

HIS BEATITUDE ADDRESS OF WELCOME TO H.E. VLADIMIR VLADIMIROVICH PUTIN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO THE BAPTISM SITE JORDAN.

Jordan River, 26 June 2012.

**Address of Welcome to His Excellency Vladimir Vladimirovich
Putin, President of the Russian Federation on the Occasion of
his Visit to the Baptism Site Jordan.**

Esteemed Vladimir Vladimirovich,

Your Royal Highness,

Dear distinguished guest,

We welcome you, Your Excellency, to this Holy Site where Our Lord Jesus Christ received baptism at the hands of the Holy Forerunner John the Baptist. From the earliest days of the life of the Church, pilgrims have come here, as you have done today, not simply to commemorate the event of Our Lord's baptism, but also to recommit themselves to their own spiritual renewal.

As Your Excellency knows well, the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan have always enjoyed an intimate and historical relationship, His Majesty King Abdullah II, following in the footsteps of his late father and his late grandfather, in a heritage that extends back to Omar ibn al – Khattab and Patriarch Sophronios, honours the ministry of the Patriarch as the senior Church leader of this region, and he recognizes the pastoral and

ecclesiastical mission of the Patriarchate for all Orthodox Christians in the Holy Land, both residents and pilgrims.

Every year we welcome a great number of pilgrims to the Holy Land, many of whom come from Russia. Pilgrims to the Holy Places are an integral part of our life and mission here, and Jordan is well known for its gracious hospitality to pilgrims. His Majesty has been a consummate leader in this region in ensuring the value of freedom of worship, and the Hashemite Kingdom has supported the accessibility and the development of the Baptism Site.

As we are surrounded here by the serenity and sanctity of this place, we wish Your Excellency a successful visit to this region, and we pray God's blessing on all the people of your beloved country.

Thank you.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III,

Patriarch of Jerusalem

**ADDRESS OF WELCOME OF HIS
EXCELLENCY VALDIMIR PUTIN ON
THE OCCASION ON HIS VISIT TO**

THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY.

Bethlehem, 26 June 2012.

Address of Welcome His Excellency Vladimir Viadimirovich Putin President of the Russian Federation on the Occasion of his Visit to the Church of the Nativity Bethlehem.

Esteemed Vladimir Viadimirovich,

Your Eminences,

Your Excellencies,

Dear Friends,

It is written "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news". (Rom, 10:15).

Your Excellency, Vladimir Viadimirovich, this morning we welcome you with joy to Bethlehem and to the Church of the Nativity, the place where Joy burst into the life of the world Here, where the Eternal Logos became man, earth and heaven were joined, and the angels rejoiced;

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those, whom he favours", (Luk. 2:14).

In the person of the Prince of Peace and the Son of Justice, this centre of peace has become the sign to the whole world of reconciliation between God and humanity. In Bethlehem, Palestinians, both Muslim and Christian, have lived together in peace and harmony for generations. Bethlehem and Its people, who embody the message of the Prince of Peace for our region and the entire world, are commending their aspirations for national Independence and Palestinian statehood to Your Excellency.

In recognition of your efforts, allow us to present this gift

on behalf of the Palestinian people and the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

We welcome you, Your Excellency, not only as the President of a great Federation. We welcome you also as a faithful member of the Orthodox Church and as a pilgrim. You follow in the footsteps of many renowned Orthodox leaders who have come here down the ages to express their allegiance to the Prince of Peace.

“May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7), and may God bless you in the service of your beloved Russia and its people.

Thank you.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

**AN ADDRESS OF WELCOME TO THE
“ARCHONS” OF THE ECUMENICAL
THRONE ON THE OCCASION OF THE**

PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

Holy City of Jerusalem, 22 May 2012

Dear Father Alex,

Beloved Brothers who serve the Great Church as Archons,

Your Eminences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Christ is risen!

With the joyful greeting of Pascha we welcome you to the Holy Land and to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the mother of all the Churches. The Brotherhood of the Holy Tomb is indeed glad to have you among us during your pilgrimage to the Holy Places.

We know of the important work that the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle does in support of the life of the church in general, and of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in particular. The Hellenic community of the United States plays a singular and noteworthy role in sustaining the life of the Church of Constantinople, and also in helping to maintain a strong Christian presence in the Middle East. The Rum Orthodox Church is the longest continuous religious institution in this region, and we are united in faith, in heritage, and in witness.

