

DECISIONS OF THE HOLY AND SACRED SYNOD OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

The Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem met in Jerusalem, on Thursday, Dec. 30th, 2021 presided by H.H.B. our Patriarch and Father Theophilos III. Following are the decisions:

After raising the prayer and calling for the Holy Spirit, His Beatitude and the members of the Holy Synod expressed their thanks and gratitude to His Hashemite Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein for bestowing the Order of the State Centennial on Dec. 21st, 2021 to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, represented by His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III, in recognition for the important historical and religious role of the Patriarchate in preserving the holy places, guarding coexistence, serving the Christian presence, and embodying the Hashemite Custodianship in Jerusalem. In addition, the Synod expressed their gratitude to His Majesty for bestowing the same decoration on the Council of Church Leaders in Jordan, in appreciation for the important spiritual and social role that the members of the Council are doing in embodying the unity of the position of the Kingdom's churches as well as representing the interests of the Kingdom and their communities, whereby the Order of the State Centennial was received by His Eminence Archbishop Christophoros on behalf the members of the Council. In addition, the members of Holy Synod recalled the Order of the State Centennial that was granted on May 25th, 2021 to the late Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem Venedictos I, for the establishment of the modern procedures of the Patriarchate and its courts, to govern and rule in accordance with the 1958 Jordanian law of all denominations and churches, which is still valid until today.

His Beatitude also discussed with the members of the Synod several cases concerning the administration, ecclesiastical and congregation affairs, and took the following decisions:

The Appointment of His Eminence Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias as General Patriarchal Deputy.

Approval of the following ordinations:

1- In Jerusalem:

The ordination of the monk Dositheos, as Deacon

2- In Jordan:

The ordination of the monk Porphyrios Barham, as Deacon

The ordination of the spiritual son Osama Salman Salim Marji, as Deacon

The ordination of the spiritual son Tariq Freih Ilyas Swiess, as Deacon

At the end of the Synod meeting, His Beatitude and the members of the Holy Synod extended the heartfelt greetings, at this holy and blessed season, to all the clergymen and to our children in our congregations and the Patriarchal see and to all the world.

Raising their prayers to the Incarnate Lord born in the manger in Bethlehem and appearing in the river Jordan, for the peace of the world and to preserve us from all distress and troubles, dispelling the scourge of the epidemic, wishing everyone a new year full of goodness and blessings, through the intercessions of the Most Holy Virgin Mary and by the grace of the Life-giving Holy Sepulcher and all the Saints, Amen.

DECISIONS OF THE HOLY AND SACRED SYNOD

On Monday, October 4, 2021, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was convened, chaired by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III.

His Beatitude discussed with the members of the Synod a number of issues related to ecclesiastical and pastoral administrative affairs that fall into the service of the Patriarchate, its monasteries, churches, clergy and the people.

Among the most important decisions taken during the assembly were:

1. His Eminence Metropolitan Benedict – in addition to his position as head of the Patriarchal Monastery of Theophany in the Jordan River (Al-Maghtas), was appointed Patriarchal Representative in the city of Bethlehem.
2. His Eminence Metropolitan Joachim was appointed in charge of the schools of the Patriarchate in Palestine and St. Dimitrios School in Jerusalem.
3. Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios was appointed as Vice-President of the Finance Committee, in addition to his duties as treasurer and member of the Synod.
4. Archimandrite Ieronymos was appointed patriarchal representative in the city of Madaba, and this decision comes among a previous series of decisions adopted by His Beatitude which concern the periodic movements of the clergy.
5. Archimandrite Christophoros Haddad was appointed as

Hegoumen of Fuheis and As-Salt, this decision was made to enable pastoral and ecclesiastical work in these two Jordanian cities for the benefit of the parish.

