

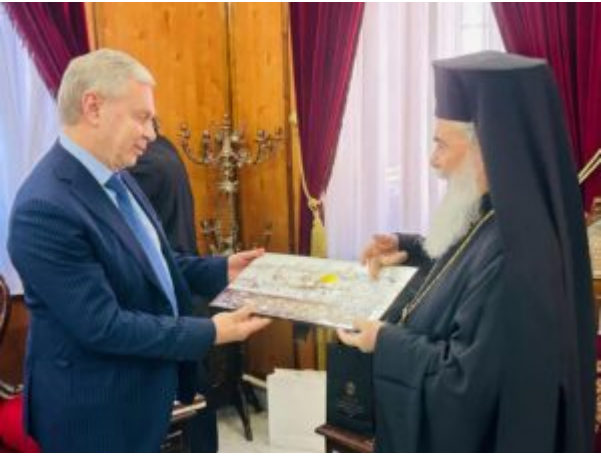
MR SERGEY CHEREMIN, MINISTER OF THE MOSCOW CITY GOVERNMENT VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE

On Friday, February 4/17, 2023, His Excellency Mr Sergey Cheremin, Minister of the Moscow City Government and Head of the Moscow City foreign economic and international relations Department, accompanied by the Ambassador of Russia in Tel Aviv, Mr Viktorov, under the Head of the Russian Mission to Jerusalem (MISSIA) Archimandrite Alexander and under other diplomatic and ecclesiastical agents, visited His Beatitude, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos.

In the context of this meeting, His Beatitude repeated His prayer for the unity and communion in Christ of the brotherly Orthodox Churches through dialogue.

The Ambassador of Russia, Mr Viktorov, informed His Beatitude about the meeting, which he held after the Israeli politician, and former member of the Government, Mr Tzachi Hanegbi, and the discussion with him about His Beatitude's work to support the Christian Community and safeguarding the property of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and all Christians in the Holy Land.

From Secretariat-General



THE FEAST OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE AND OF SAINT SIMEON THE GOD-RECEIVER IN KATAMON

On Thursday, 3/16 February 2023, the feast of Saint Simeon the God-receiver was celebrated at the Holy Monastery dedicated to him, called Katamon, in west Jerusalem near the Holy Monastery of the Cross and the Jewish Knesset on Katamon hill.

The feast of the Meeting of the Lord was celebrated also in this Monastery, to especially honour Saint Simeon the God-receiver who was the main person serving the Lord in this event, and said when he received the Lord in his arms, "now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke: 2:29-32).

In honour of Saint Simeon, the Divine Liturgy was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with the co-celebration of their Eminences, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, the Archbishops, Aristarchos of Constantina, Methodios of Tabor and Aristovoulos of Madaba, the Archimandrites, Mattheos, Ieronymos, Priests and Hieromonks from various Orthodox countries, among whom, the Head of the Russian MISSIA in Jerusalem, Archimandrite Alexander, Archdeacon Mark and the Hierodeacons, Eulogios, Simeon and Dositheos. The chanting was delivered by Mr Gotsopoulos and the Patriarchal school students, as the service was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras, the Consul Mrs Zaharioudaki, members of the Consulate, the Ambassador of Georgia to Tel Aviv Mr Lasha Zhavania and many faithful Christians from

Greece, Russia, Romania and Palestine.

His Beatitude delivered the following sermon in Greek, Arabic and Russian:

“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon... Then took he him [Christ] up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel” (Luke: 2:25-32).

Beloved Brethren in Christ,

Reverend Christians and pilgrims

The grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us all in this holy place, where the tomb of Saint Simeon the God-receiver is preserved, to celebrate his holy commemoration and synaxis along with that of Saint Anne the Prophetess.

The Evangelist Luke precisely narrates the entrance of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple of Solomon, forty days after His Nativity, according to the custom of the Law of Moses.

The presentation of Jesus in the Temple by His mother, the Virgin Mary and Joseph the Betrothed, as well as the meeting, namely the welcoming by the righteous Simeon and Anne the Prophetess are the content of today's feast. The righteous Simeon, being a Priest under the Law of Moses, became a true witness of the mystery of the Divine Providence, namely of the Incarnation of God the Word, which refers to the salvation of man. “For mine eyes have seen thy salvation” (Luke 2:30-31) the Elder Simeon exclaims.

Interpreting these words of Simeon, Saint Basil the Great says: “He calls salvation the Christ of God in the

Scriptures"; while Athanasius the Great says, "by salvation he means His presence in the flesh". "He calls salvation the incarnation of the Only-begotten Son and Word of God", Saint Theophylaktos remarks.

God had prepared this "salvation of God" which the Elder Simeon's eyes beheld, since the foundation of the world for the whole human race. "He prepared [the salvation of] Christ since the foundation of the world, and revealed it in the end of times", Saint Cyril of Alexandria says.

God, my dear ones, is the God of love, light and peace, as witnessed by the holy Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists and in general by the Holy Scriptures. "God is love" (John 4:8). "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (1 Cor. 14:33), Saint Paul preaches. And Saint Cosmas, Bishop of Maiouma composes a hymn referring to Prophet Isaiah: "When Isaiah beheld God symbolically on an exalted throne attended by Angels of glory, he cried: o wretched man that I am! For I have seen beforehand the incarnate God, the Lord of peace and unwaning light" (Katavasia, Ode 5).

