

THE FEAST OF ST. JOHN THE NEW HOZEVITE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Saturday, July 28/ August 10, 2019, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of our Holy Father John the New Hozevite from Romania at the Holy Monastery of his ascetic life, the ancient Monastery of Hozeva, which is located by the bank of brook Chorath, near Jericho.

On this day, primarily the Church of Jerusalem, but also the Church of Romania commemorate Saint John the New Hozevite, who came in the Holy Land from Romania in mid- 20th century and lived an ascetic life in Holy Monasteries of the river Jordan district and in that of Saints George and John the Hozevites. Due to his marvelous signs he was canonized a Saint by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem in 2016.

The feast of the Dormition of Saint John was celebrated with an all-night Vigil, officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, who was welcomed by the Hegoumen Fr. Constantine with the following words;

“My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning. Let Israel hope in the Lord...” (Psalm 130:6-7).

Your Beatitude Father and Master,

With Your Reverend Entourage,

In our time people have lost hope to a great extent; the Saint we celebrate today wrote about hope in November 1952:

“Hope is being born simultaneously with the man’s soul and it is the pillar of life. If the virtue of hope had not existed, nor faith, neither love would remain within the soul, and therefore life itself would be lost. This is the wondrous

power of the soul which elevates those who have been hurt – the bright ray of light that leads to the truth. In short, we can say that the person who has unshakable hope within him can never be defeated by the storms and the hardships of life”.

Your Beatitude,

Our Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, and first among all Your Beatitude, marches – through difficulties, temptations and sorrows – in this present life, based precisely on this hope the daughter of patience according to Saint Paul (Romans 5:4). Having as an anchor of Hope the Faith in the Trinitarian God and His Saints, one of whom is Saint John the New Hozevite who we honour today.

Welcome!”

After the welcoming speech, according to the typikon order, the Vigil started with the Compline, Salutations of the Saint and Vespers, followed by the Divine Liturgy. Co-celebrants to His Beatitude were the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina and the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Priests from the Romanian Patriarchate, and Archdeacon Mark. The chanting was delivered by the Byzantine singers Leonidas Doukas, Christos Stavrou, Gregorios Zarkou and Dionysios Thanasoulis, as the Vigil was attended by a Congregation of Monks, Nuns, and laity who came from the world for the elevation of their souls and prayed in deep contrition.

Before the Holy Communion His Beatitude read the following Sermon;

“Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth” (Psalm 26:8) the Prophet-King David sings.

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Noble pilgrims and Christians,

Let us rejoice in the Lord, for by the grace of the Holy Spirit we are gathered today in this sanctified and sacred place, the Monastery of Hozeva, in order to celebrate the sacred commemoration of our Father among the Saints John the New Hozevite from Romania.

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (James 1:12) St. James the Brother of God says. Blessed is the one who willingly endures temptation, because he will become experienced and cleansed just like the pure gold, he will receive the crown of life and become the dwelling place of Christ, the heavenly King. The God-man Christ will come therein with his grace and make His abode with him (John 14:23), just as He truly says, according to our Father John.

Indeed, my dear brothers and sisters, our Father John, who loved this ascetic place of Hozeva, was tested and found worthy of the crown of eternal life as the Holy Bible proclaims; “But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God...like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them” (Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-6). And in more detail, God accepts the many hardships of the tested faithful like a sweet fragrance, just like the “sacrificial burnt offering” (Wisdom of Solomon 3:6), namely the burnt offerings of the sacrifices that are being completely burnt in the altar.

And hearkening to the God-inspired words of the psalmist: “When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek” (Psalm 27:8), the Holy Righteous John managed to form Christ within him through his ascetic striving and unceasing prayer, according to St. Paul’s advice; “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you” (Gal. 4:9). Interpreting these words,

St. Cyril of Alexandria says; “until the great and extremely intelligent character of Christ is gradually doubled in our minds”.

The incorrupt and fragrant complete relic of our righteous and God-bearer Father John that lies before us, is an irrefutable and tangible and visible witness and proof that Christ is the light and the truth of the world. “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12) says the Lord.

This true light of life is being announced and preached by our Holy Orthodox Church through its saints amidst the generation of the distorted and perverted people of our time.

And we say this because the righteous, namely the saints of God, are shown as luminaries in the world on the one hand (Philip. 2:15) and on the other, they “shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (Matthew 13:43). Moreover, the Saints will sit upon twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel according to Evangelist Matthew; “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matthew 19:28).

The incorrupt and fragrant holy relic of our righteous Father John foretells and announces the “rebirth”, namely the resurrection from the dead on Judgement Day. For this St. John advices all those who follow our Lord Jesus Christ through St. Paul’s mouth, to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1). “that we may have boldness in the day of judgment” (1 John 4:17), as St. John the Evangelist preaches.

Rendering glory and thanksgiving to the Holy Trinitarian God, for “He is wondrous in His saint” (Psalm 67:36) our Father

John, let us entreat him so that along with the Most Blessed Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, may intercede for the salvation of our souls. And let us say along with the hymn writer; "As we the faithful delight today, on thy memory, our righteous Father John, we glorify Him that made thee glorious, Christ our Lord, the supremely good. Beseech Him ceaselessly, O all-venerable, that we attain to the splendour of the Saints, and to everlasting glory since thou hast boldness to speak freely unto Him at any time." Amen. Many happy returns!"

After the Divine Liturgy the reorganizer and Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery Fr. Constantinos offered a meal.

From Secretariat-General

DEPARTURE FROM LIFE OF GERASIMOS THE HAGIOTAPHITE

The Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Sarantarion Mount Archimandrite Gerasimos Selalmatzidis died on Tuesday morning, July 17/30, 2019, at the Holy Monastery of St. Gerasimos of the Jordan, where he was especially treated for his old age in the last few months, by the care of the Patriarchate and the diligence of the Hegoumen Archimandrite Chrysostom.

The deceased, genuine Hagiotaphite, joined the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood as an adult, and having received the monastic schema and the office of Priesthood, he ministered in various posts of the Patriarchate and served as the Hegoumen of the Sarantarion Mount for many years. Living in the mountains and frugal in his diet, he offered the pilgrims' financial contributions and his own property for the full renovation of

the Monastery of the Sarantaron Mount and of that of St. John the Baptist in the river Jordan.

His funeral service, in the afternoon of his departure day, was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with the participation of Hagiotaphite Archbishops, Monks and laity. The requiem was read by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina as follows;

“Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Reverend Fathers,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The departure from life of our beloved Brother in Christ Archimandrite Gerasimos, Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of Sarantaron Mount, reminded us St. Paul words; “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” (Hebrews 13:14). And “ourselves and one another and all our lives” should be aligned and directed to the final coming of the Kingdom of Heaven which has been granted to us through Jesus Christ, Who became Incarnate, was Crucified and Resurrected. Through His Cross and Resurrection death has no longer dominion over us. This salvific and hopeful message in Christ drew the soul of the deceased, our Brother Archimandrite Gerasimos.

He came to the Holy Land in an adult age from his hometown Thessalonica, and joined the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, he received the Priesthood, served the Department of Finance with financial transparency, and having been a mountain climber, he was called by our Lord Jesus Christ to minister at Sarantaron Mount in harsh conditions, where the Lord was tempted and conquered all temptations, comforting us and giving us courage to conquer our temptations. He served there for many years, and being frugal, he offered all the financial contributions he received

from the pilgrims for the full renovation of the Holy Monastery of Sarantaron Mount and the restoration of the Holy Monastery of St. John the Baptist by the river Jordan. We entreat the Lord that He may consider these good works and forgive him for any sins he may have committed as human, and place him in the land of the living, along with the righteous ones, filling him with the His Trinitarian Light.