6. Monk Vasileios was appointed as secretary of the Audit Committee within the Finance Department of the Patriarchate.
7. Decided the ordination of spiritual son Elias Spyridon to a deacon (and later a priest) in the city of Acre, Northern Israel.
8. Approved the tonsure of the young Novice Elias Konidis.
9. Approved the tonsure of the Novice Athanasios Kirmitsakis, and later to be a deacon and a priest in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
10. Monk Anastasios of St. Savvas' Monastery was decided to be ordained deacon and a priest to serve at Saint Savvas' Monastery.
11. Approved the ordination to deacon (and later a priest) of spiritual son Nibal Haddad, to serve in the Archdiocese of Jordan.
12. The Synod approved the decisions to stop the service of certain patriarchal priests due to various reasons, and this was decided in order to prevent abuse and not tolerate any violations.
13. The Synod approved a law on the principles and procedures of litigation before ecclesiastical courts, which will be applied in all ecclesiastical courts of the Holy Patriarchal See.
14. The Synod approved the Law of Church Committees to be implemented in the Archdiocese of Jordan.

From Secretariat-General

THE SERVICE OF THE LAMENTATIONS OF THE THEOTOKOS

On the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, 14/27 August 2021, the Service of the Lamentations / Epitaph of the Theotokos was held at the Holy Church of the Dormition in Gethsemane.

The Procession of the Hagiotaphite Fathers marched from the Patriarchate Headquarters to the Shrine of Gethsemane, led by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos. His Beatitude officiated the Service with the co-celebration of their Eminences, Metropolitan Isychios of Kapitolias, the Archbishops Theophanes of Gerassa, Makarios of Qatar, Philoumenos of Pella and Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, Elder Kamarasis Archimandrite Nectarios, the Archimandrites Alexios, Dionysios, Thaddeos, Meletios and Isidoros and Archdeacon Mark with Hierodeacon Eulogios, as the chanting was delivered by Hierodeacon Simeon. The Service was attended by quite a few faithful and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr Evangelos Vlioras, despite the covid restrictions.

The Service included the three stases of the Lamentations and after the exapostilarion and before the Praises, the Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod Hierodeacon Simeon delivered a Sermon on behalf of the Secretary-General, His Eminence Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina. The Sermon follows below:

“Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Reverend chorea of Hierarchs,

Your Excellency Consul General of Greece,

Pious Priests,

Noble pilgrims,

Being blessed by God to be members of the body of the Orthodox Church, we know that all the prayers, all the services of the ecclesiastical cycle, especially the Services of the Small and Great Canon of Theotokos of the fifteen fasting days of August, have a supplicant or honorary reference to the immaculate person of our Most Holy Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary. All Odes of the Church canons, Parakletiki, Minaion, Triodion and Pentecostarion, necessarily conclude to the Theotokion, the Troparion for the Theotokos. In these troparia, especially of the 9th ode, which is specifically dedicated to the Theotokos, the Church praises, blesses and magnifies the pure Mariam, the most immaculate daughter of Nazareth, who due to her purity and excessive cleanness of life was predestined by God to become the vessel of the conception, and incarnation of the Only Begotten Son and Word of God, through the Holy Spirit.

The Church reminds this supernatural mystery in an easy-to-remember poetic writing style of the Holy God-bearing Fathers, as we sing in the Katavasias: "The words and dark saying of the Prophets dimly foreshadowed Thine Incarnation from a Virgin O Christ" (Katavasias of the Dormition, Ode 4) and in a piece of grandiose Byzantine music "the prophets foretold about Thee from above". Numerous are the icons of the Old Testament which symbolise the Theotokos concerning the mystery which God the Father was pleased to accomplish through her.

The burning bush of Sinai, the crossing of the Red Sea "in dry feet" from the Israeli people who marched on land, the ladder of Patriarch Jacob are only a few of the icons which prefigure the event chanted by the Church "Thy childbirth was shown to be without corruption; God came froth from thy loins"

(Katavasias of the Transfiguration, Ode 9) and it projects them to become a solid knowledge and a way of life for its faithful members.