In other words, the prophet Isaiah was deemed worthy to see the exalted throne of God, which was a symbol of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, who became a living throne of God by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, as the God-man Lord and our God and Saviour received flesh from her pure flesh. Therefore, the hymnographer adds the words: "the incarnate God" is the "Lord of unwaning light and peace".

Saint Simeon the God-receiver became a communicant of this unwaning light and peace, not only through his bodily eyes but also through the eyes of his soul and pure heart. "Then took he [Simeon] him up in his arms, and blessed God" (Luke 2:28), the Evangelist Luke says. He blessed, namely he glorified God the Elder Simeon because his eyes saw the salvation of God (cf. Luke 2:30). "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to

him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God" (Psalm 50:23), the Lord says.

And the salvation of God is no other than His spiritual light, which will reveal to the nations the true God and the true path of salvation, namely of Christ, Who is the revealed light, "a light to lighten the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32). The established Father of the Church, Saint Cyril of Alexandria says, "Christ became the light to those who were led astray in the darkness and had been fallen by devil's hand".

Our Holy Church, being the body of Christ, and Christ is its head (cf. Col. 1:18), is the only source of the true light, which sheds light upon every man in this world (cf. John 1:9). Therefore, the hymnographer says, "Thou foundation of them that hope in Thee, O Lord, make steadfast the Church, which Thou hast purchased with Thy precious blood" (Katavasia, Ode 3). Saint Paul is also referring to this when he says, "the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). And that "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it" (Eph. 5:25-26).

Our Lord Jesus Christ, my dear brethren, calls all those "who believe in Him" through the righteous and God-receiver Simeon, to remain steadfast and firm in our faith in our life in Christ because the only true way of light and salvation lies in true reverence.

And the hymnographer of the Church urges us by saying: "Let us hasten to the Theotokos, we who wish to see her Son brought unto Simeon. When the incorporeal powers looked on Him out of Heaven, they were astonished, saying: Now do we see strange and wondrous things, incomprehensible and inexpressible. He that made Adam is carried as a babe; the Uncontainable is held in the arms of the Elder; he that abideth uncircumscribed in the bosom of His Father is willingly circumscribed in the flesh, but not in His Godhead, even the only Friend of man"

(Matins, Oikos). Amen! Many happy returns and blessed the forthcoming Great lent period!”

The Patriarchal entourage and the congregation were offered a reception by the Hegoumen and renovator of the Monastery Archimandrite Theodoritos.

From Secretariat-General

EVENT AT ZION SCHOOL FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATION OF WORLD GREEK LANGUAGE DAY

On the evening of Thursday, January 27/February 9, 2023, an event was organized in the hall of ceremonies of the Holy Zion Seminar School of the Patriarchate in honour of the Greek Language Day which has been established in recent years.

This event was organized with the cooperation of the Greek Consulate General in Jerusalem and the Dragoman of the Patriarchate and School Managing Director, Archimandrite Mattheos. The event was presented by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem, Mr Evangelos Vlioras, with the following preface:

“They gave me Greek as my language, the poor house on the sandy beaches of Homer. My only concern is my language on the sandy beaches of Homer...”

Your Excellency,

Dear Fathers,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Greek language holds the precious and rare privilege of belonging to only 5 languages, out of the 6,500 official languages spoken today, which demonstrate an uninterrupted presence of 4,000 years of oral and written existence in the history of the human race. Notable is the fact that up to 5 centuries ago the Greek language was also an international language of communication.

But language is not just a tool for communication and transmission of information. It is a carrier of culture and historical memory. Within the linguistic shapes and forms that sometimes become oral narration, sometimes written testimony, poetry, essay or song, are hidden the anxieties, the desires, the joys, the values and the history of a people who, according to our great poet Odysseus Elytis, has the privilege to call the sky "heaven" and the sea "sea", as Homer and Plato called it two and a half thousand years ago.

So we speak a language that only a few million people speak for two and a half thousand years without interruption and with minimal changes. This fact captures the peculiar dimension of our country, which, according to Elytis, is "small in terms of space and vast in terms of time" and confirms the saying of the linguist Yiannis Psycharis, that "language and homeland are the same". At the same time, the Greek language, as the language of the Gospels, makes the Greek language, and by extension Hellenism, a universal and timeless point of reference. In recent years, our national poet Dionysios Solomos highlighted the values of Hellenism as a universal cause, having nothing else in mind "beyond freedom and language". This universal dimension of the Greek spirit, as spread through the Greek language, is reminded and honoured by the establishment of the Greek State on February 9, the day of commemoration of Dionysios Solomos, as the International Day of the Greek Language.

Highlighting, promoting, and strengthening the learning and dissemination of the Greek language abroad are top priorities for the Greek State, not only because the language is a connecting link between the motherland and the diaspora, but also because the language, like Hellenism, is a living, dynamic and constantly evolving element. It constantly renews itself, adapts to changing conditions and assimilates new influences. Thus, the Greek language is the thread that holds us and brings us from the world of myth to the world of artificial intelligence and the internet.