The Hagiotaphite Brotherhood thanks those who honored his memory for their participation at his funeral and the Hegoumen of the Holy Monastery of St. Gerasimos, Archimandrite Chrysostom, because of the care he offered the deceased with devotion, over the last few months of his life.

May his memory be ever-lasting!"

The Hagiotaphite Brotherhood expresses its condolences to his relatives in the world.

May his memory be ever-lasting!

From Secretariat-General

THE EPITAPH SERVICE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Holy Friday evening, April 13/26, 2019, the Epitaph Service was held at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Service began with the procession of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood from the Patriarchate, under the lead of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos.

When the procession reached the Church, the Service began with

the Canon of Holy Saturday Matins, while the Priests were praying to receive the blessing and wear their liturgical festal mourning vestments, along with His Beatitude and the Archbishops.

At the end of the 9th Ode of the Canon the contrite Epitaph litany began from the Holy Altar of the Catholicon, with His Beatitude, the Archbishops and the Priests dressed in their liturgical vestments. When they reached the Sacred Edicule of the Holy Sepulchre they turned right towards the shrine "Touch me not" of the Franciscans, where a prayer was read, then they moved on to the chapel of the Seven bridges, of the Stocks, which has recently been renovated by the Patriarchate, of Logginus the Centurion, of the "They torn my garments", of the Finding of the Cross, of the Crown of Thorns and of Adam.

When these stops and the prayers read at them were concluded, the procession went up to the Horrendous Golgotha.

There, His Beatitude read the Gospel narrative of the Crucifixion, which was followed by a prayer and the veneration by His Beatitude, the Archbishops, and the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos.

Afterward, four Archbishops took upon their shoulders the silk corporal of the adorned with golden thread Epitaph from the Holy Altar of Golgotha, which is above the hole-base of the Sacred Cross of Christ, and coming down the stairs with all the entourage, they placed it on the Deposition slate, and His Beatitude read before it the Gospel narrative of the Deposition.

A litany of the silk corporal three times around the Sacred Edicule followed, and then it was placed by the Archbishops on the slate of the Holy Sepulchre.

Having completed all the above, the three parts of the Lamentations of Holy Friday began by His Beatitude and the

Archbishops. The 1st part started with His Beatitude, then the 2nd and the 3rd by the Archbishops from inside the All-holy Tomb, and then the troparia of the Lamentations were sung by the Archbishops, the Priests and the Byzantine Choirs, before the Sacred Edicule and from the platforms opposite it.

At the end of the 3rd part the Sermon of the day was read by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, as per below;

“For the preaching of the cross

is to them that perish foolishness;

but unto us which are saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18)

Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Reverend chorea of Hierarchs,

Your Excellency Consul General of Greece,

Noble Priesthood,

Noble pilgrims,

Today, as the day of Holy and Great Friday is setting and the day of the Holy and Great Saturday is about to dawn, the Church commemorates the Cross of Jesus of Nazareth, Christ the Son of God, and at the same time it commemorates His burial. On the Cross, Jesus “having finished the mission that the Father appointed Him to do” (John 17:4), by saying “it is accomplished” (John 19:30), He gave up the ghost as human, on Friday evening, and just before the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath, He was buried. The task of His burial was undertaken by His secret disciple, Joseph of Arimathea. Having received the permission by Pilate, he removed Jesus’ body from the Cross and buried it at the empty tomb, which was carved in a

stone by him, near the crucifixion place, where we are blessed to officiate this contrite Epitaph Service.

And while the Church commemorates a sad event, an event of death and especially a painful and humiliating death on the cross, with which the nature also was co-suffering and "was altered in pain", and an event of a burial of "a divine in human body", the Church does not lament, it does not mourn, on the contrary, it celebrates in contrition and modesty. It celebrates in joyful mourning. It celebrates its victory against death, through the death and burial of its Founder. It celebrates the mystery that is made familiar and understood through faith, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Incarnate Son of God. He is the One, Who took upon Himself the human nature, the whole of humanity. He is the One, in Whom according to St. Paul "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9) and in His Divine-human hypostasis, He descended to Hades through the Cross, then received again His glory and brought man in it along with Him. He appeared to those in Hades calling unto them, "enter again into Paradise". Those who were bound in Hades in punishment did He make again citizens of Paradise. For the remission of the human sins, Christ willingly offered Himself a living sacrifice, immaculate before God, a sacrifice of blood (Hebrews 9:14). Through His divine blood that was shed on the Cross, he redeemed us from the curse, from the bondage of the letter of the Law. Being lifted up willingly on the Cross, He established with the blood of His pierced side His homonymous state, the Christian Church. This he adorned with His own blood (Acts 20:28). And in His salvific Providence, the once and for all sacrifice of His blood for the life and salvation of the world is being continued, as it is being offered now, a daily bloodless sacrifice in the Church and in the Holy Eucharist. In it, as it will be said in the Cherubim hymn of the evening Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great today, "the king of kings and the Lord of lords brings himself forth to be sacrificed and offered as food to the faithful".

In the blood of His Cross, Christ united the two opposing worlds, the Judaic and the Greek, in one. He called the Jews who "were looking for a sign" and considered the cross to be "a scandal" and the Greeks "who sought wisdom" and considered the cross to be "foolishness" (1 Cor. 1:18-24), not to be "dismissed" but to join the ones "called unto salvation" considering the cross "the power of God that leads to salvation" and believing that "he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross" (Ephes. 2:14-16).

Our Greek Nation is joined by its own free will in this one body, the body of Christ, the Church, "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11). Our nation has kept the sciences it discovered and all the nations have assimilated them thereafter, on every aspect of life, but it abandoned its Metaphysic beliefs on the Twelve gods and "took upon itself the name of God" of Jesus of Nazareth Who was crucified. It accepted the preaching of the Apostle of Nations and in the Greek Democratic cities that used to be without peace and full of enmities, it created oases of cultivation of noble peaceful morals, of sanctification and of salvation. It created Churches, which are all over the Greek territory, in Cyprus, in Philippi, in Thessalonica, in Corinth, in Ephesus, in Crete. It throve in the architecture of marvellous Churches, in iconography, in hymn writing, in the Theology of the Ecumenical Synods. It lifted up Christ's Cross as a banner of power and joy on the frequent fights against barbaric nations and in its victories, but also as a shield of patience through harsh times and calamities it underwent by its conquerors.

Moreover, in the places of the incarnate presence of our

Crucified Redeemer, Christ our God, the Roman Orthodox nation has been magnified. Firstly at this Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the first official Church of Christianity, of the Emperor who is known with the phrase "with this [the Cross] you win], whose "beauty can be compared with the decorum of the heavenly firmament" and then to the Church of Nea and to the Churches of the Monasteries of the citizens of the desert, the Saints; Euthymius, Savvas, and Theodosios, and of Sophronius Patriarch of Jerusalem, the Fathers who defended the doctrine of the one hypostasis and the two natures of Christ.

The witness of these Holy Fathers has been unceasingly exhibited by the Church of Jerusalem the Mother of Churches, which fights along with its Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and in this Sacred Edicule which is "a possession and offering to Christ of the Orthodox Romans in 1810" as its architect Kalfa Komnenos from Mytilene inscribed on it. Having been renovated two years ago, this Edicule protects and decorates the joy-and-life-giving Tomb, in which the Lord who was crucified in the flesh, was buried, still in the flesh, by the grace and power of Which, the Head of the Church of Jerusalem and Officiator of this Epitaph Service, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos, and the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre with Him, wish to all of you, the noble pilgrims, "Happy Resurrection".