This philanthropic providence of God for our salvation, which is foretold in parables and riddles in the Old Testament, is revealed in more precision in the New Testament, "when the fullness of time came" (Gal. 4:4). Then Mariam of Nazareth receives a visit and is invited by God to become an accessory of His goodwill to save man. She is addressed by Archangel Gabriel: "thou who art full of grace, the Lord is with thee" (Luke 1:28) in a greeting that no man had ever heard before, and the Archangel reveals to her that she is to conceive by the Holy Spirit and bear the Only Begotten Son of God in a human form. As she consents, "behold the maiden of the Lord, let it be unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38), immediately "the Son of God becomes Son of the Virgin", the until then bodiless Word of God becomes flesh, borrowing flesh from her flesh, receives a body and she becomes Theotokos (Mother of God). He for whom the Apostle of nations says: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9), dwells in her bodily.

This mystery is not done "under the stool" but "it is placed on the lamp" to illuminate the world. When the "Virgin went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda" (Luke 1:39), then her relative Elizabeth "was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:42-43). Elizabeth receives the information that Mariam bears in her womb the incarnate God the Word, that she is a vessel of the Insufferable, a dwelling place for the Uncontained, and that the One she carries in her womb is the One who holds the whole universe. Information for this truth is also given to Elizabeth's foetus, Saint John the Forerunner, who "leapt in her womb" (Luke 1:41). In this

event, the two mothers meet and embrace each other and also Saint John meets with the Lord, "the star with the sun", as they are both fetuses, and the Theotokos prophesises "behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (Luke 1:48). All the honour and reverence that the Orthodox Church shows in the Fathers' Sermons for the feasts of the Nativity, Annunciation and Dormition are based on this foretelling by the Mother of God.

The Fore feast of the Dormition of Theotokos, which is uniquely celebrated with this Epitaph service by the Church of Jerusalem, under the lead of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, is not considered death; that is why it is characterised as "deathless", singing: "On thy deathless Dormition, all the heavens are jubilant, and the hosts of Angels exceedingly rejoice, clouds caught the Apostles high into the air; and although dispersed throughout the world, they were brought to stand in one choir before thine immaculate body" (Matins, praises, troparia 1,3).

Saint Gregory Palamas says, "we celebrate the holy dormition or transition to another life" (Speech 37, PG 151, 461, 1). Saint John Damascene in his "1 Praise to the Dormition" (Publication of the Institution Saint John the Russian, Athens, 1979) says, that "the source of life is going to life through death" (p. 128) and characterises the Dormition as "the best departure, through which life in God is granted" (p.130), and that "after the departure of the Theotokos her body remained incorrupt" (p. 130) and that "through His ineffable mercy, the Son receives his Most Holy Mother in His hands and welcomes her soul" (ps. 111-112).

Following Saint Cyril of Alexandria in his "Praise to the Holy Mary Theotokos" in the 3rd Ecumenical Synod of Ephesus against Nestorius, let us say along with him: "Rejoice Mary Theotokos, Virgin Mother, Light-bearer, Rejoice Mary the ornament of the universe, immaculate dove, undying lamp, from you the Sun of righteousness is born, rejoice Mary the dwelling place of the

Uncontainable, whom hast contained the Only Begotten God the Word. Rejoice Mary for who the prophets sing, shepherds give glory, angels dance, Archangels rapture, wise men offer worship, John while still in his mother's womb leapt with joy, Rejoice Mary Theotokos through whom the true Light came forth, our Lord Jesus Christ, who said in the Gospels "I am the Light of the world" (PG 77, 1032-1033).

In our praise to the Most Holy Lady Theotokos, who the triumphant Church praises, the Most honourable than the Cherubim, most glorious beyond-compare than the Seraphim, who stands by the right side of the Saviour having the mother's boldness, let us fervently pray to her, to remove the infectious covid-19 which plagues and decimates humanity, to extinguish the fires which burn and charcoal the creation of God, the homes and the people, to come as a helper to those who are left without the necessary means to live and to pacify and protect the Middle East and the Holy Land, to heal the sick Hagiotaphite Fathers, and to strengthen the healthy ones in their work of the witness, conciliation, peace and love for the preservation of the Holy Land, to comfort every suffering and tested soul and protect our nation from every hostile foreign intrigue. So be it."

After the Praises and Doxology the Priests carried the Epitaph with the icon of the Dormition to the top of the stairs where there was an entreaty before taking the Epitaph back to its place behind the Theotokos' Tomb.