As stated by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Katsaniotis, in his message for the International Day of the Greek Language: "From the 'golden Mycenae' and Linear B", the speech of Homer and the great Tragedians, until today, in the age of information, digital technology and social media, the Greek language is alive and active, producing history, culture and science".

We can only grasp the thread and continue the course with a deep awareness of the responsibility imposed on us by our centuries-old linguistic tradition and history.

On this occasion, I would like to express special thanks to Professor Mr Nikos Michaelidis for the keynote speech of the event, H.H.B. the Patriarch of Jerusalem for His blessing for the event to be held at the Patriarchal school of Holy Zion, and of course the Managing Director of the School, Fr Mattheos, the children and the teachers and all those who worked for today's event.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you for your presence at the event tonight."

The main speaker on the subject of the Greek language was the anthropologist professor Mr Nikolaos Michaelidis of the University of Missouri, USA, with his lecture to be posted shortly.

Among the guests were; the representative of H.H.B. the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos Geronda Secretary-General, His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, the French Consul in Jerusalem Mr René Troccaz and the Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus in Ramallah Mr Assos, members of the Greek Consulate and the Greek Parish of Jerusalem and the Arab-speaking flock, teachers and students.

From Secretariat-General

THE BLESSED DEAN PRIEST CONSTANTINOS KARMAS HAS SLEPT IN THE LORD

On Sunday, January 23rd/February 5th, 2023, Fr Constantinos Karmas, the elder Dean Priest of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, slept in the Lord.

The departed to the Lord Fr Constantinos Karmas was born in 1927 in the commune of Beit Jala. He joined the ranks of the clergy of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, being ordained as a deacon and priest in 1957 in the Holy Temple of the Meeting of the Lord in Amman and then received the office of Steward under the blessed Archbishop Aristovoulos of Kyriakoupolis.

After his widowhood, he received the office of Archimandrite by His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos in the year 2019.

After zeal and devotion, he served the Patriarchate of Jerusalem during the blessed Patriarchs of Jerusalem Benedictus, Diodorus, Irinaios and the current Patriarch

Theophilos.

He was distinguished for his contribution to the flock of the Patriarchate in Jordan in a variety of ministries, cultivating the liturgical life, preaching, charity, maintaining a rich Library and developing constructive writing activity for the people. He also stood out for his patriotic attitude, supporting the rights of his beloved homeland Jordan, founded cultural and educational centers and represented the Patriarchate in many local and international Conferences. He enjoyed appreciation from the Jordanian Authorities and respect from the Jordanian people.

He was honored with the insignia of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre by the Blessed Patriarchs Benedictus and Diodorus and by the current Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and by the President of the Palestinian State, Mr Mahmoud Abbas Abou-Mazen, with the awarding of the Star of Jerusalem for the year 2022.

On the morning of Monday, January 24/February 6, 2023, His Beatitude, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos held a Trisayon at the monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood for the repose of his soul in the land of the living.

His funeral service was held in Amman in the Holy Church of the Meeting of the Lord, presided over by the Most Reverend Archbishop Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis, with the participation of all the clergy of the Patriarchate in Jordan and a large number of people honoring his offering to the flock and the Jordanian people.

In his funeral procession, His Beatitude sent the following condolence address. See link:

<https://jerusalem-patriarchate.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/%CE%A3%CE%A5%CE%9B%CE%9B%CE%A5%CE%A0%CE%97%CE%A4%CE%97%CE%A1%CE%99%CE%9F-%CE%9C%CE%97%CE%9D%CE%A5%CE%9C%CE%91.pdf>

PATRIARCH THEOPHILOS III SPEAKS AT THE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON DC

His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III attended this morning, Monday January 30, the opening session for the annual International Religious Freedom Summit (IRF) held in Washington DC, United States.

After greeting the attendance with the peace of Jerusalem, His Beatitude took the opportunity to relay the current circumstances of Christians of the Holy Land and Jerusalem to the audience. Pointing out that the “peaceful mosaic that we have known for hundreds of years is under threat” explaining that for years now “the Christian community has faced hate crimes and acts of vandalism” that are no longer targeting properties alone but carrying subtle messages with every attack, that being “that Christians are not welcome in Jerusalem”. In addition, Patriarch Theophilos III underlined that those attacks are intensifying and targeting the Christian pilgrim route at Jaffa Gate, New Gate, as well as the Mountain of Olives, which will impact the Garden of Gethsemane.

Being a main speaker at this summit, representing his fellow Church leaders as well as the faithful communities of the Holy

Land, His Beatitude utilized the joint statement published yesterday by the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem regarding the increasing cycle of violence in the Holy Land, “we have been constantly warning of an exploding, senseless cycle of violence that will only cause hurt and suffering to everyone. Such a state of affairs will almost certainly bring further atrocities and anguish, driving us away from the much sought-after peace and stability that we all seek.”

