

# **INAUGURATION OF “SPIRITUAL CENTER” AT BETHLEHEM PILGRIMAGE SITE**

On Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> of August 2013, the Spiritual Center of the Bethlehem Pilgrimage was officially inaugurated.

The Center is set up at a residence near the Basilica of the Nativity, and the Central Monastery of the Greek Orthodox located within. The residence was purchased and renovated by the Patriarchal Commissioner in Bethlehem, His Eminence Theophylaktos, Archbishop of Jordan.

The Center is intended to include various teaching and educational departments for the youth of the Arab-speaking congregation in Bethlehem (Rum Orthodox), i.e. courses on the History of the Holy Land, the Church of Jerusalem, the Holy Sites, Byzantine Music, computer literacy, foreign languages etc.

By means of these courses and other events to be hosted at the Center, young people will have the opportunity to meet and communicate with one another, overcoming isolation and alienation caused by the unstable political situation and financial adversities facing both Bethlehem and its environs.

The administration of the Center shall be undertaken by His Eminence Theophylaktos, Archbishop of Jordan, alongside selected associates from the Bethlehem congregation, i.e. theologian Mr Jandala Masri, and Mr Georgios Kharan with the blessing, approval and guidance of His Beatitude Theophilos and of the Holy and Sacred Synod.

The inauguration ceremony was preceded by a meeting of the heads of the three Communities – Greek Orthodox, Franciscan and Armenian – at the Bethlehem office of the President of the

Palestinian Authority, Mr Mahmoud Abbas – Abu Mazen, with his representatives, focused on working together on the manner in which officials and pilgrims will be received at the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

Subsequently, the Patriarchal Commissioner in Bethlehem, Theophylaktos, hosted lunch for His Beatitude and retinue, as well as for high-ranked officials of the Palestinian Authority, Sheiks of the region, Mr George Bassus and to approximately two hundred members of our congregation in Bethlehem and other communities.

Lunch was followed by the Center's opening ceremony and the blessing of the water by His Beatitude.

On this very significant event for the life of our Greek Orthodox Community and all towns in Bethlehem, His Beatitude made a speech in Arabic which may be read here <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2013/08/28/2662> wishing success of the Center's objectives for the benefit of those partaking in its activities.

At the conclusion of His speech, His Beatitude was given a letter by the Judicial Assembly of the Palestinian Authority addressed to President Abu Mazen, wherein His Beatitude is praised for His cooperation towards peace, inter-religious coexistence and contribution to the Palestinian people. The letter, in Arabic, may be read here: <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/ar/2013/08/28/2665>

Upon leaving the Center, His Beatitude consecrated the Chapel of the Holy Innocents near the Basilica, recently renovated by Theophylaktos, Archbishop of Jordan.

**From the Secretariat-General**



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**MR. CHRISTOPHER PAPPAS  
ADDRESS TO HIS BEATITUDE  
PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM  
THEOPHILOS III.**

*HOLY CITY OF JERUSALEM, 22-5-2012*

Your Beatitude,

It is sincere privilege and profound honour to greet our esteemed guests and my fellow pilgrims of the Order of Saint Andrew to this historical and hallowed pilgrimage in the Holy Land and the sacred city of Jerusalem, where we are humble guests of Your Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III, the 141<sup>ST</sup> Patriarch of the ancient Orthodox Christian Church of Jerusalem.

Your mere title, Your Beatitude, introduces us to the auspicious and awesome region that we find ourselves today. For you are the spiritual leader of the Orthodox Christians in the old city of Jerusalem and all Palestine, Syria and Arabia, beyond the Jordan River and Cana of Galilee, and finally Holy Zion. This city is one of the oldest and holiest in the world; it has been sacred to the people of the Old Testament for 3000 years and to the people of the New Testament for 2000 years. This territory has been trodden by the feet of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; it is here in Bethlehem, that Christ was born and lived, preached sermons and performed miracles, was crucified and risen. It is in the surrounding sanctified waters that Christ was baptized, walked on the sea, and healed the paralytic. It is from here that Christianity spread like

fire throughout the world. And it is here that your revered predecessor, Apostle Iacovos, the brother of our Lord, presided over the first Church Council at which gathered the Holy Apostles and Disciples of our risen Savior Jesus Christ.

As you know, Your Beatitude, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in America are the devoted lay servants and committed defenders of the Sacred See of Saint Andrew, the first called of the Apostles. Yet, we all hold in the highest esteem the maternal source and spiritual birthplace of the Christian Church, which was established on the day of Pentecost with the descent of the Holy Spirit on Christ's disciples.

It is truly a blessing and inspiration for us to be here during this Paschal Season. We will be able to chant Christ is Risen before the empty tomb of our Lord. We will be here, on the divine day of the Ascension of our Lord, as it is says in the Creed, when He "ascended into heaven to sitat the right hand of the Father". What we will experience in the coming days will remain in our minds and in our hearts for the rest of our lives. It can never be adequately described with words; it can only fittingly be honored with silence.

We thank you for your hospitality, Your Beatitude and for the honor you've given us by being our most distinguished guest this evening. We also assure you of our love and support in your sacred of history.

Thank you.

***Archon Christopher Pappas,***

***appointed Regional Commander of***

***South Central United States***

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# **ADDRESS BY H. B. CHRYSOSTOMOS II ARCHBISHOP OF CYPRUS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF THE MIDDLE EAST**

November 29, 2011

It is with feelings of great joy that we greet today the 10th General Assembly of the Council of Churches of the Middle East.