The Service was dismissed and the Patriarchal Entourage was welcomed at the Hegoumeneion by the Hegoumen, His Eminence Archbishop Dorotheos of Avela, and offered a reception with refreshments for the continuing heatwave.

From Secretariat-General

DECISIONS OF THE HOLY AND SACRED SYNOD OF JERUSALEM PATRIARCHATE

On Monday, 11/24 May 2021, the Holy and Sacred Synod of Jerusalem Patriarchate met in an ordinary Session, chaired by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, and addressed pastoral and pilgrimage issues of the Patriarchate and made the following three decisions:

1. Decided the upgrading to a Shrine of the Holy Monastery of Saint John the Baptist on the East Bank of the River Jordan, with the name "Pilgrimage Holy Monastery of Theophany". The Monastery was constructed by the care and funding of Metropolitan Benedict of Diocaesarea.
2. Decided the Ordination to Deacon and afterwards to Priest of Issa Ibrahim Hadad, in order to serve at the parishes of the Patriarchate's flock in Jordan.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF OUR HOLY FATHER SAVVAS THE SANCTIFIED

On Friday, December 5/18, 2020, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of our Holy Father Savvas the Sanctified at his Holy Monastery in the Judea desert, by the bank of brook Cedron,

which leads to the Dead Sea.

This old and respectable Monastery was founded by Saint Savvas himself, in A.D. 500. Saint Savvas came to the Holy Land from his hometown Moutalaski of Cappadocia at the age of 18, became a novice under the obedience of Saint Euthymius the Great and his co-ascetic Saint Theoktistos, and later on founded the Lavra that bears his name.

He founded the Monastery as a Lavra community, for advanced Monks who had already received their training in a Coenobitic Monastery. Saint Savvas founded another ten Monasteries around Palestine and became a great spiritual father in all of them, leader of thousands of Monks and laity and at the same time fervent and brave supporter, along with Saint Theodosios the Cenobiarch, of the decisions of the 4th Ecumenical Synod of Chalcedon in A.D. 451, which established the two Natures of our Lord Jesus Christ, the divine and the human, in one Hypostasis.

In this historic Monastery, the commemoration of Saint Savvas was celebrated with a contrite All-night Vigil, officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants the Archbishop of the three-day celebrations, His Eminence Aristovoulos of Madaba, and their Eminences; Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, and Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis. The chanting was delivered by Archbishop Aristovoulos on the right in Greek, and by Archimandrite Philotheos with his helpers on the left in Arabic. The service was attended by Monks and Arab-speaking faithful from Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour.

Before the Holy Communion, His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon:

“The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. The works of his hands are verity and

judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever and are done in truth and uprightness" (Psalm 111:2, 7-8).

Beloved Brethren in Christ, Fathers and Brothers,

Noble Christians

The desert rejoices today and the area of the River Jordan is exceeding glad, on the commemoration of Saint Savvas the Sanctified in his Lavra. And this is so because our Holy Father Savvas became "a peer of angelkind, dweller with saints in the heights, companion of the prophets and joint-heir with the apostles and martyrs" (Great Vespers, sticheron 1).

The incorrupt and fragrant relics of God-bearing Savvas that we see before us, is a testimony and a true witness that he became a vessel of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, of Christ's Spirit. For while he was still a man of clay, he put on Christ, becoming Light of Christ, and having received by God the power to work miracles, he was able to convince those who lived in asceticism with him, to despise the worldly goods and the carnal passions, as his hymnographer says: "Righteous Father, diligently struggling in virtue from thy childhood, thou becamest an instrument of the Holy Spirit, and receiving from Him the power to work miracles, thou didst persuade men to disdain pleasures. And now, as thou art more purely illuminated by the Divine Light, do thou enlighten our minds also, O Savvas our Father" (Entreaty, Troparion 3).

Having been illumined by the Lord's Light, Saint Savvas did not doubt in the least that the Lord's works are truth, judgment and righteousness because the Lord is reliable, true in His words and His words are just. Interpreting David's words: "all His commandments are sure" (Psalm 111:7), Saint Chrysostom says: "what is the meaning of the word 'sure'; that they are certain, and they endure. And if they are bridged, then punishments follow, and these commandments are not

shaken; and even if men disobey, God Himself makes justice”.

