the relatives of the victims, while praying for the repose of the souls of those murdered, and the speedy recovery of those injured.*

*Upon this we embrace Your erudite Holiness from the Holly and Divine Cavern where Christ was miraculously born of the Virgin.*

*In the Holy City of Bethlehem, 18 December 2013.*

*Of your Embraced Holiness*

*Your Dearest Brother in Christ*

***THEOPHILOS III***

*Patriarch of Jerusalem*

In the letter, the Patriarch condemns the terrorist attacks which took place in the city of Volgograd, Russia, extending condolences to the innocent victims.

On the same day, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem sent the following epistle to His Excellency the President of the Russian Republic, Mr Vladimir Putin, similarly condemning these atrocious acts and extending condolences to the innocent victims:

*Your Excellency,*

*Dwelling in Jerusalem and already gazing towards Bethlehem for the feast of the Nativity in flesh of the Angel of the great will of God, the Lord of peace, we learned with profound sorrow and sacred indignation of the terrorist attacks against innocent civilians in Volgograd, South Russia, aimed at obstructing the organization of the Winter Olympic Games.*

*Extending our profound condolences to Your Honoured Excellency and the relatives of the innocent victims, we pray from the All-holy and Life-giving Sepulcher that the souls of our three hundred murdered fellow humans rest in peace, that the tenths of injured at these atrocious and condemnable crimes recover speedily, and that the citizens of the pious country of Russia be protected from acts of people who hate peace and have no respect for the value of human life.*

*Upon this, we beseech for Your Excellency the grace and protection of the All-holy and Life-giving Sepulcher towards the unhindered performance of Your lofty government services.*

*In the Holy City of Bethlehem, 18 December 2013.*

*For Your Honoured Excellency*

*Fervently praying to the Lord*

***THEOPHILOS III***

*Patriarch of Jerusalem*

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2013/2<sup>nd</sup> of January 2014, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem sent an epistle condemning the aforementioned acts and reassuring for the victims, to the Most Reverend Metropolitan of the city of Volgograd, as follows:

*The Most Reverend Metropolitan German of Volgograd and Kamyshin, our brother in Christ and co-officiator of Our Mediocrity, we embrace in Christ the Lord.*

*Dwelling in Jerusalem and gazing towards the holy Bethlehem, which is by no means least among the rulers of Judah, in order to celebrate the Metropolis of all feasts in the sacred and divine Cavern and the village of the Manger, where the Lord of peace, our Lord Jesus Christ, was born, it is with profound sorrow and sacred indignation that we learned of the two recent terrorist attacks against the Metropolis of your most dear and erudite Reverence, claimed the lives of three hundred innocent human beings, its spiritual children, and severely wounded tenths of others among them.*

*We categorically condemn these atrocious acts, and extend our deep condolences to the innocent victims, praying that those murdered rest in peace in the country of the living with the*

*saints and the righteous, and that those unjustly and severely wounded recover speedily.*

*We embrace your Reverence from the All-holy and Divine Cavern where Christ was miraculously born of the Virgin.*

*In the Holy City of Bethlehem, 20 December 2013.*

*Your Dear Brother in Christ*

***THEOPHILOS III***

*Patriarch of Jerusalem*

**From the Secretariat-General**

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# **MESSAGE OF HIS HOLIEST BEATITUDE, THEOPHILOS III, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM, CHRISTMAS 2013**

*Behold the Virgin, begetting God in flesh,  
in the city of Bethlehem, inside the Cavern,  
the entire universe has been enriched,*

*rejoice and dance,*

*associate with servants*

– *for the Lord has come near everyone.*

(Matins Oikos 20, December)

The one, holy, catholic and apostolic Orthodox Church of Christ, across the world, celebrates today a miraculous and sublime event which transcends every human intellect and concept.

It celebrates the event of the birth in flesh of the Son and Word of God, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, incarnate and made man from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary.

This event, God the Father had wanted since centuries ago and for it He had prepared men through His holy prophets and *"the Law as guardian"* (Gal. 3, 24) in His Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit.

*"But when the fullness of time had come"* (Gal.4, 4) during the reign of Caesar Octavius Augustus, he revealed so in this very city, Bethlehem, *"which is by no means least among the rulers of Judah"*(Matt. 2, 6), and in this plain cavern.