We commend the special relationship that you have with the Ecumenical Throne, and we wish to send through you our love and fraternal greetings to our beloved brother and concelebrant in the Lord. His All Holiness Bartholomew I. In his patriarchal ministry he bears many burdens, but he does not bear them alone. He bears them with the support and devotion of Orthodox Christians everywhere.

We also wish to acknowledge the ministry of Father Alex. We know of his assiduous and energetic labours, and we are conscious of the help that he is to the Archons in your own mission to ensure religious freedom and the well-being of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

It is precisely in this spirit of ensuring religious freedom for all in every place that we welcome you here. More and more the United States and its citizens, as well as the government, other non-governmental agencies, religious organizations, and informal groups of people, are taking a crucial role in protecting the Christian presence in this region, and promoting peace. At the heart of religious freedom is true symbiosis that is the heart of the Orthodox experience of the peoples of the Middle East over centuries. We welcome the Order of Saint Andrew especially, as well as the American Orthodox community as a whole, to a renewed and vigorous relationship with the Church in the Holy Land. Together there is much that we can accomplish for the common good.

The Holy Places remain at the centre of the living witness of the Church, a witness that is nothing less than the redeeming blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ. As you know, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem holds a special place and exercises a unique leadership throughout this region. Christians here look to their fellow Christians in the United States in hope; they have great expectations of their American brothers and sisters, who have given moral and material support in the past, and who continue to do so into the present. We hope that as Archons who understand the precious gift of religious freedom and who know the power of resources to transform lives of individuals and communities you will be a light to your fellow Christians in the ongoing mission of the Church.

on the occasion of their Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III
Patriarch of Jerusalem

**REMARKS AT THE INSTALLATION
OF THE VERY REVEREND HOSAM
NAOUM AS DEAN OF SAINT
GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL IN
JERUSALEM.**

Holy City of Jerusalem, 17 May 2012.

Your Grace, Bishop Suheil,
Your Grace, Archbishop Fred,
Dear Father Hosam,
Sisters and Brothers,
Christ is risen!
Al-Masiach qam!

We greet you in joy today as you celebrate the installation of Father Hosam as Dean of this Cathedral. This celebration opens a new chapter in your life, and we have known of Father Hosam's ministry here for years as pastor of the Arab-speaking Anglican congregation at the Cathedral.

The Anglican Communion has a long and important relationship of particular significance. We remember with warmth the recent pilgrimage to the Holy Land of His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose commitment to closer relations with the Orthodox Church is well known, and whose support of the Christian communities of the Holy Land has been specially encouraging to us all.

As Orthodox and Anglicans in the Holy Land, we share many of the same challenges as well as many commitments. Most of all we share the commitment of ensuring the well-being and the security of the Christian presence in the Holy Land. Christianity is native to this region, and we regard the Holy Land as our home. And we understand that a vital, vibrant Christian presence is essential to the true nature of the Holy Land as a place of genuine religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and co-existence.

We know the place that Saint George's Cathedral and Saint George's College hold in the hearts of so many Anglicans around the world. You welcome many pilgrims here every year, and you are the gateway to a fresh relationship with the Holy Land for many faithful Anglicans. This is a crucial ministry, and we of the support that you receive from your fellow Anglicans around the world. The presence of Archbishop Fred Hiltz, the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, is an eloquent expression of your world-wide influence and commitments.

As we celebrate your installation today, dear Father Hosam, we greet also your wife, Rafa, and your children Wadi, Laurice and Krista. We know the support that a priest's family can provide.

This Cathedral bears a significant dedication, for in your patron Saint George we Orthodox and Anglicans share a great saint, whom we venerate with equal devotion, especially in the Holy Land, and his image adorns the lintels of so many of our

Christian homes.

In token of our prayers for you, your family and your congregation here at the Cathedral, we would like to present to you this icon of Saint George, and we commit you to his prayers and protection.

May God bless you, Bishop Suheil, Archbishop Fred, Father Hosam, and the ministry of this Cathedral.

Thank you.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

**H. B. THE PATRIARCH OF
JERUSALEM IS INVITED FOR A
LECTURE TO AN INTERNATIONAL
INTER-RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE IN
KIEV.**

From 11-12/ 24-26th of April 2012 an International Interreligious Conference was convened in Kiev with the theme the contribution of the religions in the fight against violence and for the promotion and establishment of peace in our modern society.