For God’s commandments cannot be shaken, because “They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness” (Psalm 111:7), and this is confirmed by Jesus’ prayer for His Disciples “Father, sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so, have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes, I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth” (John 17:17-19).

Interpreting these words of the Lord, Saint Cyril of Alexandria says: “Jesus became an Apostle and a High Priest of our confession, according to Paul’s voice (Hebrews 3:1), as it is befitting to the human form and the manner of His kenosis; as soon as the Holy Apostles were elected, they had to be sanctified by the Holy Father, implanting in them the Holy Spirit through His Son.”

Our Father Savvas can be considered “a remnant according to the election of grace” (Romans 11:5), as we can see from his reply to Saint Euthymius the Great; “I know, Holy Father, that God who foresees everything, has led me to your holy hands in order to save me.” Then, Great Euthymius sent him to Theoktistos, asking the latter to take care of Savvas, as he was going to become great in monasticism by the grace of Christ”.

In other words, my dear Brethren, blessed Savvas received the sanctification from God the Father since his early childhood, through the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in him, through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Behold, therefore, why our Holy Father Savvas is called ‘sanctified’. He “purged himself from these... [and became] a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Timothy 2:21).

The sanctified Saint by our Master and God is honoured by the

Church of Jerusalem today, and let us say along with the hymnographer: "O Blessed Savvas, thou wast offered from thine infancy through thy great virtue as a pure and spotless sacrifice unto God, Who ere thy birth, verily foreknew thee; wherefore thou wast an adornment of the righteous Saints, an all-praised founder of cities in the wilderness. Hence, I cry to thee: Rejoice, O Father of great renown" (Kontakion).

It is precisely to this cause, our Holy Father Savvas, has called us, namely, to the participation in the grace of the Holy Spirit's sanctification of his, through the intercessions of our Most-Blessed Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, who bore in the flesh the Saviour and Redeemer, the God of all and our Lord, in the Cave of Bethlehem; may we be granted to celebrate His Nativity in peace and health of body and soul. Amen. Many happy returns!"

Immediately after the Dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, a monastic meal followed.

Leaving the Monastery, His Beatitude blessed the Fathers and having accepted their thanks, He stopped over the Monastery of Saint Theodosios the Cenobiarch, according to the custom, before His return to Jerusalem and the Patriarchate Headquarters.

In honour of Saint Savvas, the Divine Liturgy was also celebrated at his chapel inside the Holy Monastery of the Archangels, by the Master of Ceremonies of the Patriarchate, Archimandrite Bartholomew, at the invitation of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda.

From Secretariat-General

DECISIONS OF THE HOLY AND SACRED SYNOD OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

On Monday, December 1/14, 2020, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem convened a meeting chaired by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos.

The Holy and Sacred Synod discussed various matters of the Patriarchate and decided the following:

Approved Monk Markelos' application to join the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, and be ordained a Deacon and then a Priest, in order to continue his ministry as the Hegoumen of the Holy Shrine of the Holy Great Martyr George in Lydda. Father Markelos came from Arizona of U.S.A. and has been serving at the God-receiving Cave in Bethlehem.

Appointed Archimandrite Nicodemus as a member of the Ecclesiastical Court of First Instance in Yaffo, as a member of the School Board of the Patriarchal School of Zion and as a member of the Cemetery Committee at the Holy Zion and at Gethsemane.

From Secretariat-General

DECISIONS OF THE HOLY AND SACRED SYNOD OF THE

PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

On Thursday, September 4/17, 2020, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, met in its canonical Meeting, 115/4th /17th September 2020, chaired by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III, discussed various matters and decided the following;

Appointed Geronda Sacristan of the Holy Sepulchre, His Eminence Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, as member of the Holy and Sacred Synod.

Appointed Archimandrite Raphael as Exarch of the Holy Sepulchre in Greece and as member of the Holy and Sacred Synod.

Brought back Archimandrite Damianos to the Hagiotaphite Headquarters in Jerusalem from the Exarchy of Greece.