The Service continued with the Eulogitaria, the Praises, and the Great Doxology before the Holy Sepulchre and the finishing of the Service was done inside the Catholicon, with the placement of the silk corporal on the Holy Altar. Then there were the readings of the prophesy, the Apolytikion and the Gospel narrative, the morning prayer and the Dismissal. At the end of all these, the Patriarchal Entourage returned to the Central Monastery, while the bells were tolling in a mourning tone.

From Secretariat-General

DOXOLOGY ON THE NATIONAL ANNIVERSARY OF MARCH 25 1821

On Monday, March 12/25, 2019, a Doxology was held on the occasion of the National anniversary of March 25 1821 at the Catholicon of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where there was a special prayer for the repose of the souls of the Fathers of our Nation who fell heroically during the years of the Ottoman Tyranny and finally a thanksgiving prayer for the liberation of the Nation.

The Doxology was led by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with co-celebrants the Archbishops of the Throne, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Deacons, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos. The chanting was delivered by the Choir Leader of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos and the Ecclesiastical Byzantine Choir "St. John Koukouzelis" under the lead of Mr. Emanuel Daskalakis, while the service was attended by many Orthodox Faithful and members of the Greek Community of Jerusalem. At the end of the Service the Patriarchal entourage and all

people returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters in the Reception Hall.

There, His Beatitude addressed all present as follows;

“Do not be afraid of the darkness! The freedom like the foggy star, will bring the night to dawn” says poet John Polemis.

Your Excellency Consul General of Greece Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos,

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brothers,

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Full of national boasting in Christ today we celebrate the historic anniversary of the liberation of our pious nation from the long-term slavery of the Ottoman sovereignty. Today we celebrate the anniversary of our National Rebirth.

The truly heroic Revolution of 1821 is a milestone in world history. And that’s because a small group of determined fighters, with the blessings of the Bishop Palaion Patron Germanos, raised the honest banner of the Revolution and gave the sacred oath “Freedom or Death”, “now is the struggle for all”.

This nationalistic motto echoed as an ecumenical commandment in all the centres of the enslaved Romiosyne, which hearkening to the words of the psalmist: “The Lord being mindful of us, hath helped us” (Psalm 113: 20) rushed in the sacred fight with all the forces of its rebellious children, “for the holy faith of Christ and the freedom of the homeland”, “there is no sweeter thing than homeland and religion,” General Makrygiannis will write in his memoirs.

The participation of the Church in the struggle for the regeneration of the nation was decisive. Leading ecclesiastical figures such as the Metropolitan Palaion Patron Germanos, Gregory Papaflessas, Athanasius Diakos, Bishop

Isaiah Salonon, members of our Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and many Priests named and anonymous, became not only the animators of the Ottoman barbaric yoke of slavery, but also examples of self-sacrifice, namely martyrs of blood, in favor of freedom, which God gave to man, as St. Paul preaches by saying, "and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor 3:17) and elsewhere: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage "(Galatians 5: 1).

In other words, the great and distinguished fighters of 1821 understood the notion of freedom and of the Homeland biblically and not in a worldly manner. "Faith to the crucified and resurrected Christ" and "freedom of the homeland" constitute the cohesive force of preserving the Greek-Orthodox tradition and the identity of the pious nation of the Romans and the Christian nation of the Greeks. This, moreover, is borne out by the lyrics of our National Poet Dionysios Solomos in the "Hymn to Freedom", which he considers "to be drawn out of the sacred bones of the Greeks".

The Revolution of 1821 has clearly demonstrated that determination to self-sacrifice for the defense of sacred and moral values, such as freedom and homeland, is fully enforced. This is because the one who sacrifices his life wins it forever, and tyrannical sovereignty subsides in front of the moral splendor that manifests decisively and sacrificing.

The unparalleled heroism and admirable sacrificial to the point of blood attitude of the fighters of 1821 would be good to be a source of inspiration for all of us in the face of the impending challenges of the so-called "New Age" or "New Order" in order to preserve natural laws and moral biblical values. "When the Gentiles, who have not the law, do not have the law, they have a law to themselves" St. Paul says (Romans 2:14).

Our Venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, willingly and as owed, participates in this annual anniversary of the sacred

commemoration of the rebirth of our Nation, and came down to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with all its members in order to offer thanksgiving praise and doxology to our God Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who was crucified and resurrected for us, for the benefit He granted to our Nation. We also offered interceding prayers for the eternal repose of the souls of those who fell heroically and gloriously in the sacred struggle of our noble nation for the nation of the Roman Orthodox people.

For all these, allow Us to raise our glass and exclaim in honour:

Long live March 25 1281!

Long live the noble and royal nation of the Roman Orthodox people!

Long live Hellas!

Long live our Hagiotaphite Brotherhood!

And the Greek Consul General as follows;

“Your Beatitude,

Most Reverend Archbishops,

Reverend Fathers,

Ladies and Gentlemen

We are glad that today we celebrate at the Patriarchate of Jerusalem the Nation’s Revolution of 1821, and remember the nation’s most glorious page of the modern history with national pride. We honor those who fought with courage, heroism and self-denial and managed, through an unequal and

long struggle that demanded unspeakable sacrifices to end the four dark ages of a foreign tyrannical yoke.

On this day, we must remember the elements that made the 1821 liberation struggle distinct for both Greek and world history and which are of utmost relevance to us today. Those elements that are a lesson for all modern Greeks. Three of these elements are: The common vision of Freedom, the unity of the nation, and the courage in the face of far superior enemies and enormous objective difficulties.

The common vision was that of the free Homeland, in particular the creation of a model state, based on the principles of democracy and justice, which takes care of all its citizens, with no discriminations. This vision, especially promoted for its time, made the struggle righteous and morally imperious, enhancing the determination and vigor of the fighters and winning the sympathy of thousands of Friends of Greece who strengthened it in a variety of ways.

National unity and unity of soul were indispensable to the outcome of the Revolution, as in every common struggle. The adversary tried to divide the fighters, instigating internal quarrels, aiming to hurt faith in the just struggle, neutralize the vigor and bend the resistance of the fighters. The unity was conquered by difficulties and after civil breaks that delayed the successful outcome of the Revolution. The lesson for all, then and now, is that without unity and unity of soul, the common purpose and national laws are in danger of losing their meaning and value.

The boldness of the fighters who defied the mighty power of the oppressor and the negative international circumstances and declared the liberation struggle, carrying it for more than eight years on land and sea, is the characteristic of the Greeks that has repeatedly pushed them to the forefront history. A prudent, computational assessment of circumstances would entail continuing national subordination and abandoning

the national vision of freedom and national pride. As General Makrigiannis put it, "when the few decide to die, and when they make that decision, they lose a few times and many win."

Today we do not forget the crucial role played by the Church in achieving the national goal, while maintaining the identity of the Greeks in the long and gloomy years of the Ottoman domination. The Church was the ark of the salvation of the Nation and the guardian of our values, preserving the language, the Christian Faith and the hope of the Resurrection of the Nation. Thus, as the fighters themselves proclaimed, the struggle of the national rebirth became "for the holy faith of Christ and the freedom of the Homeland."

Greece does not forget the great offer of expatriate Greeks in the struggle of national rebirth and always feels grateful for it. The Friends, beginning with large urban centers in Europe, enthralled with enthusiasm and self-denial with their rebellious brothers, played a significant role in shaping the common vision of freedom and in the initial plans of the Revolution and contributed to the creation of the Philhellenic current.