His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III was

invited to this Conference and gave the lecture which follows:

“Remarks at the Kyiv Interfaith Forum’s International Conference on Global Winds of Change: Religion’s Role in Today’s World; The Challenges in Democracies and Secular Society

His Beatitude Theophilos III Patriarch of Jerusalem

Dear Mr. Feldman,

Esteemed Fellow Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen

it will come as no surprise to you that we believe strongly that religious faith plays a role of paramount importance in any vibrant, healthy society. This is so not least because religion and religious affiliation lie at the very heart of the identity of most countries and cultures.

If we take our own region of the Middle East as an example, it is religion that determines the primary description of the many ethnic identities of our diverse communities. We see this everywhere, from Baghdad to Damascus, from Beirut to Nicosia, from Cairo to Jerusalem. Without a nuanced understanding both of the religious Identities of our peoples, and of the complex historical relationship that has existed between different communities of faith down the centuries, it is not possible to understand Middle Eastern society. The conflict that currently exists between Israel and Palestine is, at its heart, a matter of religion.

We do not deny that in the relations of the nations, diplomacy and political negotiation play a crucial and leading role. And whereas there is a distinction between the mission of the Church and the work of political leadership, it would be naive to ignore the importance of religion in our common life, even in societies that are described as increasingly secular. By

definition, the very existence of arguments about "secularism" assumes the importance of religion in the conscious and unconscious life of our society.

In our contemporary conflicts around the world, politicians have come to realize more than ever before the power and influence of religious leadership in the work of establishing and maintaining peaceful, harmonious, and just societies. Governments cannot succeed in efforts of peace-building and the extension of Justice to all without the co-operation of religious leadership.

If we look, for example, at the present situation of the European Union, we see the paradox on the one hand of more or less official secularization and the separation of Church and State in most countries, while on the other hand we see the emergence of a new power and influence of religion in those same countries.

In Christian, understanding there has been this fundamental instinct from the very inception of the life of the Church. For instance, in the Letter to the Romans, Saint Paul reminds us that "nations, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though having no law, are a law unto themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience bears witness" (Roman 2:14-15).

Here in the Ukraine, you will understand this phenomenon better than many in our own time. For during the difficult years of the 20th century, religion survived, even under extreme difficulty and persecution. And since the collapse of totalitarianism, we see the forceful resurgence of religion in the region, and the importance that it clearly holds, not simply for the individual believer, but for the health and well-being of the society as a whole. For religion promotes good citizenship, as we have seen in former times such as the Byzantine Empire, where Church and State worked together in

harmony and where there was a system of mutual synallegeia.

We know, for history has taught us, often painfully, that we have no right whatsoever to disregard the role of religion in human society, both as an individual and a collective reality. And we have learnt the truth of the words of the Holy Scriptures: "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" {Mt 4:4, Deut. 8:3}.

The longing of the human heart for communion with God is a universal experience, older even than human memory itself, and as we look to the common human destiny that we all share, may we understand afresh the urgency of the right relationship of religion in contemporary society. It has been acknowledged by science that man is not a biological entity only, but there is, as Saint Paul says, there is the "inner man," that is the Spirit that dwells in him. For it is only on this path that human society will survive and flourish.

Thank you".

AN ADDRESS AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE M.E.C.C. OFFICES IN AMMAN ON THE OCCASION OF WELCOMING THE NEW SECRETARY GENERAL.

Amman, 24 April 2012.

The Reverend Dr. Paul Rohana

Your Royal Highness Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad,

Your Beatitudes,

Your Eminences,

Your Excellencies,

Brothers and Sisters,

Distinguished Guests,

Christ is risen!

Under the Patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, today we celebrate the inauguration of this office and we welcome the new Secretary General of the Middle East Council of Churches, the Reverend Dr. Paul Rohana.

We thank you, Your Highness, for the support and vote of confidence that your presence here today represents. We are constantly reminded of your wise words at the United Nations for <World Interfaith Harmony week>, when you said:<The misuse or abuse of religions can be... a cause of world strife, whereas religions should be a great foundation for facilitating world peace. The remedy for this problem can only come from the world's religions themselves. Religions must be part of the solution, not part of the problem>. Unity shall be our strongest weapon.