Gave the title of Elder Dragoman to Archimandrite Mattheos who had already been ministering in this position as Vice Dragoman.

From Secretariat-General

DECISIONS OF THE HOLY AND SACRED SYNOD OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

On Tuesday, July 29/August 11, 2020, the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, chaired by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos held a normal Meeting with the additional video conference for the participation of the Synodical Members in Jordan, their Eminences Metropolitan of Diocaesarea Benedict and Archbishop Christophoros of

Kyriakoypolis, under the technical supervision of Priest Nikitas.

The Holy and Sacred Synod took into consideration various matters of the Patriarchate regarding its relations with the Brotherly Orthodox Churches and its Arab-speaking flock, the adaptation of the legislation of the Ecclesiastical Courts in fidelity to the legal tradition and in understanding of the modern changes in the lives of the people and;

1. By the proposal of His Beatitude, appointed the Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Hozeva Archimandrite Constantine Peramatzis a member of the Holy and Sacred Synod.
2. Decided the deposition of Hieromonk Euphrosynos to the order of laity. Hieromonk Euphrosynos was a former member of the Monastic Community of St. Savvas' Lavra, and recently a minister at the Sacred Shrine of the Tomb of Theotokos. This decision was taken due to his escape without giving any notice to his ecclesiastical authority, which however is reserved to restore him to Priesthood, should he return to his place of repentance.

From Secretariat-General

DECISIONS OF THE HOLY AND SACRED SYNOD OF THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

On Thursday, April 24/May 7, 2020, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, chaired by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, took under

consideration various matters of the Patriarchate, especially the way the Paschal Services were held within the framework of the restriction precautions due to the COVID-19 pandemic and decided the following;

1. Appointed Hierodeacon Simeon Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod, replacing His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda, who resigned from this position as well as from his place as member of the Holy and Sacred Synod for health reasons, after a thirty-year fruitful ministry. His Eminence has kept his position at the Secretariat Office.
2. Decided the ordination to Priest of Deacon Alexander Yasevich, in order to minister at the Russian-speaking Community of Ber-Shebba.
3. Decided the ordination to Deacon of Novice Monk Haldun Salman Attallah Hourani at the H. Metropolis of Philadelphia under His Eminence Archbishop Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis in Amman.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE BOILED WHEAT MIRACLE BY THE HOLY GREAT MARTYR THEODORE THE TYRO AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday of the First week of Great Lent, February 23/ March 7, 2020, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of the Holy Hieromartyr Polykarp Bishop of Smyrna according to the immobile feasts of the Minaion, and the commemoration of

the boiled wheat miracle of the Holy Great Martyr Theodore the Tyro, according to the mobile feasts of the Triodion.

On this feast the Church stresses especially due the Great Lent, the miracle of the Holy Great Martyr Theodore the Tyro. He was a newly recruited soldier when he martyred for Christ during the reign of Maximianus and Maximinus in 297, and he appeared to Archbishop Eudoxius of Constantinople in a vision and urged him to inform the faithful Christians, not to eat the available food in the market, because Julian the Offender was going to contaminate it with idolatrous food which was a sin for the Christians. Instead, they should eat boiled wheat, explaining what kind of a food that was in his hometown, Euhaita. When the Christians were informed, they ate the boiled wheat and did not contaminate themselves with the idolatrous sinful food.

The Patriarchate celebrated this miracle at the Holy Monastery of Saints Theodoroi, on the west side of the Patriarchate, with Vespers in the afternoon and the Divine Liturgy in the morning, led by His Eminence Archbishop Theophanes of Gerassa, with the co-celebration of Hagiotaphite Hieromonks with first in rank Dragouman Archimandrite Mattheos, and the participation of monks, nuns and faithful Christians from Jerusalem as well as pilgrims.

During the Divine Liturgy H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos visited the Monastery for veneration.

The Patriarchal and Episcopal entourages were offered a reception at the hegoumeneion and the congregation at the courtyard of the Church by the good keeper of the Monastery and Typikon Keeper of the Church of Saints Constantine and Helen, Archimandrite Alexios.

From Secretariat-General