Towards the end of his speech, His Beatitude called on Members of the Congress and leaders of American civil society to support the Christian existence in the Holy Land to thrive alongside other communities, highlighting that although “we are small in number but large in mission” and to ensure that the upcoming generations would be able to visit the Holy City and walk in the footsteps of the Prophets and Christ, and be welcomed not only by stones “but by a vibrant Christian presence.”

The IRF summit of 2023 is going to be held for three days in Washington D.C., starting January 31st and ending on February 1st.

Article by: Heba Hrimat





THE FEAST OF SAINT THEODOSIUS THE CENOBIARCH AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday, January 11th / 24th 2023, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of our Holy Father Theodosius the Cenobiarch in the Holy Monastery, located in the area between the Village of the Shepherds and the Holy Lavra of Saint Savva the sanctified and the adjacent so-called village of Abediye.

On this day, the Church remembers that Saint Theodosius came from Mogarissa in Cappadocia, he came to the Holy Land in the year 451, when he was 27 years old, he joined the Order of the Studios of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Then he lived as a monk in the Monastery formerly called "Seat of Ikelia" near Jerusalem and in the area where the cave was, where the Magi spent the night "returning by another way to their homeland" (Matthew 2:12).

In this area he founded the Coenobitic Monastery for the training of novice monks, trained in common life, obedience and humility, without being deemed suitable for entering the

Monastery – Lavra for an ascetic life. Due to his extreme virtue, he was appointed Cenobiarch, i.e. Leader of the entire Coenobitic life in Palestine and he cooperated after his compatriot Saint Savva for the protection of the doctrine of the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in the year 451 AD. That is, that Christ our God, has one hypostasis in two natures, the divine and the human.

In his Holy Monastery, he received monks of various nationalities. The monks worked as manual labourers and from this income maintained charitable institutions such as a nursing home and an orphanage. Due to the Monastery's location near the Shepherds Village village, it maintained a coenobitic character for the help of the needy asking for help. The Monastery had four churches and about seven hundred monks.

In this famous Monastery, the centre of monastic life and doctrinal correctness of the 5th and 6th centuries, a Divine Liturgy was held in honour of its founder, Saint Theodosius, during a vigil on the night of January 11/24, 2023, officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with the co-celebration of their Eminences, the Archbishops Aristarchos of Constantina and Theodosios of Sebasteia, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, among whom the Dragoman Archimandrite Mattheos, Archdeacon Mark and Hierodeacon Eulogios. The chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon and Mr Gotsopoulos and by a choir made up of members of the flock from the neighbouring areas, with the participation of monks, nuns and pilgrims.

Before the Holy Communion His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon:

“Thou didst secretly enter into the noetic darkness of the Divine Light, O all-blessed Theodosius; and having the doctrines of piety written on the tablets of thy heart by the finger of God, thou gavest them to thy disciples as a book of life” (Minaion, Ode 8, Troparion 4).

Beloved brothers in Christ,

Reverend Christians and pilgrims,

Christ, the Son and Word of God, who was baptized in the Jordan, and who renewed and regenerated the aged man by sin, brought us all together in this Holy Monastery of Abba Theodosius the Cenobiarch, to celebrate his venerable memory.

Our holy Father Theodosius, who loved Christ from a young age, left his native country, the town of Mogarrisa in Cappadocia, and retreated to the Holy Land, where he lived the monastic life, during the reign of Markianus.

According to his biographer, Cyril Scythopolitis, our holy Father Theodosius was shown to be a citizen of heaven, the great beauty of Palestine and the boast of the desert, and the General and support of the monastic figure and the right doctrines and defender, guide and protector of the Coenobitic Canon.

It is noteworthy that the God-bearing Theodosius became not only "the support of the monastic schema", but also the general and champion of the correct doctrines. And this because when he entered the holy city of Jerusalem and was lodged in the Tower of David, by the elder Longinus of Cappadocia, of the monastic order, "of the Studios of the Holy Resurrection of our God Christ", namely of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, he was not allowed to departure to the monasteries of the desert of Palestine, "due to the schism of the monks in the desert who did not partake of the Catholic Church, but were subject to the strife and ill-will" of Eutychus and Dioscorus

In other words, the Church of Jerusalem and the monasticism in the desert, a numerous place of anchorites, was tested by the malice, the heresy of monophysitism, monoenergeticism and Monothelitism. Our holy Father Theodosius was "a general and champion of the Orthodox doctrines, that is, of the Orthodox

teaching and faith, as his hymnographer also eloquently states: "Calling thy teaching to remembrance, O Theodosius, we proclaim Christ in two essences, acknowledging the two natural wills and energies and authorities in God who was baptized in the flesh" (Matins, Ode 9, Troparion 3).

The dedication of the God-bearer Theodosius to the healthy Orthodox faith made him a Temple of the Holy Spirit. Clothed with power from on high according to the proclamation of our Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high", (Luke 24,49), he worked many miracles.

It is said of him, Saint Theodosius, as his biographer mentions, that he did three outstandingly meritorious deeds, firstly, the most exacting exercise of true and orthodox faith from youth to old age, secondly, his kindness to strangers and the poor, and his impersonal philanthropy, the third and the unceasing celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

This is why the hymnographer exclaims, saying: "Thou didst secretly enter into the noetic darkness of the Divine Light, O all-blessed Theodosius; and having the doctrines of piety written on the tablets of thy heart by the finger of God, thou gavest them to thy disciples as a book of life" (Minaion, Ode 8, Troparion 4).