March 25, 1821 remains for us all the foundation stone of our national entity and the leading station of the modern history of the Nation. The heroism, self-denial and determination of the Revolutionist fighters, and those inspired by them, to seek a free, fair and democratic Homeland, inspire us, but at the same time make us commit ourselves to being worthy of them and, like them, to rise to the height of the circumstances and to get everyone involved to overcome obstacles, however insurmountable they may seem to be.

Long live 25 March 1821!

Long live Greece!"

THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM PARTICIPATES IN THE TWO-DAY CONFERENCE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE

A two-day conference was held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, from 28th February to 1st March 2019, with the topic: “Religious –Ecclesiastical diplomacy in the 21st century” / “Depicting Political Principles and suggestions for a Strategic course for the exercise of Religious and Ecclesiastical Diplomacy”.

In this conference the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was represented by the Patriarchal Commissioner in Constantinople Most Reverend Archbishop Nectarios of Anthedon with his speech titled: “The Patriarchate of Jerusalem as a stability and dialogue factor in the Middle East” which follows below;

THE PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM AS A STABILITY AND DIALOGUE FACTOR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, or otherwise “Deir Rum,” is an unbroken historical chain of holiness, martyrdom and lasting struggle for the Church of Christ and its Christian congregation, as well as of the preservation of the holy shrines, while preserving their Roman character of many centuries.

The founding of the Church of Jerusalem dates back to the day

of the Pentecost and the first Bishop was the Hieromartyr Apostle Saint James the Brother of God († 62 AD).

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem is active in the area of the Holy Land, the wider Middle East, the Persian Gulf and the Arab Emirates.

In its long history, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem was first found under three state and governmental powers and authorities whose interests are on the contrary opposite. This is the difficulty both of the Patriarchate and of the Patriarch, for suddenly the Patriarchate was at the centre of political conflicts, not of local and political conflicts but of political conflicts concerning the global community.

Its presence in the Holy Land is a daily miracle, for both His Beatitude and the Holy Brotherhood are inspired by pure ecclesiastical thought, always invoking the help of God, namely the Incarnate Word of God.

The historical patrimony of the Patriarchate, its powerful theological and cultural beliefs, and its experience of living with other religions make it not only remarkable, but also a force of decisive importance in inter-Orthodox developments, interfaith dialogues, but also in every peace effort in the Middle East.

The Order of the Studios, founded by St. Helen, whose evolution is today's Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, has taken on the protection, preservation and ministry of the Holy Shrines, as well as the pastoring of its logic flock through the religious, social, and philanthropic activity.

However, the great challenge of the Patriarchate is its coexistence with the Jewish and Arab world, and its mission and role as a factor of equilibrium, bearing in mind that Jerusalem is a city in itself religious, inextricably linked to the Sacred History of Christianity, but also to the other two monotheistic religions, Judaism and Islam.

And here is the real dimension of both the role of the Patriarchate and the Patriarch, as well as of the leaders of the other two monotheistic religions for the prevalence of peace in the region. Religions play a key role in this area.

The problem of international diplomacy and of politicians is that because they do not have a deep understanding of religion issues, they try to ignore the role of religion on a global scale.

Moderately, however, they recognize that where there are conflicts of a political nature, in most cases the causes are purely religious, although they try to emphasize more the political or the national part.

Unfortunately, in recent years warfare in the Middle East region and the resulting problems have led to an even greater decline in the Christian population, yet the Church of Jerusalem does not abandon its mission of guiding its logical flock and also by maintaining the liturgical character of the Shrines, in which, souls seeking the truth, both locals and pilgrims, find their Good Shepherd, where He, through His Cross and Resurrection, " Worked Salvation in the centre of the earth".

Apart from its purely religious spiritual role, the Patriarchate has invested in the field of Education and Social Welfare. It is historically established that the first schools and hospitals were founded by it, and today it maintains schools within the State of Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan.

Through Education, it contributes precisely to the coexistence of religious entities, but also to the expansion of religious fanaticism, since Christians are a minority in the Holy Land and in the wider Middle East region.

As a result, the Patriarchate schools particularly host mostly students who are not Orthodox Christians but followers of

other religions. This has the effect of contributing to the mutual understanding of the persons and, on the other hand, to the mutual understanding of the religious beliefs and symbols of each one.

And this, of course, is recognized by all, since the Patriarchate has a particular relationship with the Arab Islamic world, and in many cases acts as a bridge between the West and the East.

At the same time, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem with many efforts and sacrifices maintains at the Zion Hill the Patriarchal School of Zion, the Ecclesiastical High School of Lyceum, attended by students, many of whom after graduation remain in the Holy Land, and which acts as a nursery for the members of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood. Unfortunately, due to the particular situation that prevails, the number of pupils is small and it would be desirable to increase it.

Great efforts are also being made to reopen the Theological School of the Holy Cross, one of the earliest Greek Educational Institutes abroad, from which great theologians, both laity and clergy, graduated, who served in Orthodox Churches of the East.

His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III, during the 1st International Conference of the Non-Governmental Organization "Romiosini", which was founded by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, underlined that the purpose of the NGO is the promotion of our of the Communion in Christ of the Greek-speaking with the Arabic-speaking Roman-Orthodox Christians on the one hand, and the other Orthodox Christians on the other. Besides, this is one of the main goals that His Beatitude has set since the beginning of the practice of His pastoral ministry.

During His speech, he also pointed out that "the special position of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, under the

governmental authority of the State of Israel, the Palestinian Autonomy and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Principality of Qatar, makes its recognized ab antiquo institutional Religious and Ecclesial Establishment as extremely important both for the unity of the Orthodox Churches and for the coexistence of the neighboring peoples in the area of □□its jurisdiction “.

Given the prominent role that can be played by the religion in general and consequently by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, due to the special religious significance of Jerusalem as a holy city for the Jews, Christians and Muslims, the Patriarch of Jerusalem was invited to a Conference on the relations between the American and Islamic world in Doha, Qatar, in February 2010. In the work of the Religious Leaders Department, H.B. the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos stressed the close relation between religion and politics within the cultural context of the Islamic countries, especially the Middle East countries.

Being aware of their enormous responsibility and mission in the Middle East, the Heads of the Orthodox Churches of the region and the Archbishop of Cyprus re-established the Council of Churches of the Middle East, working together to provide support to the tested Christians in the region, as well as all kinds of spiritual relief and support in the political and religious drama that has evolved for years in the hottest region of the world.

Also, appreciating the important role played by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Muslim world, the current President of the Turkish Republic, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, invited His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III as speaker at the International Conference on “The Arab Spring and Peace in Middle East – Muslim and Christian Perspectives “in September 2012 in Constantinople.

In short, due to the limited time, I tried to present the

importance of the presence and mission of the Venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Middle East, hoping that a dim light illuminated its great work over the centuries.

Finally, on behalf of His Beatitude my Father and Patriarch, Theophilos and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood I would like to thank, for all the years, the unstoppable interest of Greece towards the Patriarchate of Jerusalem in every possible way, and culminating in this interest was the valuable help of the Hellenic State in the restoration of the Sacred Edicule of the Holy Sepulchre.

At the same time, however, Greece understands that the Patriarchate of Jerusalem is a stronghold and a spiritual extension to the most sensitive area of the planet.

By concluding this little suggestion, it would be better to refer to the formulations of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III, at the meeting of the Heads of the Orthodox Churches of the Middle East.

“Today, all political diplomats, etc., have become aware of the importance and role of religious leadership in the peaceful coexistence of people. For this reason, all religious leaders are invited to participate in any negotiations or dialogues. Their contribution is necessary and let it not seem strange to you if you look in the long run for political and international authorities in the religious leadership to find a solution to the issue of Jerusalem.

