THE WIFE OF RUSSIAN PRIME MINISTER DMITRY MEDVEDEV VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

At 20:00 pm of Tuesday, the 16th/29th of March 2016, H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, upon His return from Cyprus, received Ms Svetlana Medvedeva, wife to the Russian Prime Minister Mr Dmitry Medvedev. Ms Medvedeva was accompanied by a small entourage.

The Patriarch expressed joy on the visit and content on the harmonious relations between the Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Moscow and the Russian Government, that have borne Russia's significant financial contribution to the conservation of the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, now underway.

Reference was also made to the impending restoration works on the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulchre by the NTUA, in relation to which a wish was made for financial aid by pious pilgrims.

From the Secretariat-General

httpv://youtu.be/Fri-u-9GdI0



THE GOVERNOR OF MISSOURI

VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On the morning of Saturday, the 13th/26th of March 2016, Mr Jay Nixon, the Governor of Missouri, U.S., visited the Patriarchate. He was accompanied by associates of his.

The Governor and his entourage were received by H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the presence of Hagiotaphite Fathers.

At the meeting, Patriarch Theophilos spoke of the relations between the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the United States, making special reference to His participation, as Archimandrite, in the meeting between the late Patriarch Diodoros and President Clinton; also, to welcoming, as Patriarch, President Bush at the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and former President Jimmy Carter at the Patriarchate.

Further, His Beatitude talked of the Patriarchate's peacemaking work, that contributes to the coexistence of adherents to three religions, as Jerusalem remains a city for two peoples and three religions.

Patriarch Theophilos also spoke of the study conducted on the restoration of the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulchre, 200 years after its erection by donations of pious pilgrims.

Mr Nixon thanked the Patriarch for sharing with him thoughts and positions, which he pledged to utilize for the support of Christians in the Holy Land.

From the Secretariat-General

httpv://youtu.be/2kat46bapSY



DOXOLOGY ON THE NATIONAL DAY OF THE 25TH OF MARCH 1821 AT THE CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

At 10.45 of Friday, the $12^{th}/25^{th}$ of March 2016, Doxology was held at the katholikon of the Church of the Resurrection on the national day of the 25^{th} of March 1821.

Doxology was led by H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, having as concelebrants Hagiotaphite Primates and Hieromonks, Hierodeacons and monks in the presence of the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis, members of the Greek parish and the Rum-Orthodox flock in Jerusalem.

Doxology included a prayer of gratitude to God for His help in the liberation of our nation from merciless slavery, and supplication for the repose of the souls of those heroically fallen during the years of the Revolution.

On the conclusion of Doxology, the Patriarchal Entourage returned to the Patriarchates, where the Patriarch addressed clerics and laymen in Greek.

"A bottomless source of inspiration for the revolutionary fighters of 1821", His Beatitude said, "were admittedly the spiritual greatness of Hellenism, especially of the Christian Orthodox Faith, as proclaimed by the great figures of 1821, Germanos of Old Patras, Kolokotronis, Makrigiannis and several others".

"We are obliged", the Patriarch added, "to underline this

today, as contemporary perception, namely of the new order, of the divine and natural moral values, e.g. freedom and respect of human rights, is permeated by motives of anarchy and worship of created things".

"The Greek Revolution of 1821, for the faith and the homeland, has proven that man does not live for his mortal flesh, but instead for the unsurpassed grandeur of his godlike soul. "What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?" (Matthew 16, 26).

The Patriarch closed His speech by referring to the contribution of the Church of Jerusalem through the participation of it faithful children, both clerics and laymen, in the fight for freedom.

The Greek Consul-General went on to read the message of the President of the Greek Republic, Mr Pavlopoulos. Here follows an excerpt:

"The unparalleled example of our ancestors the Fighters, of 1821, must inspire and guide us for all time. Even more so during this current historical occasion for our Homeland. All Greeks, both those living in Greece and those who make part of the thriving Hellenism abroad, owe, now more than ever, to create an unbreakable front of joint responsibility and coordinated actions, so that we may successfully deal with the new challenges of the times and secure a better future for Greece and the new generations of Greeks. Now is the time when Hellenism must take action, united, according to its nature and historical destination, making the best of the immense potential and the excellent quality of human resources and of the Greeks of the Diaspora".

The Greek President also referred to the huge financial and social problem facing Greece today in consequence of the unprecedented flow of refugees, calling upon the country's European partners to remember that the center of Europe is not

the common currency but Man himself. "We ask", said Mr Pavlopoulos, "of the European Union to remember its principles and deal with the Refugee problem in accordance with its political and legal civilization, isolating those extreme voices within its midst that advocate exactly the opposite choices and are guided by anti-humanitarian and anti-democratic phobic syndromes".

The event closed with a reception hosted by the Greek Consulate.