Your Highness leads by example, and in this same spirit you have recently made an historic visit to Jerusalem. It was indeed a pleasure to welcome you to our patriarchate. Your Highness is well known throughout the world for your efforts in support of interreligious dialogue. We are encouraged by this support, especially of the work of the Middle East Council of Churches, and we applaud Your Highness for this witness to the cause of peace and justice.

We also wish to pay tribute to the role of His Majesty King Abdullah II. May God bless him in everything that he does. His leadership in a time of Challenges remains a source of encouragement to so many.

Join us, please, in acknowledging Father Paul. We welcome him in his new capacity, and welcome him also to Jordan, the birth-place of many peace initiatives, among them principally the <Amman Message>, the <Common Word>, and the <Interfaith Harmony Week>.

Father Paul and his team have a considerable responsibility and a huge challenge in their work for the unity of the Christian voice in our beloved region. Their task is not only to make our voice better heard, but also to encourage us all to fulfill our role and mission in the fabric of our society.

The Middle East Council of Churches must realise its ecumenical destiny of being the instrument to mobilize the Churches of the region and to provide, indeed, the right grounding for our relationships with our fellow citizens and the rest of the world.

We take pride in the initiative of this new office which will serve the work of the Middle East Council of Churches as well both the patriarchate of Jerusalem, the mother of all the Churches, and the member Orthodox Church family. This new office is a clear demonstration of our commitment to the fundamental purposes of the Council, which we have made in our efforts in the re-organisation of the Council.

This is more than timely, not least because of the rapid and unexpected developments in our region. And we understand the chief purposes of this office to be three-fold:

- 1) to work to remove the obstacles to our common witness.
- 2) to encourage genuine respect and understanding between Churches and Christian communities, and between Christians and

members of other faiths; and

3)to serve the needs of the Orthodox Family of Churches within the Council.

Amman has been chosen as the home for this office for very specific reasons.

The Orthodox Church is the oldest continuous religious institution in the region, so we have grown up in a unique cultural context of symbiosis, and therefore we understand the complexities of the multi-cultural and multi-faith inheritance that is ours. And here in our beloved Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan we have a true example in our region of freedom of expression and freedom of worship.

Last but not least, we would like to thank Miss Wafa Goussous for her commitment to the Council. She has been instrumental in the implementation of the work of this office. Without her careful attention and management, this office would not exist.

May God bless this effort, and strengthen us in our mission.

Thank you!

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III,

Patriarch of Jerusalem

PRINCE GHAZI BIN MUHAMMAD OF

JORDAN VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM.

On Wednesday the 5th / 18th of March 2012, His Highness Prince Ghazi of Jordan escorted by Sheikh Ali Gomaa the Grand Mufti of Egypt and by other religious and political personalities of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and of the Palestinian Authority, in the presence of the Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel Mr. Cesar Marzie visited the Patriarchate.

His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III received His Highness Prince Ghazi of Jordan along with Fathers members of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. Welcoming the Prince His Beatitude said that Jerusalem is an example of religious symbiosis of Jews, Christians and Muslims.

On occasion of this visit His Beatitude presented to the Emir a replica of the Nativity Church made from mother of pearl and a book of the Koran also decorated with mother of pearl. His Beatitude presented to the Grand Mufti of Egypt a plaque with inscripted passages from the Koran.

After this visit to the Patriarchate, the Prince with His Beatitude escorted by Fathers -members of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre descended from the Central Monastery via the Cathedral of St. James to the Church of Resurrection and the Holy Shrines therein.

Chief Secretary's Office.

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PASCHAL GREETINGS TO THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM.

Holy City of Jerusalem, 18 April 2012

Your Eminence Archbishop Nourhan,

Your Eminences, Dear Reverend Fathers,

Christ is risen!

We have come to greet you and rejoice with you in our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The resurrection of Christ is the foundation of our living hope.

For we read in the First Letter of Peter: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable.” (I Peter 1:3)-

By Divine Providence we have been made the guardians and servants of this “imperishable inheritance, for we are the guardians and servants of the Holy Sites, which themselves bear witness to our crucified Lord. This has always been, and continues now to be, our mission, and the Holy Sites are a focus of devotion and attention not only to our fellow Christians, but indeed to the whole world.