If a solution to the Jerusalem issue is found, then all problems will be resolved both regionally and globally, because the whole world crisis is based on Jerusalem. So if World Peace can ever prevail, it will again depend on Jerusalem. ”

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Friday, February 2/15, 2019, the Patriarchate celebrated the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple at the Holy Monastery of Panagia Sayda Naya, which is located near the Patriarchate at the Christian Quarter.

On this Feast the Church celebrates the entrance of the Lord in the Temple of Solomon when He was a forty-day old infant, brought by His parents who offered a pair of turtles and a pair of chick pigeons. Then the Righteous Simeon received Him in his arms and having received the inspiration from the Holy Spirit, recognized Him and cried out: "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 2:29-32).

For this Feast Vespers was held in the aforementioned Monastery in the evening and the Divine Liturgy was celebrated on the morning of the Feast, officiated by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, with co-celebrants Hagiotaphite Hieromonks and Deacons. The chanting was

delivered by the Choir Leader of the Church of the Resurrection Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos and the Patriarchal School students, with the attendance of a large congregation of local faithful and pilgrims.

His Eminence delivered a Sermon to this congregation (see video).

During the Divine Liturgy H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos came for veneration with Hagiotaphite Fathers.

The renovator of the Monastery Reverend Nun Seraphima offered a reception to the Patriarchal and Episcopal entourages as well as to the congregation at the Hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Monastery.

For this Feast of the Lord also, H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos participated in the Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchal and Monastic Church of Saints Constantine and Helen.

From Secretariat-General

THE COMMEMORATION OF SAINTS IOANNIS AND GEROGE THE HOZEVITES

On Monday, January 8/21, 2019, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of our Righteous Fathers Ioannis and George the Hozevites at the Holy Monastery bearing their names, which

lies at the bank of brook Chorath, at the natural cave of a rock, at the brook's estuary before Jericho.

The first of these Saints, Ioannis, is honoured by the Church on this day as the former Bishop of Caesarea, which came and lived in this Monastery in the 5th century, as a complacent Bishop who guided monks.

While Saint George, of Cypriot descent, rebuilt the Monastery after the destruction due to the Persian raid in 614 A.D.

In honour of these Saints as the founders of the Monastery there was an All-night Vigil, at the beginning of which the current Hegoumen and renovator of the Monastery Archimandrite Constantine Peramatzis welcomed H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with the following words;

“I praise the two founders of the Monastery of Hozeva, wise George along with Ioannis...”

Your Beatitude Father and Master,
along with Your Reverend Entourage,

The Lavra of Hozeva celebrates today its founders, Saints Ioannis and George. Their lives had been a continuous sacrifice, having as their basic axis the liturgic life. It was a sacrifice of love and total devotion to the Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. It was also a sacrifice of Godly love towards their fellow men.

We read in the life of St. George: “A certain day our Righteous Father George was sitting on a stone, being heated from the sun (because he was frail due to the excessive abstinence), and being totally afire inside from the desire of the spiritual love, with the aim of accomplishing the divine will. With continuous tears he was entreating the philanthropic God to have mercy on His people”.

We generously experience this very same love towards God and our fellow men in You, Your Holy Beatitude! And we agree with the biographer of our Holy Father George in those things he characteristically mentions about his Holy Geronda: "Believe me Reverend Fathers and Brothers...if I was under temptation or any kind of sorrow and I would meet him, immediately everything vanished from me, as if a sponge had erased them, and from then onward I had much serenity and peace...Then, returning to ourselves, we remember the pious manner of living of the Holy Father, namely the stability in fasting, standing up all night during the night-vigils, the unceasing tears, the patience in the temptations. And to cut a long story short, we remember the stable and patient manner of his virtuous and angelic life, and we are filled with good and useful hopes."

Likewise, we have the same comfort of souls under Your Patriarchal and Fatherly Prayer and Protection!

Friend of Saints, Father and Master,

Welcome!"

The All-night Vigil with the Compline, Salutations, Matins and the Divine Liturgy were officiated by His Beatitude, with co-celebrants the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, Archdeacon Mark and other Deacons. The choir was formed by the choir leader of the Metropolitan Church of the Annunciation of the Holy Metropolis Iliou Mr. Leonidas Doukas, the choir leader of the Holy Church of St. Paul in Athens Mr. Eustathios Kasteliotis, the choir leader of St. Paraskevi in Athens Mr. Christos Stavrou and the choir leader of the Holy Church of St. Kyriaki in Pyrgos of the Holy Metropolis of Ilias Mr. Nikolaos Papademetriou, with the help of monks and the participation of a congregation of monks, nuns, Priests and pilgrims.

His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon to this congregation;

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Mat. 11:29-30) the Lord says.

Beloved Brothers in Sisters in Christ,

Noble Pilgrims

We glorify the only-begotten Son of God, Who has no Father from the Mother's side, and no Mother from the Father's side; in the recent Christmas feast we saw Him as an infant, while in yesterday's celebration of Epiphany we saw Him made perfect the One who is manifested perfect, our God. Today we see Him in the dwellings of the Monastery of Hozeva, and the surrounding area of the river Jordan. Today we see Him being glorified in His saints, namely Ioannis, Ioannis the New and George, who were redeemed from the darkness and now dwell in the light of God's knowledge along with the Heavenly hosts, praising and glorifying Him.

We glorify the Holy Trinitarian God who has called all of us in this sacred Eucharistic gathering in order to festively honour the great ascetics of the desert of the Jordan and brook Chorath, the righteous George who came from Lefkara of Cyprus to these holy places that the preaching of repentance of St. John the Baptist was heard saying: “There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose... He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.” (Mark 1:7-8).

Having been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, our Father George came in this deserted place following the footsteps of Holy men, such as Prophet Elias, and hearkening to the Lord's words: “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Mat. 11:29). “Taken captive by divine love for the holy places of Sion, O all-blessed, thither didst thou depart, and

there didst thou abide till thy death, O wisest of men, afflicting thy flesh with labours, towards the heavenly Sion" the hymn writer of the Church proclaims.

The Church honours and venerates the commemoration of its saints because the prophets and the saints of the Law foretold us the kingdom of heaven: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat. 3:2) as St. John the Baptist used to preach in the desert of Judea. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27) St. Paul preaches.

And Christ, who we are called to "put on", is no other than the new Adam, who has been illumined by the divine and unapproachable light of the Father, namely of the Holy Spirit, who descended upon Him in the form of the dove when He was baptized in the river Jordan by St. John.

This very Christ, the new Adam for whom "there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11) is the One St. George put on from the garment of the unweaning and uncreated light. And we say this because Christ is the true light. "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). While St. Paul advices us by saying: "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephes. 4:24). Put on the new man, who is the new creation, which has been created according to the Will of God, so that you live in righteousness towards men and in devotion and holiness towards God, namely with the virtues which are the fruit of the truth of the gospel.

Indeed, my dear brothers and sisters, the yoke of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is good and the burden is light. In other words, the yoke of the obedience in Christ and His teaching is soft and salutary for the one who carries it; but also the burden of the commitments and duties the Lord asks from us is

light.

This very thing did our Father George acknowledge, who has become a precise measurement and example for his imitators who also became saints, the Fathers of this modest place of Hozeva, the luminaries, Ioannis and Ioannis the New from Romania.

Let us entreat our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as "at thy divine giving of birth [Theotokos], the Word stripped Adam of the coats of mortality and clothed him with the robe which He alone had woven when He received a body in thy womb", so that by the intercessions of our Holy Father among the Saints George the Hozevite and the saints of Hozeva with him, we who honour them, may be granted the enlightenment of the divine Epiphany of the river Jordan and the divine communion. Amen."