In other words, the blessed Theodosius, like another Moses, entered the place where God was (Exodus 20,21). According to Saint Dionysios of Areopagite, this divine "gnophos" (noetic darkness) is the unattainable light". According to Saint John the Theologian: "God is light, and in Him, there is no darkness" (1 John 1, 5). And according to Saint Gregory of Nyssa, the "slates written by the finger of God" are the voice of God. "The letters in the slates, the voice of God." Through whom the revelation of the mysteries took place." According to the celestial Paul, the Lord God is " Who only hath

immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (1 Tim. 6,16).

From the above, it is demonstrated, my beloved brothers, that the faithful and genuine members of the Church, of the Body of Christ, belong to the communion of saints. " God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord", (1 Cor. 1,9) preaches Saint Paul, who prays for us, " That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1, 17-18).

This wealth of the glory of God was inherited by our holy Father Theodosius, who is being honoured today. This wealth, says Saint Chrysostom, is "the ineffable glory of God", so he wonders: "what word is able to describe that glory?" [of God]?"

This wealth of God's glory is provided by Christ as an inheritance in His Church and through His saints, as the psalmist says: "God is wonderful in His saints" (Psalm 67:36).

We beseech God's Saint Theodosius the Great, my beloved brothers, to be ambassador, after the blessed Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, to the noetic Sun of Righteousness, who came to Jordan to be baptized by John, to enlighten us and the whole world. Amen. Many happy returns".

After the Divine Liturgy, the renovator of the Monastery, elderly Archimandrite Hierotheos, offered a treat to the Patriarchal entourage.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF SAINTS GEORGE AND JOHN THE HOZEVITES

On Saturday, January 8th/21st, 2023, the memory of Saints George and John the Hozevites was celebrated by the Patriarchate in the Holy Monastery of Hozeva, located on the left bank of the Brook Horrath in its Jericho flow.

On this day, the Church remembers that Saint John came to the Holy Monastery of Hozeva, having resigned his Bishopric in Caesarea, and became a pole of spiritual attraction, and Saint George came from Lefkara of Cyprus and renovated the Monastery after the Persian invasion of 614 AD.

The memory of these holy men was honoured with an all-night vigil after the preface by the Hegoumen Archimandrite Constantine of His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with the following address:

“Rejoice, rules of extreme humility,”

“Rejoice, images of clear wisdom”,

Your Beatitude, Father and Master,

And Your honourable Entourage,

We have gathered once more to celebrate the annual memory of the two Holy Founders of the historical HozozHoHeva Lavra, George and John, and the three thousand Hozevite martyrs the day after tomorrow.

Their virtues are many! Based on the most meaningful, excellent spiritual teaching of our Holy Father George, a virtue above all:

Holy humility!

In the teaching of the Saint to the Hozevite Monks, "About pride", we read:

"Humility, humility, exaltation (that is, boasting) has the Only Begotten Son of God, who humbled Himself to death, death on the Cross... I tell you, brothers, that there was no Greek or Jew or Samaritan who had true humility and he is not loved and much loved by God and men... so let us acquire these virtues: humility and reverence. Struggle, brothers, supporting each other in humility."

This is what our Holy Father George taught the Hozevites. Not only did he teach, but also practiced!

Both Saints John and George were possessed, not only by humility but above all, by extreme and genuine humility. The distinct, indeed, difference between the two concepts is clarified by our Holy Father Nikitas Stithatos in the second hundred of his chapters:

"Humility is achieved by all suffering and by the external efforts of virtue... Humility, however, is what is divine and heavenly and is born... through the influx of the Holy Spirit". (Philokalia, volume 4 p.86,87, 1st edition 1987, "The Orchard of the Virgin Mary").

The sublime precisely humility, which is completely lacking in our days, please pray, Your Beatitude Father and Master, that we may all acquire it. And indeed, we may walk in life with moderation, in the bond of the Lord's love, Amen".

Consequently, the all-night vigil followed, officiated by His Beatitude, with the co-celebration of their Eminences, the Archbishops, Aristarchos of Constantina, Isidoros of Hierapolis, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, among whom the Elder

Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, the Hozevite Hieromonk Chrysogonos, at the changing of Mr Stavros Christos, cantor in the Church of Saint Paraskevi of Attica, Mr Papadimitriou Nikolaos, choir leader of the Holy Church of Saint Kyriaki in Pyrgos Elia, Mr Stavros Ioannou choir leader in the Holy Church of Saint Dimitrios of Tripoli, Mr Theotokatos Nikolaos left choir singer in the H. Church of Prophet Elias of the Municipality of Saint Paraskevi Attica, Mr Kamtsios Elias and Panagiotis, right and left choir singers respectively of the chapel of the Holy Apostles of the Municipality of Saint Paraskevi Attica, after the monks of the Monastery, with the participation of many people for the first time after the last covid-19 pandemic.