From the Secretariat-General

httpv://youtu.be/faac5ofJWus



THE NAME DAY OF H.B. THEOPHILOS, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

On Tuesday, the 9th/22nd of March 2016, the Name Day of H.B. Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, was celebrated in commemoration of St Theophilos, one of the Holy Martyrs who had suffered a martyr's death in the year 320 AD, during the reign of Licinius, in Lake Sebaste, Pontus.

A' Vespers

The feast began in the form of Parrhesia through the reading of the Ninth Hour at the Monastic Church of Sts Constantine and Helen, followed by procession to the Church of the Resurrection, censing and veneration at the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulchre.

Vespers was then held at the katholikon, upon which the Patriarchal Entourage returned to the Patriarchates.

B' On feast-day

On the morning of Tuesday, the 9th/22nd of March 2016, the Patriarchal Entourage walked to the Church of the Resurrection where the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts was led by Patriarch Theophilos, having as concelebrants: Metropolitans Kyriakos of Nazareth and Benedict of Philadelphia, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Arabic-speaking presbyters, Archdeacon Evlogios and Hierodeacons Anastasios and Markos. Archimandrite Aristovoulos sang, aided by novice Georgios Papanikolaou, in the presence of the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem and several pilgrims.

The divine Liturgy was followed by Doxology.

The service was broadcast live over the internet on the Patriarchate's Radio Station.

Upon return to the Patriarchates, His Beatitude was addressed by the Elder Secretary-General, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, and the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem.

In his speech, Mr Zacharoudiakis conveyed the unwavering support of the Greek Government to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, declaring their acknowledgement, appreciation and respect for the Patriarch's tireless efforts and multidimensional contribution, and underling the absolute confidence with which He is invested. "The unprecedented change and rapid developments of our times", said the Consul-General, "especially in the troubled region of the Middle East, project once more the Rum-Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem as a fulcrum of modesty, prudence and stability that, by means of its moral and spiritual stature, contributes to the fight against blind fanaticism and to the defence of

justice, the strengthening of understanding and solidarity as well as to the achievement of progress in the efforts towards peace in the suffering Middle East".

Mr Sami Halasa, Minister of Public Works of the Government of Jordan, and representative of the king of Jordan, also addressed the Patriarch.

Moreover, Metropolitans, Patriarchal Commissioners, representatives of Communities and of sister Orthodox Churches and of the Arabic-speaking flock paid tribute to Patriarch Theophilos.

Extending thanks to those honouring Him, the Patriarch urged everyone to emulate the virtue of the saints in the face of contemporary persecutors of the Church of Christ, who rage against the faithful members of His Church and their innocent fellow citizens. "Lets us therefore pray to the saints", concluded the Patriarch, "so that by their mediation we provide testament of the love and forbearance of Christ our Saviour, and we become worthy of peace and concord during these days of the holy Forty-Day Lent before reaching the glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ".

The festive gathering was followed by meatless monastic lunch.

From the Secretariat-General

httpv://youtu.be/ozEJiGkvl3w

httpv://youtu.be/P09L83ebPRc

httpv://youtu.be/J3EAyNoXzbo



SCAFFOLD INSTALLATION FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE AEDICULA OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

On Tuesday, 9th/22nd of March 2016, the feast-day of the Forty Martyrs who had suffered a martyr's death in Lake Sebaste, Pontus, and the name-day of His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, the scaffold required for the protection, reinforcement and restoration of the Aedicula of the Holy Sepulchre was attached to the structure in accordance with the report conducted by the NTUA's Scientific Team under the supervision and coordination of professor Antonia Moropoulou.

On the conclusion of the divine Liturgy for the Presanctified Gifts and the Doxology for His Beatitude's name-day at the katholikon of the Church of the Resurrection, a modest ceremony took place in front of the Aedicula's southwest wall. The ceremony included the presentation of the scaffold tower by His Beatitude, the Custos of the Holy Land, and the Armenian Patriarch, in the presence of Ms Moropoulou, the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Zacharoudiakis, the Head of Christian Affairs at the Israeli Ministry of Religions, Mr Cesar Margie, and all Hagiotaphite Fathers.

During the ceremony, Patriarch Theophilos addressed guests in English,
see:
https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2016/03/22/21731

and went on to extend warm thanks to ATTICA BANK and in particular its Chairman, Mr Ioannis Gamvrilis, for courteously offering the amount of 50.000 euros for the purchase and

installation of the scaffolding.

At the end of the ceremony, the Patriarchal Entourage proceeded to the Patriarchate for the celebrations of His Beatitude's name-day.