The contrite feast was followed by a monastic meal which was offered to the Patriarchal Entourage and all congregation.

After the aforementioned two Saints of the Monastery, the Monastery always honours the first five ascetics who lived there in the 4th century, Promos, Elias, Aias, Gannaios and Zinon, and the new Saint Ioannis from Romania who has been recently canonized a Saint of the Orthodox Church by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

From Secretariat-General

THE FEAST OF THE ENTRY OF

THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Tuesday, November 21/ December 4, 2018, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos at the Temple, at the Holy Nunnery of Megali Panagia which is adjacent to the Patriarchate.

On this feast the Church celebrates the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos in the Temple when she was three years old. She was brought to the Temple by her parents and entered into the Holy Altar of the Temple of Solomon, where she was prepared as a chosen vessel in order to contain within her the One whom nothing can contain and incarnate the -until then without flesh- Word of God.

For this feast there was Vespers in the evening and the Divine Liturgy was celebrated in on the feast day, led by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, with Hieromonks and deacons as co-celebrants. The chanting was delivered by Archimandrite Eusevios on the right and the Choir Leader of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre Mr. Constantinos Spyropoulos and the Patriarchal School students on the left, while the services were attended by many monks, nuns, laity, pilgrims and local faithful.

His Eminence delivered a Sermon before the Holy Communion, underlining the virtues of the Holy Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, who for many years endured silently the scorning of the Jews due to their being sterile, having steadfast faith in God. Moreover, he praised the character of Holy Prophet Zacharias, who having had the gift of prophesy and recognizing the future Mother of the Son of God, instead of keeping her in the girl's school near the Temple, he took her in the forbidden sacred area of the Temple, the Holy of Holies, thus causing the rage of the Jews against him and putting himself

into grave danger.

“We are able, therefore, to honour this great Feast of the Mother of God, imitating the great patience, the steadfast faith and the sacrifice of the Holy Ancestors of God, as well as the heroic character, which was manifested by the Holy Prophet Zacharias. And while they displayed such a virtue, living in the darkness of the Law and not knowing of the Resurrection of the Lord, we on the contrary, have the special blessing to live within the Church and with the Grace of the Holy Spirit, making only a small effort in order to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven”.

After the Divine Liturgy, the renovator of the Church of the Monastery and of its ancient icons, Reverend Nun Melanie, offered a reception to the Episcopal entourage and the congregation at the Hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Church.

From Secretariat-General

THE THIRD DAY OF THE VISIT OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM IN ROMANIA

On Saturday morning, November 18/ December 1, 2018, there was a Service of thanksgiving Doxology to God for His help in the liberation and unity of the Romanian people as one Orthodox nation. The service was held on an outdoor platform in front of the Holy Trinity Cathedral, and despite the sunny weather, the temperature was six degrees below zero, making the fingers

stiff. The service was attended by the Princess and many people.

At the end of the Doxology the Patriarch of Romania spoke in English:

“Let us defend and cultivate national freedom and unity as expressions of the dignity of the Romanian people”

The Great Union in Alba Iulia, since which we celebrate 100 years today, on December 1, 2018, is the celebration of freedom, unity and dignity of the Romanian people, gained through many sacrifices and sufferings.

The War of Romanian Unification (1916-1919), as Romanians have called their participation in the First World War (1914-1918), aimed to unify all Romanians into one national state, “following centuries of sufferings endured in a Christian manner” with faith, patience, and hope.

The achievement of national unity on December 1, 1918, was also possible with the contribution of the Romanian Orthodox Church, which supported the Great Union of all Romanians. The Church was together with the people in every effort *to cultivate national consciousness and to affirm the wish of national unity*, in all Romanian provinces, but particularly in Transylvania, Bessarabia, and Bukovina.

Through prayer, through speech, by printed books, with the personal presence and the concrete action of its servants, the Church was active in the unification process, involved in the achievement of this ideal through learned hierarchs, patriotic priests and deacons, theology professors and students with oratory, persuasion and mobilization skills, but also through monastics who have taken care of the wounded soldiers, in monasteries and parishes that organized money and food collections, all of them together morally encouraging and materially helping the Romanian fighters for national freedom and unity.

During the 1916-1918 Unification War, more than 250 Romanian Orthodox priests accompanied the troops of the Romanian army on the battlefields as *military confessors*. Some of them died on the front, others were taken prisoners and deported. Over 200 monks and nuns worked as nurses in various campaign hospitals or on the front, some dying on duty because of typhus exanthema. Hundreds of priests were investigated, robbed or expelled from their parishes by the enemy, others died after being shot in the territories occupied by German troops. In Transylvania, over 150 priests were thrown into the Hungarian prisons, some of them being sentenced to death or years of imprisonment. More than 200 priests were deported to Western Hungary, in Sopron County, where they lived in inhumane conditions until their release in 1919 by Romanian troops (Ref. Rev. Prof. Mircea Pacurariu, *History of the Romanian Orthodox Church*, 3rd ed. In Romanian: Basilica Publishing House, Bucharest 2013, pp. 471-473).

Regarding the Great Union in Alba Iulia, on December 1, 1918, the 1228 official delegates in the Constituent National Assembly included *many Church servants*. The two Romanian Churches in Transylvania (the Orthodox and the Greek-Catholic Churches) were represented in Alba Iulia by *five bishops, four vicars, ten delegates of the Orthodox consistories (diocesan councils) and Greek-Catholic collegiate chapter, 129 deans, one representative of theological-pedagogical institutes, and two representatives of the students of theology*, adding many other priests who came leading their believers to seal the century-long desire of the Romanian ancestors to live in one country without oppression.

Church servants were elected in the Great Council of the Romanian nation, as well as in the Conducting Council, while the Romanian Orthodox bishop Carasnebes, Miron Cristea, who later became a Primate Metropolitan (1919), and then the Patriarch of Greater Romania (1925), as well as the Greek-Catholic Bishop of Gherla, Iuliu Hossu, were elected as

members of the four-person delegation who presented the Union Act to King Ferdinand in Bucharest.

Now, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Great Union of December 1, 1918, we want *to pay homage of gratitude to all those who contributed to the achievement of the greatest ideal of our history.*

As an act of commemoration of the 1918 Great Union founders, on this Centennial anniversary, on November 25, together with His Holiness Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, and the hierarchs of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, we consecrated the *Romanian People's Salvation Cathedral* or the National Cathedral in Bucharest, a symbol of Romanian spirituality and unity, which draws together the love for God of a Christian, sacrificial, and generous nation and the gratitude we permanently owe to the National Heroes.

We are all called to keep and cultivate the gift of national freedom and unity as a symbol of the dignity of the Romanian people, acquired with many human sacrifices and many spiritual and material efforts!

For all the benefactors of the Great Union, we thank today the Most Holy Trinity, the Protector of the Coronation Cathedral in Alba Iulia, and we gratefully remember all Romanian heroes who sacrificed themselves for the freedom, unity and dignity of the Romanian people.

Today, all Romanian citizens have the duty *to keep and cultivate not only the gift of freedom, but also the gift of national unity*, as a symbol of the dignity of the Romanian people, in dialogue and cooperation with all peoples of the world.

Many and blessed years, Romania!

+ DANIEL

Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church

After the Doxology, at a nearby building of the Museum there was a representation of the event of the 1220 delegation of representatives who came from Transylvania, Bessarabia, and Bukovina, and signed the papers for the unity. The representation was done by people dressed in traditional clothes of the time of the agreement, and people dressed in contemporary clothes who held two-metre-long bulges, similar to those by which they bulged in 1918 and summoned the soldiers to war and to the unity of the Romanian people. There was also the unveiling of three plaques bearing inscriptions with the names of those who contributed to the unity. These were followed by the attendance of a parade of groups of laity dressed in 1918 clothes, who sang national songs, and finally there was the blessing of the water by the Patriarch of Romania at the very high cross-shaped monument of those who fell in the battlefields in 1918 and a memorial service for the repose of their souls.