Before the Holy Communion, His Beatitude delivered the solemn sermon as follows:

“And I said: this change hath been wrought by the right hand of the Most High”, (Ps. 76,11) exclaims the psalmist,

Beloved Holy Fathers and Brothers in Christ,

The redeeming Grace of God and our Saviour Christ, who appeared in the Jordan, brought us all together in this Holy place of Hozeva, so that we may solemnly honour the sacred memory of our Holy Father George the Hozevite.

Burning from childhood with the desire for a solitary and ascetic life, to which he was drawn, and after remaining in the service of his elderly parents until their death, he left his native island of Cyprus for the Holy Land. Then his brother the monk Heraklides receives him and leads him to the famous for its austerity and its holy monks, the coenobitic monastery of Hozeva.

Let's listen to his hymnographer saying: “Neither lengthiness of the road nor severity of the place could avail to weaken thy strong and fiery zeal to make thy journey to God; and when thou joyously hadst arrive da the places that were trod by the

feet of our Lord and God, thou, O righteous George, leftest nothing undone till through thy labours and ascetic deeds thou camest unto the Sion in Heaven's heights" (Vespers, sticheron 2).

Indeed, "the fire of our Saint George's education to God" is strengthened by the Davidic words "I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord, and Thy law is my meditation" (Psalms 118, 174) from one; and the strict (hard) his practice on the other hand, in Lavra. "The insults of the warrior devil did not settle the citadel of his soul," says the hymn. And this, because the blessed George had as a model of imitation our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the commandment of Saint Paul: "Be ye, therefore, followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph. 5, 1-2).

Interpreting these words of Paul, Saint Chrysostom says: "See that the suffering because of the enemy, is a smell of fragrance and also a welcome sacrifice; if you die, then it a sacrifice; this is to imitate God."

The imitation of God, that is, of our Saviour Christ, is nothing other than the alteration of the right hand of the Most High, Who "became like us and was greatly altered himself", as Saint Cyril of Alexandria says, adding: "and everyone, out of malice returning, or remaining in virtue and prosper, let him say: -Now I start; this change, which the right hand of the Most High has bestowed, may it be the greatest advance through the striving of reverence. The precept of virtue does not exist when he does not change. It is also said that the Only Begotten (Son and Word of God) is changed, as the descent of the divine nature to the human form and a kind of change, not by expulsion (=rejection) but by adoption.

Our holy Father George also achieved this exact change

according to Christ, "having been trained in virtue through the gymnasiums (=practice) of piety, of the right professed faith. Also worth noting is the fact that the Holy George, like another Paul, dwelt on earth as a disembodied angel, unceasingly glorifying the Holy Triune God and receiving his divine radiance.

Saint George, born as a vessel of the enlightening Grace of the Holy Spirit and following in the footsteps of Saint John the Forerunner and Baptist preaching repentance in the desert of Jordan, echoed and evangelized through the mouth of the psalmist, the greatness and saving truth of Christ, saying: "I have proclaimed the good tidings of Thy righteousness in the great congregation; lo, my lips I shall not restrain; Lord, Thou knowest it. Thy righteousness have I not hid in my heart; Thy truth and Thy salvation have I declared (Ps. 39, 11-12).

True witnesses of this event have been the multitude of monks, the ascetics in this holy Monastery of Hozeva, in which John the bishop-to-be of Caesarea of Palestine and John our New Father from Romania, who is before our eyes and his incorruptible and fragrant relic proclaims the Resurrection of God and our Saviour, but also our resurrection in Christ. " For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:5), preaches the wise Paul.

We, my beloved brothers and venerable monks, who are practising in this sanctified Lavra, beseech the all-wise George standing before God, to grant to those who honour him the illumination of the Holy Spirit who appeared in the form of a dove in the Jordan and the divine communion.

And after the hymnographer let us say: "with one accord, let us faithful laud with hymns God the Word, Who came forth from God, and Who ineffably took on flesh from a pure Virgin for us and in wisdom past telling descended to make Adam new again, who by eating fell grievously down into corruption's pits"

(Ode 9, Heirmos).

Amen. Many, peaceful and blessed years”.

After the Dismissal of the vigil, the renovator of the Monastery and its reorganizer, Hegoumen Archimandrite Constantine, offered a solemn feast.

Blessing everyone, His Beatitude ascended the uphill road with the help of the monastery vehicle and boarded the Patriarchate’s car to return to Jerusalem.

From Secretariat-General

THE LETTER OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF ATHENS AND ALL GREECE IERONYMOS ABOUT THE HOLY MONASTERY OF SINAI

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem publishes the letter of His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos under Protocol no. 788 and from December 21, 2022, to His Beatitude Archbishop of Athens and All Greece Ieronymos regarding the Autocephalous regime of the Holy Monastery of

Saint Catherine of Sinai and the canonical order in the case of the celebration of the Divine Liturgy in it, under a Bishop of other ecclesiastical jurisdictions.

This letter reads as follows:

No. Prot.

788

Your Beatitude Archbishop of Athens and all Greece and President of the Holy Synod of the Holy Church in Christ God in Greece, dear brother and co-minister of Our Mediocrity Mr Ieronymos. Embracing you in a holy kiss we humbly admonish Your Beatitude.