From the Secretariat-General

httpv://youtu.be/6IyqC2Jgkkg



REMARKS AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE SACRED AEDICULE IN THE CHURCH OF THE ANASTASIS

22 March 2016

Your Excellency Father Pierrebattista, Your Beatitude Patriarch Nourhan, Esteemed Members of the Project Team, Your Eminences, Your Graces,

Beloved Members of our Respective Brotherhoods, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we mark the format beginning of the project for the restoration of the Sacred Aedicule in the Church of the Anastasis. This project is being carried out by a team of specialists from the National Technical University of Athens under the supervision of Professor Moropoulou, whose important report has recently been completed and published. This report was submitted to the three Communities here in Jerusalem in

February of this year, and the work can now begin;

We wish to acknowledge the consensus that the three Communities have reached so that this project could proceed. We are grateful to the Custos, Father Pierrebattista, and to the Armenian Patriarch, Patriarch Nourhan, for their commitment to this work. In so doing, the three Communities, which are the historic guardians and servants of the Holy Places, are fulfilling the historic responsibility that has been entrusted to us by the Status Quo, the provisions of which have been honored both in the process of producing the report and in the renovation work that is about to start.

For the first time in over two centuries, the Sacred Aedicule will receive urgent restoration and renovation. This restoration will secure this Holy Place for generations yet to come for all those pilgrims and people of good will who come to this church to seek spiritual renewal. During the entire process of renovation, the Holy Tomb will remain accessible to pilgrims without disruption, and for this careful planning and execution we owe the project team a huge debt of gratitude. The Holy Tomb must always be open to all.

May God bless this work and those whose responsibility it is to carry it out, and may the renovation of the Holy Tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ be a beacon of hope for a hurting world.

Thank you.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

METROPOLITAN KYRIAKOS OF NAZARETH AND ARCHBISHOP METHODIOS OF TABOR OFFER GIFTS TO THE PATRIARCH

On Monday, the 8th/21st of March 2016, the Most Reverend Kyriakos, Metropolitan of Nazareth, and His Eminence Methodios, Archbishop of Tabor, visited Patriarch Theophilos at the Patriarchate.

At the meeting, Metropolitan Kyriakos offered the Patriarch a fine Primatial cane, whilst Archbishop Methodios offered a fine Primatial staff with enamel carvings, on the occasion of His Beatitude's name-day. Upon the offer of gifts, the Primates wished the Patriarch many happy returns in health, for the benefit of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and the Patriarchate.

From the Secretariat-General



SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY AT THE

PATRIARCHATE

On Sunday, the $7^{th}/20^{th}$ of March 2016, the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the Patriarchate commemorated the restoration of the icons by pious emperors Theodora Augusta and Michael in the year 843 AD following more than a century of merciless persecution against them.

Through the restoration of the holy icons, the Church attests to the incarnation, humanization and birth in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and to His appearance amongst men. According to the Fathers of the Church, denying the icons equals denying the presence of Jesus on earth.

A' Vespers

This event was celebrated by the Church with the reading of the Ninth Hour at 2:00 pm at the monastic Church of Sts Constantine and Helen, followed by Vespers at the Church of the Resurrection, censing and veneration at the Apokathelosis and the Holy Sepulchre, as members of the Synod and Primates venerated at the Golgotha, amidst bells tolling.

After Vespers, the Patriarchal Entourage walked to the monastic Church of Sts Constantine and Helen.

B' On feast-day

At 7:00 am of Sunday, the 7th/20th of March 2016, the Patriarchal Entourage, headed by Patriarch Theophilos, walked to the Church of the Resurrection.

Once His Beatitude, Primates and Priests were dressed in sacerdotal vestments, the divine Liturgy began at the katholikon, led by the Patriarch. Co-officiating were Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, Archbishops Dorotheos of Avila, Aristarchos of Constantina, Theodosios of Sebaste, Demetrios of Lydda, Makarios of Qatar and Metropolitan Joachim

of Zambia, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, and Archimandrite Nektarios as head priest. Archimandrite Aristovoulos sang with pious pilgrim, novice Georgios, and others in the presence of the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem, Mr Georgios Zacharoudiakis, as a great crowd of nuns, members of the Greek parish, the Arabic-speaking flock and pilgrims participated in piety.

The Apolysis was followed by a procession of the Holy Icons around the Holy Sepulchre and the shrines surrounding the katholikon, in declaration of their victory.

On the completion of the procession, the Patriarch read the Gospel on the Resurrection and the Synodicon of the First Sunday of Lent for the eternal memory of those who restored the Holy Icons and anathema against the iconoclasts.

At the Patriarchate, His Beatitude addressed guests in Greek, pointing out that "the restitution and veneration, hence the restoration of the Holy Icons marks a great event for our Orthodox faith in the Crucified and Resurrected Lord or better say God the Logos united in substance with our own human nature, as proclaimed by the Apostle Paul: And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (1 Timothy 3, 16)".

The Patriarch closed his speech by proclaiming "Eternal Memory!" for the followers of the holy icons.