At noon there was a meal offered by Archbishop Eirinaios of Alba Julia.

In the afternoon of the same day there was the welcoming reception of the President of Romania Mr. Werner Johannes at the square of Alba Julia Cathedral.

From this position the President and his associates, along with Their Beatitudes the Patriarchs returned to the cross-shaped monument, the symbol of the freedom and unity of the Romanian people and the President with the Mayor cut the ribbon to allow their entrance inside.

Consequently at the central square of the city, before the President of the country, other officials and Their Beatitudes, as well as a huge crowd of people, who had filled the streets and the balconies of the blocks of flats around,

there was a parade of groups of soldiers, tanks, Fire brigade, artillery, helicopters, military aviation and many other contemporary weapons for the defense of the Romanian people, under the music of a philharmonic orchestra.

Thereafter, supper was offered by Archbishop Eirinaios of Alba Julia, and finally the Patriarchal entourage travelled by car via Sibiu, and by plane back to Bucharest. His Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem and His entourage flew from Bucharest back to Tel Aviv by El-Al airways early on Sunday morning, December 2, 2018. Glory be to God for all things.

From Secretariat-General

THE 13TH ENTHRONEMENT ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BEATITUDE THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM THEOPHILOS

On Thursday, November 9/22, 2018, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem celebrated the 13th Enthronement Anniversary of His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, at the glorious Throne of the Mother of Churches. For this extremely significant event in favour of the strengthening and unity of the Church of Jerusalem, there was a Doxology Service at the All-holy Church of the Resurrection.

The Doxology was officiated by His Beatitude, with co-celebrants Hagiotaphite Archbishops, Hieromonks and Deacons,

Arab-speaking Priests and with the participation in prayer of monks, nuns and many laity. The service was also attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos and the Ambassador of Georgia in Israel.

After the Doxology His Beatitude and the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood along with the full congregation returned to the Patriarchate Headquarters.

Therein, first among those who congratulated His Beatitude was Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina with the following address;

"Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Today the Holy Sion, the Mother of all Churches, the Church of the Holy Land, the land of the appearance of the divine revelation, rejoices and is glad, along with the venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, on the commemoration of the thirteen-year-ago event, which turned out to be extremely important for its life and mission in the world.

In the year 2005, after a period of crisis and turbulence, which however did not lead to the submerging of the vessel of the Church of Jerusalem, by the illegally signed documents without the Synodical agreement, which mortgaged invaluable property of the Patriarchate, the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, which is the guardian and the depositary of the Christian presence and property in the Holy Land, fulfilled the cause of its mission, and by the legal and homophonous voting of the Holy Synod, elected Your Holy Beatitude as the 141st Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and all Palestine and as its Hegoumen.

This event is being celebrated festively today, with a Doxology at the All-holy Church of the Resurrection in the presence of the full congregation of monks, clergy and laity, due to its significance as a means of solidarity for the body

of the Church, as bonding its unity and as safeguarding the continuation of its episcopal succession, ever since its foundation by the Lord and by its first Hierarch, St. James the Brother of God.

The continuation of the pastoral mission of the Church of Jerusalem throughout its jurisdiction in the three Palestines as far as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, was then placed in the hands of Your Beatitude by the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, and You have ever since proven to have been worthy of their trust on you, in both words and actions for the last thirteen years.

Out of these, worth mentioning are "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:28); parishes in towns and villages of the Greek-Ortodox Arab-speaking flock, and especially Your care for the Arab-speaking communities in Jordan, through the recent appointments and Episcopal promotions, with the aim of a better pastoring care of the flock in Jordan, with the King of which the Patriarchate keeps good relations in favour of all the Christians and citizens of the Kingdom, nevertheless, it does not fail to care for the Russian-speaking flock in Jordan and Israel.

During Your Patriarchal Office, Your Beatitude has shown a special sensitivity and generosity of spending time at the Patriarchate for the reception of the incoming multitudes of pilgrims from all other Orthodox Churches, blessing and teaching them on their spiritual benefit from their pilgrimage, cultivating with their guiding Bishops and Priests good relations of ecclesiastical communication and cooperation and presenting, even at times of crisis, the viewpoints of our Patriarchate, which always aim to maintain the unity of the Orthodox Church under the bond of peace.

Beyond the pilgrimage visits, Your Beatitude has repeatedly received visits of, state, political and diplomatic delegations and representatives, to whom You have presented

and projected the cultural and peace-making work of the Patriarchate, in the turbulent and flammable political environment, in which it is ordered to minister ecclesiastically. Your Beatitude has exported this work further than its local boundaries, in Your overseas travels, seeking supporters for the cancelling of the illegal agreements of mortgaging the property of the Patriarchate and the prevention of law enforcements which impose heavy tax measures, and deny its right for the free management of its property.

The interest of Your Beatitude in the historic holy Monasteries of the Patriarchate was displayed by Your relevant actions, so that by the cooperation of the Palestinians with the Israeli Army the installation of water was made possible in the Holy Monastery of Hozeva, and by the permission of the Israeli Army as well, the Holy Monastery of St. John the Baptist in the Jordan was renovated and opened again to the pilgrims' visits.

By the actions and guidance of Your Beatitude irreconcilable was the support, claim and confirmation of our rights in our shrines which were questioned by the Armenians, as for example the presence of the second guard of ours by the Angel's stone inside the Holy Tomb for the reception of the Syriac and Coptic Communities right after our Paschal all-night Vigil and recently, our right in the cleaning of the God-receiving Cave in Bethlehem.

The always granted interest of Mother Greece in favour of the preservation of the indefinable rights of our nation on the All-holy Shrines, has recently been made active by Your Beatitude, through Your invitation to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Markos Bolaris, who, responding willingly, visited the Patriarchate, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Gethsemane, the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Holy Monastery of St. Savvas and the Holy Monastery of the Sacred Cross, intending to support the Patriarchate whenever

there is need.

Raising the glass on behalf of the Brotherhood and the Holy and Sacred Synod, to Your health, solidarity and longevity, in fullness of divine blessings, I reassure You, that being encouraged by all the aforementioned, we, the Hagiotaphite Fathers, Your Beatitude, are strengthened and join forces and walk along with You as Kyrinaioi at Your Patriarchal mission of the Cross, increasing our Hagiotaphite fruition for the benefit of souls, the praising of our blessed nation and the glory of our Trinitarian God. So be it."

The Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem also addressed His Beatitude with the following words;

"Your Beatitude,

Most Reverend Archbishops,

Reverend Fathers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's celebration is of great importance for all of us, as the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood and the Holy Church, the pilgrims and the Orthodox Community, honor with due grandeur the 13th anniversary of the enthronement of the Head of the Church of Sion, the Mother of the Churches, His Holy Beatitude , the Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III.

It is a special honor and pleasure for me to attend this celebration and I would like to convey our cordial wishes for health, strength, and longevity, in order to continue Your high mission, which is becoming more and more significant and important, in this difficult time.