Here, in this land, God the Father had deigned that His hitherto fleshless and timeless Son be born in flesh and appear in time. Here came the Magi from the East, led by a bright star, and saw an infant in the arms of the Virgin and worshipped Him, offering Him their presents of *'gold, frankincense and myrrh'* (Matt. 2, 11). The Shepherds worshipped Him too, those living in the fields near the town of the Shepherds. Here too the angelic hymn of peace was heard from the heavens: *"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests"* (Luke 2, 14).

And this happened because God, who had made man, never ceased to love and seek him, even when man was distant from Him. God sought man in his complex, endless and pointless philosophical quests, and in his sinful and pernicious achievements, but He did not decline him; instead, according to the god-bearing saint Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, *"He appropriated humanity and, without confusion, incorporated flesh and received man"* (On the Right Faith, PG 76, 1181D) during the



mission in the world and the incarnation of His Son.

Willingly executing the will of His Father, Christ, *“though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich”* (II Cor. 8,9). Being a citizen on the earth and associating with men as Theanthropos, God-Man, perfect God and perfect man, he benefited them in many different ways. He offered charity to the needy and the poor. He incorporated our human nature and elevated it to the heavens through the Cross, the Resurrection and the Ascension.

The Church, His holy body, through the effusion of the Holy Spirit, carries on His sanctifying and philanthropic work on earth. Through the centuries, the Church has been endlessly consecrating its members, cultivating, humanizing and adorning the customs of men, supporting the sacred institution of family, feeding the poor; today it sustains in deed the victims of the financial crisis and invites humanity to resolution and reconciliation, peace and justice, philanthropy, love and benefaction.

Even more so, the Church of Jerusalem, the first to evangelize the birth of Christ, prays from this Cavern and this Constantinian Basilica, of which it has proved a faithful guardian through the centuries, for peace and goodness in the entire world, for the end of acts of violence in the Middle East and elsewhere, for the cessation of terrorist activities, for respect of religious freedom and worship, for the liberation of the abducted hierarchs and nuns of the sister Church of Antioch and for the reconciliation and unification of all.

In the Holy City of Bethlehem, **CHRISTMAS 2013.**

Fervently praying to the Lord,

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of Jerusalem



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# SECOND OFFICIAL RESPONSE OF HIS BEATITUDE PATRIARCH THEOPHILOS III OF JERUSALEM TO HIS BEATITUDE JOHN X OF ANTIOCH CONCERNING THE JURISDICTION OF THE EMIRATE OF QATAR

Translated by Theodoros Pritsis, M.Div., Th.M.

Reference No.

**1020**

Your Beatitude, Most Eminent Patriarch John of the Great City of God, Antioch and all the East, Our most beloved brother and concelebrant of Our Humility in Christ our God. We embrace Your Most Beloved Beatitude in the Lord and We greet You with exceeding joy.

We have recently received Your Beatitude's letter (Reference No. 396/2013) dated October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013, which conveys to Us the opinion of Your most Holy and Sacred Synod regarding Us and

the decision of Our Holy and Sacred Synod to elect and ordain Archbishop Makarios of Qatar. We have read your letter with great attention, together with Our Holy and Sacred Synod, and have studied it closely.

We gladly bring forth Our best possible response, and on behalf of the Holy and Sacred Synod, first desire to inform You that We deeply share in the difficulties, adversities and trials of the sister Church of Antioch and of the Syrian people, which we have shown through our long cooperation with Your predecessor, the ever-memorable Patriarch Ignatios of Antioch, in the meetings of the Primate of the Senior Patriarchates of the Middle East in Jordan and Cyprus, and their visit to the European Union. We have also shown Our active support for the displaced Syrian people and our brethren in the Zaatar refugee camp in Jordan, and by condemning the abduction of the two hierarchs, Your consanguineous brother Metropolitan Paul of Aleppo and Alexandretta and hierarch of the Syriac-Jacobite Church, Metropolitan Grigorios of Aleppo.

The issue at hand, which should not have been an issue to begin with, is that the sister Church of Antioch has an underlying problem with the election and ordination of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Qatar. We have extensively explained the reasons for the canonical presence and pastoral activity of our Patriarchate in the Emirate of Qatar in Our response letter to You (reference no. 213) dated March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013. So allow Us not to repeat to You the same explanation in this present letter.

In this present letter of response it is enough for Us to even acknowledge the concern raised by the Church of Antioch at the expense of the Church of Jerusalem. We never went and protested to any other sister Orthodox Church, but responded to the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, sending Our own delegation, which met with both Your

delegation and that of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece.