Through these Patriarchal fraternal Letters of Ours, we communicate in the spirit of fraternal love in Christ after Your most beloved and widely studied Beatitude, taking the occasion from this year's feast of the Holy Glorious Great Martyr Catherine the All-wise in the Holy Monastery of the God-trodden Mount Sinai.

As you know, the long-standing canonical tradition of our Orthodox Church, witnessed in most canonical and synodical documents, (e.g. in the Canonical Letter of the Patriarch of Constantinople Gennadius Scholarios to Maximus Sophianus Hegoumen of the Monastery of Sinai, in the decisions of the Synodical Assembly in Cairo in the year 1557 under the Patriarchs Joachim of Alexandria, Joachim of Antioch and Germanos of Jerusalem, in the decision of the Holy Synod in Moscow in the year 1667, in the Patriarchal Letter of the Ecumenical Patriarch Methodius III), and also in the creeds, the confession which the Archbishops of Sinai have been giving up to the present time before the Patriarchs of Jerusalem at their ordination, as well as in the valid Constitution of the Patriarch of Jerusalem Chrysanthos, which defines this Monastery as being within the limits of the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, for centuries Autocephalous,

Autonomous and Independent, administered by the Holy Synod of the Sinaitic Fathers.

This tradition and order from the days of Our election to the Patriarchal Throne, We also, conforming to the Canonical Principles, which were established by Our predecessors, including the great Sinaitic Patriarch of Jerusalem Nektarios, have totally respected, without any intervention neither in the internal administrative issues of the Monastery nor in its external activities.

These being strictly observed, however, a problem has been created recently, as it were, from the non-notification of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem by the Sinaitic Fathers, for the invitation of Hierarchs from other Ecclesiastical jurisdictions, for the purpose of the celebration of the Divine Eucharist in the Holy Monastery, in particular on the feast of Saint Catherine. Every year We send a delegation for this feast, without knowing which High Priests of other Churches we will meet there, thus making Our representatives witnesses of canonical disorder.

At the Divine Liturgy of the feast of Saint Catherine this year, His Eminence the Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia and Lavreotiki, presided, without any knowledge on Our part, and he commemorated in the Divine Liturgy, apparently due to a misunderstanding, the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece and the Archbishop of Sinai, without any mention of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, in contrast to the liturgical and canonical order that existed in the Venerable Patriarchates. We wonder if the Autonomy of the Monastery or its "Autocephalous", as the Sinai Fathers claim, annuls the order of the Diptychs and on what canonical basis is this annulment based.

We make known to Your Beatitude that through the above we do not express an intention to catalyze the "Autocephalous" character of the management of the Monastery, but on the contrary, we intend to protect its Status in everything within

the framework of the normal mandates of the Fathers and Synods (35th of the Apostles, 2nd of the Second Ecumenical Council, 20th of Quinisext Council, 13th and 22nd of the Antioch Council, etc.), so we asked the Sinai Fathers to observe the normal order on this issue to ensure “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4.3).

Collocating these, we kindly request from Your Beatitude to recommend to the High Priests of the Church of Greece, any time they wish to celebrate the Divine Liturgy in the Holy Monastery of the God-trodden Mount Sinai, to inform the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, like the High Priests of the Other Orthodox Churches do because the Autonomy of the Monastery does not annul the fact that the Monastery does not stand in some abstract placement but on normal grounds of the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Whence, attributing to You the embracing in the Lord from the Holy and Life-Giving Tomb of our Saviour Christ, we remain.

In the Holy City of Jerusalem, December 21, 2022

Your Beatitude's

Beloved brother in Christ

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

CELEBRATION EVENT IN QATAR

On Friday, January 13, 2023, in the space between the Bishopric and the Cathedral of the Archdiocese of Qatar, a celebratory event of the Twelve Days period was held,

following an artistic program from various local traditions.

The artistic program included contemporary Christmas carols by the children of the Orthodox Arabic-speaking Catechetical School, the Greek-speaking Catechetical School, the Russian-speaking Choir, Qatar Arabesque, the Russian-Ukrainian International Centre for Music Kamerton Choir. The dancing Association of the Greeks of Qatar, wearing Greek traditional clothing, danced traditional dances and the Al Kofia Association, wearing traditional Arabic clothing, danced traditional dances and sang traditional songs.

At this event, gifts and objects of reverence were put up for sale, to support the work of the H. Archdiocese. A wide variety of Arabic, Greek, Serbian, Romanian, Moldavian, Russian and Ukrainian cuisine was also presented, offered by various companies and leading members of the flock.

The event was honoured with their presence by the Ambassador of Greece, Mrs Helen Michalopoulou, the Ambassador of Moldova, Mr Lulian Grigorita, the Ambassador of Bulgaria, Mr Plamen Stankov Delev, the Ambassador of Russia, Mr Dimitri Dugadkin, the Ambassador of Georgia, Mr Nikoloz Revazishvili and the Acting Ambassador of Serbia, Mr Slobodan Radeka, as well as representatives of other denominations in Doha.