From the Secretariat-General

httpv://youtu.be/C8y00CqXg-s

httpv://youtu.be/tNjLftPfSdw

httpv://youtu.be/aa0i9tKjtYg

THE FIRST STASIS OF THE SALUTATIONS AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On the evening of Friday the $5^{\text{th}}/18^{\text{th}}$ of March 2016, the Patriarchate celebrated the First Stasis of the Salutations of the Most Holy Theotokos.

The First Stasis of the Salutations was read in the context of the Small Compline service and of the Canon "I shall open my mouth" at the katholikon of the Church of the Resurrection, under His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem. Patriarch Theophilos was accompanied by the Patriarchal Commissioner, the Most Reverend Isychios, Metropolitan of Kapitolias; the Elder Secretary-General, His Eminence Aristarchos, Archbishop of Constantina; His Eminence Demetrios, Archbishop of Lydda, the Most Reverend Joachim, Metropolitan of Zambia, the Elder Kamarasis, Archimandrite Nektarios, and other Hagiotaphite Fathers. In attendance was the Greek Consul-General to Jerusalem and members of the Greek parish and of the Patriarchate's Arabic-speaking flock.

In the context of this pious service, His Beatitude preached the Word of God in Greek, saying inter alia:

"The Most Blessed Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary became the vessel of the Grace of the Holy Spirit, through which every man that comes to the world is enlightened and blessed. St Gregory Palamas calls the Holy Theotokos "a border between the built and unbuilt nature" and explains that no one could

approach God than through her and the mediator born of her, and none of God's gifts could be given to either angels or humans than through her". [...]

"The pure and ever-virgin Theotokos stands apart as the par excellence paradigm of obedience to the will of God, which in this case signifies fasting, namely the submission of our will to the will of God. It also signifies repentance and confession of our transgression and sins. "Whoever comes to me I will never drive away" (John 6, 37) says the Lord. To the question of the Apostle Peter, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times" (Matthew 18, 21-22). [...]

From the Secretariat-General

httpv://youtu.be/bUfK5EfSrmQ



THE FEAST OF HOSIOS GERASIMOS OF JORDAN AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Thursday the 4th/17th of March, 2016, Thursday of the First Week of Lent, the Patriarchate observed the memory of hosios Gerasimos of Jordan at the Monastery dedicated to his name, on the West Bank of the river Jordan, before the river mouth at the Dead Sea.

St Gerasimos came from his hometown of Lycia, Asia Minor, to the Holy Land and led a monk's life at a Monastery in the region of the river Jordan. Having shortly deviated to the heresy of Monophysitism circa 450 AD, he returned to Orthodoxy under hosios Efthymios the great and excelled in defending the Christological doctrine of the two natures of Christ at the Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon. He went on to found a monastic Lavra for advanced monks, led thousands of them to life, completion and deification in Christ, and attracted several Christians from across the world to piety in Christ. The Monastery he founded survived the transformations of human history, albeit in the tumultuous region of Palestine.

At this Monastery, His Beatitude Theophilos officiated at the divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, having concelebrants Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, e.g. Archimandrite Ieronymos, hegumen in Fhes, Jordan; Archimandrite Ignatios, hegumen at the Village of the Shepherds; Archimandrite Paisios, hegumen at the Monastery of the Prophet Elias; Archimandrite Ananias, hegumen at St George, Beit Jala; Hieromonk Kyriakos, priest at the Monastery, and the vicar of St Constantine, f. Nikitas; Arabic-speaking presbyters as f. Issa Mousleh, f. Yusef Hondali and f. Pavlos Aleme; also, Archdeacon Evlogios, Hierodeacons Agapios, Markos and f. Anastasios. Metropolitans Kyriakos of Nazareth and Isychios of Kapitolias, the Elder Secretary-General, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Archbishops Demetrios of Lydda and Makarios of Qatar, and Metropolitan Joachim of Zambia prayed jointly. Archimandrite Aristovoulos sang with monks of the Monastery of Hozeva and Bethlehem, having students from the Patriarchal School as participants. Attending the service were the Patriarchate's Mass Media representatives, ministers of the church and pilgrims from Greece, Cyprus, Russia, Romania and Ukraine.

To the pious congregation the Patriarch preached the word of God in Greek.

In Arabic, the Patriarch's speech may be reached here: https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2016/03/17/19668

A great crowd participated in the Sacrament of the Holy metalepsis. A procession followed, as the icon of Abba Gerasimus was carried thrice around the Monastery, and supplication was made for health and peace in the world, and for the repose of the souls of our departed fathers and brothers.

At noon, the hegumen, Archimandrite Chrysostomos, hosted everyone to meatless lunch.

From the Secretariat-General

httpv://youtu.be/uXnde1LD9h0

httpv://youtu.be/qnt0SYg30Fs

httpv://youtu.be/NpacowJ9Wa0