“If Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is in vain, and your faith is in vain”. So declares the Apostle Saint Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthian (I Cor. 15:14). Just as we know that if the resurrection has not taken place, our faith is futile, so it is that should Jerusalem

ever be left without our presence here, then the living witness of the resurrection -that is, the Tomb of Christ – would disappear. Jerusalem would lose its vibrant Christian character.

It is, therefore, our moral responsibility to maintain the precious Christian character of Jerusalem, for in so doing Jerusalem remains a sign of hope – a hope that shines brightly from the Tomb of our risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us, then, overcome our shortcomings and weaknesses, and join our efforts in proclaiming the message of hope, consolation, and, above all, new and eternal life.

Your Eminence, Archbishop Nourhan, we assure you that we are ready in the name of our common Lord and in the spirit of the resurrection to heal any wounds that have been caused by human frailty.

Once again, on behalf of our Brotherhood and ourselves personally, we extend to you our prayers for His Beatitude Patriarch Tarkoom. Please accept our Paschal greetings to your Brotherhood and to the whole Armenian community of the Holy Land.

Christ is risen!

Thank you.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

ADDRESS OF HIS BEATITUDE TO THE REPRESENTTIVES OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES.

Holy City of Jerusalem, Tuesday of Pascha, the 17th of April
2012.

“This is the Holy and chosen day, the first of Sabbaths, the Mistress and Queen, the Feast of feasts and the Festival of festivals, and on it Christ is glorified unto all ages”. Says the hymnographer of the Church.

Your Beatitudes

Your Eminences

Reverend Fathers

Dear Sisters and brothers

The Holy Jerusalem Church together with the Christian Community celebrates the life-bearing resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is central to our faith for, as Saint Paul says in his epistle to Corinthians, if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins (1 Cor 15, 16-17).

The Risen Christ is alive for ever in the presence of the Father, sovereign over the power of death, and so pars beyond hat death can do to us. We have nothing to fear: the death that is a punishment for sin in fallen humanity is overcome as

we accept the 'death' of baptism, identifying ourselves with Christ's obedient and self giving death. Once this has been done, new life is ours which physical death cannot touch. "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord says Paul (Rom 6, 23)

Our Paschal gathering today here is a visible and tangible witness to the living reality of our faith to the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian presence in Jerusalem is precisely the physical testimony to the undeniable fact of the death and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The death of corruption i.e. of sin has no longer any power on us, despite his aggressive and destructive power on man and ofcourse on our Church Community. For the risen Christ is the incarnate and unfailing hope. It is the hope of Christ's anastasis that has encouraged and strengthened us throughout the ages to keep our lamps going on with the life-giving light that has come out from the empty tomb of Christ.

Our diverse expression of our faith should not be considered as an obstacle to our common Christian proclamation that Christ is the Incarnate and risen divine Logos of love, justice truth and living light.

Ours is the ministry and mission to be the light of the world. This is Our Lord's commandment to His servants: "Let your light to shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father" (Mat 5, 14-15).

We pray our risen Lord to enlighten the minds and warm the hearts of those who exercise authority throughout the world to work for peace and justice on earth and especially on our beloved Jerusalem and Holy Land, where the destructive power of Hades was conquered by the divine and salvation authority of the Lord of Justice and peace.

Christos Anesti.

His Beatitude

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE VISITS THE WESTERN CHURCHES FOR THE FEAST OF EASTER.

On Holy Tuesday, the 28th of March / 10th of April 2012, the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre – whose superior is His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III visited on occasion of their Easter the Franciscan Brotherhood and the Latin Patriarchate, following the years-long established order of exchanging visits during the feasts.

After these first two visits, His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III escorted by the Chief Secretary His Eminence Aristarchos Archbishop of Constantina visited the Apostolic Delegate who is the Representative of the Pope to Jerusalem and the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem Suheil Dawani while His Eminence Timotheos Metropolitan of Vostra visited the Lutheran Bishop in Jerusalem Mounib Yiounan and the Propts of the German-speaking Community in the Holy Land Rev Uew.

His Beatitude reciprocated properly according to the circumstance all the addressees and below is the address of

His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem to the Custos, in the English language (please see the link <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2012/04/10/1960/>)

Chief Secretary's Office.

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