In this meeting, which was under the auspices of the then Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Mr. Kostas Tsiaras, and the Director of the Department of Ecclesiastical and Religious Affairs, Mr. Charalambos Manassis, statements and comparisons were presented by both the Patriarchate of Antioch and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem regarding the canonical jurisdiction of the Emirate of Qatar, and no agreement was reached by anyone concerning the issue. The delegation of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem suggested that a committee of Canon Law professors be assembled, which would study the entire issue and decide.

We now suggest dialogue so this issue can be resolved. However, in the instance that Your Beatitude does not accept dialogue, as You have told Us in Your recent letter, and reach a point where You do not recognize the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, We are very saddened because this act will not only break up the in-Christ communion and unity of Our two neighboring sister Churches, but also the entire Orthodox Church. Nevertheless, in such a possible deplorable situation, We will not cease in praying for the sister Church of Antioch and will continue to observe the communion of Christ-like love.

Awaiting Your positive response to the formation of a committee for the study of the entire issue, We send Our embrace in-Christ from the All-Holy and Life-Giving Tomb, We remain,

In the Holy City of Jerusalem, the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2013

To Your Honored Beatitude

Beloved Brother in the Lord,

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of Jerusalem

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# **CONDOLENCES NOTE OF THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM ON THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT GLAFKOS CLERIDES**

(Jerusalem, 17 November 2013).

*Your Excellency,*

With great sorrow, yet with equal sorrow in Christ who has vanquished death by the cross, we communicate through this Patriarchal Letter of Ours with Your esteemed and distinguished Excellency in order to offer our condolences to You and Your respectable government as well as to the entire afflicted people of Cyprus, on the demise of the former President of the Republic of Cyprus, the ever-memorable Glafkos Clerides.

The former President, who departed full of days, is recognized the world over as a fighting Greek Cypriot patriot, a skilled and perceptive political leader, the man who initiated the

accession of the Republic of Cyprus into the European Union, uncompromisingly working for its reunion, and offering in deed his support to our long spoken of Patriarch of Jerusalem.

We share the grief of the people of Cyprus on the death of this esteemed and popular President, praying from the All-Holy and Life-Giving Sepulcher that God our Lord rest his soul in the land of the living, and that Your Excellency be enhanced to successfully complete Your struggle towards a just resolution of the political problem facing the martyric Great Island of Cyprus.

In the Holy City of Jerusalem, the 17<sup>th</sup> of November.

Of Your Honoured Excellency,  
Fervently Praying to the Lord,

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of Jerusalem

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# **PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM CONGRATULATES ARCHBISHOP OF CYPRUS**

By His letter, number 802 and dated 7<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> of September, His Beatitude Theophilos, Our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, congratulates His Eminence Chrysostomos, Archbishop of Cyprus, on his recent Synodic Encyclical (see link: <http://www.churchofcyprus.org.cy/article.php?articleID=3550> )

which was read out in Churches during the divine Liturgy of Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2013, upon the start of the new school year 2013-4. Stressed in the Encyclical is the absolute need to preserve our Greek Orthodox identity and Greek language in order to maintain our creative and dignified life and presence in the process of history.

This is an excerpt from the letter of His Beatitude Theophilos:

*[...] With great interest we watched on television the Synodic Encyclical of Your dearest and erudite Beatitude, read out in the holy churches of the Archbishopric of the Church of Cyprus, on the occasion of the beginning of the new school year 2013-4.*

*The Encyclical points out the danger of the attempted effort to replace, in the new syllabi of the Cyprus Ministry of Education, the lesson of Religious Education with Religiology; to emphasize the Cypriot idiom over the Greek language; to develop only the democratic attitude of students, and silence the values of our Christian Tradition, which preserve our Greek-Orthodox identity and hold our blessed nation in unbreakable cohesion and unity.*

*Warmly we congratulate Your Beatitude on this brave pastoral Ethnarchic Encyclical and wish You a wealth of support from above over many years to come, in order to complete the work of rebirth and renewal You have initiated in the Church of Cyprus, and to continue Your contribution to the just geographical unification of the suffering island of Cyprus, now divided by the Turkish occupation. [...]*

*Your dear brother in Christ*

**THEOPHILOS III**

Patriarch of Jerusalem