The large attendance of the Qatari Orthodox and members of other Christian Communities confirmed the success of this activity.

From the Holy Archdiocese of Qatar

THE CUTTING OF THE NEW YEAR CAKE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On the evening of Friday, December 31, 2022/January 13, 2023, New Year's Eve, the cutting of the New Year Cake (Vasilopita) took place in the hall of the Patriarchate, in the presence of the Hagiotaphite Fathers, the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem, Mr Evangelos Vlioras, the Greek Community of Jerusalem, the Trustees of the Cathedral of Saint James the Brother of God, the members of our Arabic-speaking flock and pilgrims.

On this occasion, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos delivered the following address:

“And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night? and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years” (Genesis 1:14) the Bible reads.

Our holy Church celebrates a double feast today the feast of the circumcision of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ and of the memory of our holy Father Basil the Great, and brought us all together in this holy place of our Venerable Patriarchate, that we may glorify and give thanks to the holy Triune God for the entrance of the New Year. Moreover, so that we can customarily perform the cutting of Vasilopitta, made in honour of Saint Basil.

God the Father set times and seasons in his own power (cf. Acts 1:7) says the Lord. Interpreting these words of the Lord, Saint Gregory of Nyssa says: “The Father in his own authority established the times, and from the times and everything born in the time we understand that the Father has authority over all these”. And Athanasios the Great points out saying: “about the end of all times [Christ] as the Word knows, as man is

ignorant; for the man himself is ignorant of even these things". According to Cyril of Alexandria: "one should not be curious about the very secret things and hidden in God and through them, the Lord taught".

Indeed, it is impossible for the human mind to determine the meaning of time and its change without referring to its creator, God the Father, as Saint Paul teaches saying: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible... all things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:16). Therefore, Basil the Great says: "and when now the time has come for the world to be introduced into the creatures ... then the flow of time was created as a basis, inherent with the world ... a flow that constantly rushes and runs sideways towards it and nowhere ends its path. Isn't Time something whose past has disappeared, whose future has not yet appeared, and whose present, before it is fully perceived, escapes immediately from the hands of the senses?"

The exit of time, i.e. its appearance after the world but also its change, indicates the course on the one hand of man's history in the world, on the other hand, of his rebirth in the Holy Spirit, of his hagiographical so-called history. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted...To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord"(Is. 61,1-2/Lk. 4,18-19) says the Lord.

The Year of the Lord is not other than that, through which Jesus Christ, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost? Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Tit. 3,5-6). We also hear St. Cyril of Alexandria saying: "accepted is the year which, however, we have entered into, washing away sin through holy baptism and becoming communicants with its divine nature, being born into communion through the sharing

of the Holy Spirit... as also the all-wise Paul preached "behold, now is the accepted time? behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6,2).

The Church, therefore, the divine-human body of Christ, which is not of this world (Jn. 8:23), celebrates the fact of the change of the year not in a worldly way, but in a Christ-like way. And this is because Christ is the Lord of Time distinguished into the present, past and future on the one hand, and numbered in years on the other. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. John 1:8) according to the testimony of Saint John the Theologian.

In other words, the human intellect's understanding of the outgoing old and the new incoming Year becomes possible only in the Incarnation of God the Word of Christ, because, as Saint Paul preaches, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away? behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5,17). We become partakers of this newness in Christ in the liturgical and eucharistic act of the Church, as Time becomes season.

Christ has granted us the time that is born in his Church, so that we may cleanse soul and body from all corruption and become beloved to God, as the apostle Barnabas orders in his letter: "let us therefore completely depart from all works of iniquity, lest the works of iniquity overtake us; and let us hate the error of the present time, that in the future we may love".

These divinely inspired words of the apostle Barnabas call all those who love, according to Basil the Great, "the longed-for beauty, the source of life, the mental light but also the unattainable wisdom", during this time of the change of the year and the dawning apostasy and iniquity, so that we may reflect on our transgressions, for which our Lord Jesus was delivered and raised for our righteousness (cf. Rom. 4:25).

“Let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous” (1 John 3:7) orders St. John the Evangelist.

Saluting the dawn of the new year in the Incarnate in Christ from the pure blood of the most blessed Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, we beseech the Great Hierarch of Cappadocia, Saint Basil, the one who has adorned the things of men, that he may also intercede to the circumcised Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ for our souls, for the peace of the universe, especially for our tested region of the Middle East and for the cessation of schisms and the restoration of the broken unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Orthodox Church.

And after the hymnographer, we say: “God of Gods and Lord, you who are three-present nature, unapproachable, and creator of all, Almighty, we all fall to you, and we entreat you; bless this present year, as a Good one, keep in peace, Your Church, our Venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, our pious Christian flock, the holy city of Jerusalem and the pious nation of the Roman Orthodox. Amen.

Happy, blessed and peaceful New Year 2023, and many happy returns!”

Then, as the troparia of the Circumcision of the Lord and of Saint Basil were chanted, His Beatitude cut the cake and distributed its pieces to the pilgrims, praying: “Happy and prosperous New Year 2023” and the students sang the New Year carols in the Hall and later at the cells of the Hagiotaphite Fathers.

From Secretariat-General