On this occasion, I would like to express Greece's unconditional support towards the Sacred Institution, the Presbyterian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which has played an exceptionally significant historic role throughout the centuries, and as the centre of Orthodoxy in the Holy Land, it

continues to be an endless source of hope, projecting the values of Christianity and the message of the salvation of man from the Holy City towards all directions.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem is of course, a steadfast point of reference for all Greeks, wherever they are, and it symbolizes the long-term presence of Hellenism in the Holy Land, while it can only be an unrelenting bond of friendship and cooperation with the other nations, as well as being the expression of the Orthodox Christians of the region, conserving valuable traditions and conveying the ecumenical message of Orthodoxy towards all directions. For all of us, the Venerable Patriarchate is certainly the depository of the most important Sacred Shrines of Christianity, which the Hagiotaphite Fathers defend daily with devotion and self-denial, and who always inspire and encourage the faith and reverence of the faithful around the world, as well as the bonds with the Church of Sion.

Your Beatitude,

With Your hard work and tireless efforts, You promote the uplifting of the status of the Patriarchate, the defense of the existing Status Quo in the Holy Land and the protection of the herein Christian presence. With the sincere mood of understanding and reconciliation You demonstrate, You systematically cultivate the relations with the other denominations and religions, as well as the wider effort of reconciliation and peace-making in this much tested region. With a series of your initiatives you promote the restoration and highlighting of the most Sacred Shrines of Christianity, while you take care of the spiritual concord and unity of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, and the spiritual guidance and prosperity of a flock that undergoes significant challenges and trials.

Your Beatitude,

The burden You carry upon Your shoulders is heavy and the struggle it entails is also long and arduous. It is my deep conviction however, that with God's help and the active support of all of us, You will complete your task and accomplish your mission.

All the Staff of the Consulate and I, pray that you may have health, strength and longevity for the good of the Patriarchate, of the Brotherhood, of your Greek-Orthodox Flock, of Orthodoxy and of the peace in the Holy Land.

Many Happy Returns."

Likewise addresses to His Beatitude were delivered by representatives of the Brotherly Churches and some Hagiotaphite Fathers.

In return of those addresses, His Beatitude said the following;

"Your Excellency Mr. Consul General of Greece,

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brothers,

Dear Christians,

Noble pilgrims,

"I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psalm 34:1).

Our Holy Church of Jerusalem, which has been founded by the redeeming blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, gleefully celebrates today the completion of the thirteen-year ministry of Our Mediocrity since Our undertaking the Apostolic and Patriarchal throne of St. James the Brother of God and first Hierarch of Jerusalem. For this reason, along with the Venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, we went to the All-holy Church of the Resurrection, where we had a thanksgiving Doxology to the Holy Trinitarian God, where the love of His

Son and our Lord Jesus Christ constrains us (2 Cor. 5:14).

This festal thirteen-year anniversary does not refer to Our unworthiness, but to the Holy-spiritual institution of the Church, namely the mystical body of Christ. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col. 1:18-20) according to St. Paul.

Our so far hierarchical, monastic and pastoral ministry "unto the throne of grace of the great Hierarch Jesus Christ the Son of God" (Hebr. 4:15-16), namely of the Biblical Mother of Churches, and Dwelling place of the God of Holy Sion, had one and only purpose, the preservation of our Apostolically-delivered consignment of the healthy faith and the right division of the word of truth according to St. Paul; "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). Moreover, the preservation of the all-holy shrines as places of the logical worship and sources of divine and therapeutic energy, but also the safekeeping of their indefinable privileges and sovereign rights of the reverend and royal nation of the Roman Orthodox Christians.

Nevertheless, hearkening to the words of Paul: "let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebr. 12:1-2), we have not ceased our overseas international campaign in order to awaken the consciousness of those who love the City of the King of kings, the earthly Jerusalem, which is the visible symbol of peaceful co-existence and reconciliation of nations, peoples, and religions, on the one hand; and on the other, we have been striving for the guarantee of the Christian presence

and of the Churches in the Middle East and in the Holy Land.

And we have been working on this cause, under the spiritual and religious mission of the Mother of Churches, namely the primary institution of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which has been preserving the existing Status Quo, on both the pilgrimage and the demographic areas in the Holy City of Jerusalem, which has been threatened by those who covet its distortion.

We say this, because Jerusalem has been the primordial and inexhaustible source of the blood of righteousness, always remaining the shelter of those who desire God the Father of love and peace, according to the psalmist; "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God" (Psalm 41:1-2).

This thirteen-year enthronement anniversary of Our Mediocrity calls us not in boasting over the things done by us, but that we "may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God" (Rom.15:17). "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience" (2 Cor. 1:12).

It is precisely for this testimony of our conscience that we are called to continue our ecclesiastical and hierarchical mission amidst a world suffering from confusion and especially in our region of the Middle East. "Quench not the Spirit", St. Paul orders (1 Thess. 5:19).

In this sacred ministry of the throne of the apostles and martyrs of St. James the Brother of God, as well as of the mystery of the divine Providence, we have as collaborators and communicators our dear Fathers in Christ and Hagiotaphite Brothers, Archbishops, Hieromonks, Deacons and Monks, along with whom, according to St. Ingatius the God-bearer, "in concord we watch over all things that should be done, with the Bishop who is the Head in resemblance of God, and the

Presbyters in resemblance of the Apostles, and the deacons to whom the ministry of Jesus has been entrusted, just as it has been along the centuries with the Father and it has finally been revealed" (Vol.2, p. 269).

We honestly say that our fight is a fight "against the doctrines of deceit" (Eph. 4:14). For this reason St. Paul advices us saying: "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (Eph. 6:14,16), "for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44) according to John the Evangelist. These methods of deceit and lies of the devil are being recorded in the sacred history of the past but also the present times of the Church of Jerusalem, namely of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate, which has been challenged but not debilitated by the sons of the darkness of this generation (Luke 16:8).

Let us pray to God the Father of lights and of truth, "that he may guide our footsteps in the working of His commandments" by the intercessions of the Most Blessed and Ever-Virgin Mary, our Lady Theotokos, and those of our Father among the Saints Nectarios of Pentapolis. And may the grace of the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ fortify all of us in the ministry of the All-holy Shrines, the irrefutable witnesses of our faith, as well as in the pastoring of our reverend Christian flock.

As far as all these are concerned, we call upon all those who participated in the prayer with Us and honoured with their presence this feast of Enthronement, and pray for strength from on high, the grace of the All-holy Tomb, patience and all blessings of God, expressing our warmest thanksgiving for those who addressed us, Geronda Secretary-General, Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, who spoke on behalf of the members of the Holy and Sacred Synod and our Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, His Excellency the Consul General of

Greece Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos, His Excellency the Ambassador of Georgia, Reverend Archimandrite Alexander, the representative of our Brotherly Holy Church of Russia, who conveyed the wishes of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Moscow Cyril, Reverend Archimandrite Theophilos, representative of our Brotherly Holy Church of Romania, who conveyed the wishes of His Beatitude the Patriarch of Romania Daniel, the Most Reverend Metropolitan Kyriakos of Nazareth, who spoke on behalf of Our flock in Nazareth, the Most Reverend Archbishop Damascene of Joppa, who spoke on behalf of our flock in Joppa, Reverend Fr. Halalambos Bandour, who spoke on behalf of St. James Cathedral, the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, who spoke on behalf of the Madaba Community in Jordan and of the Russian-speaking Community in Ber-Sheba, Reverend Archimandrite Philotheos, who spoke on behalf of the Communities of Acre, Reverend Steward Fr. Savvas, who spoke on behalf of the Community of Beit Sahour, Reverend Steward Fr. Yusef Hodali, who spoke on behalf of the Community of Beit Jalla, the School of St. Demetrios, Mr. Abu Aeta and all who participated in the celebration of this Enthronement anniversary.

To the health of all of you!"

At noon there was a festal meal.

From Secretariat-General