The Church of Cyprus, and we personally, welcome to our island, with great pleasure, the honourable Representatives – clerics and laymen – from the various Churches – members of the Council of Churches of the Middle East. We thank you and we welcome you all. You all, guided by the true spirit of the Christian love, have responded to the invitation and came here, so that all together we will exchange views and respond to the many and serious problems which concern us.

Thirty-seven years after the Initiating Assembly of the Council of Churches of the Middle East in Cyprus, spearheaded by the late Archbishop Macarios III, the Church of Cyprus has the distinguished honour to host the 10th General Assembly. We are confident that this Assembly, as well as the Initiating one, will be a milestone for the future and the history of the Council and for the further development of the Ecumenical Movement in the region.

The presence of all of you here highlights, and also

confesses, the great significance and importance, which the current General Assembly of the Council of Churches of the Middle East has. During the critical times that we are experiencing, in which we are witnessing acts of violence, religious fanaticism, intolerance and religious discrimination in the wider region of the

Middle East and North Africa, this General Assembly attracts the immediate interest and attention of all Christians in this sensitive area of our world. Therefore, as religious leaders we need to hear the messages of our peoples for freedom, democracy and dignity against regimes, which – in their agony to survive – spread terror, violence and death to their people.

We have a strong view that the time is here, when all together – all Churches of the Middle East – we have to join forces and work consciously towards resolving many, various and serious problems that exist in our region, especially the prevalence of peace amongst our peoples and countries.

Our responsibility to work for peace, is primarily a result of our responsibility towards God; all human beings were created according to His image. Moreover, the concept of peace is tied up with the presence of God amongst humans and is not limited simply to a word which denotes the absence of war. It has a deeper meaning and this becomes clear from the first moment of the presence of the Saviour on Earth, and the hopeful message of the angels , which is carried to the whole of humanity “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men».

Developments are running fast in our region and we cannot be ordinary observers in what is happening around us, nor can we just follow the events. Our responsibility is to keep in pace with developments and – to the possible extent – to modify them towards the benefit, progress and prosperity of our peoples. Besides, this is required as our duty towards the

future generations and towards our children, for which we must secure the right to live in a better, safer and more peaceful world, at local, regional and international levels.

To be able to exercise our role, as the Middle East Council of Churches, and to make an active contribution to a better and happier world in our region, without wars and bloodshed, it is realised that we must resign ourselves to Christian love and, in a spirit of goodwill and understanding, beyond mere rhetorical expressions, in order to see the problems which concern us, to confront the difficulties and challenges, to respond, to make decisions and resolve them. This is the moment at which our words and our values are turned into action and projects, which will contribute to the culture of peace in the region.

Primarily, we highlight the need for reconstruction of the Middle East Council of Churches, so as to make it more effective in its decisions and actions. Undoubtedly, there were and there are economic difficulties, which need to be addressed, taking into account, of course, today's difficult economic situation, which exists worldwide. However, weaknesses have been observed and the functioning of the Secretariat of the Council, resulting to a lack of coordination and harmonious cooperation between the member churches. All these have to be resolved, otherwise, the Middle East Council of Churches will not be able to respond to the esteemed causes of its establishment and operation.

At the same time, the Middle East Council of Churches should create those appropriate structures and programmes, through which the representatives of the Churches of the Middle East, will be able to meet, discuss, and seek answers to many important issues associated with the Christian presence in the Middle East. However, our commitment to a greater and better understanding and dialogue cannot be limited just among Christians. It is also our responsibility to develop harmonious and friendly relations amongst Christians, Muslims

and Jews. Consequently, we must reaffirm the common values of love, mutual respect and understanding, as they are so aptly and beautifully recorded in the Holy Bible: "Let us love one another, for love is for God and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1, John A:7). The opening of an Interreligious Dialogue will enable the Middle East Council of Churches to become the catalyst of developments in the Middle East.

We wish, on this occasion, to express our deep appreciation to the hitherto considerable work and great service of the Council not only to

Christians, but in general and to the people and countries of our region. Undoubtedly, however, much remains to be done.

We reiterate that the current General Assembly of the Council of Middle East Churches is meeting at very difficult and critical times for our region. We all live and experience these. We especially note the sad events of the resurgence of religious fundamentalism and significant violations of religious freedoms.

Unfortunately, we are sorry to say that, also, in the occupied northern area of our island, for almost thirty seven years now, following the invasion by Turkish troops, basic human rights are being violated and religious freedom is not respected. Since then, and in all these years since 1974, to the present day, we have no right to perform our religious duties, to protect and conserve our ancient churches and monasteries. These ancient churches and monasteries have either been destroyed or looted; some were transformed into Muslim mosques, others into leisure centres and others into yards for sheep or stables of animals.

In relation to this, we mention that we, as the Church of Cyprus, know that only through sincere and open dialogue with the Turkish Cypriots, we will be able to overcome our

differences and to build trust between us. It is sufficient to stress that the Cyprus problem has never been a religious problem, as we lived peacefully and harmoniously, Greek Christians and Muslim Turkish Cypriots. Therefore, the dialogue with the Turkish Cypriot Muslims in our own country is vitally important.

We stress, once again, that during these critical times, which we undergo, a perfect and harmonious collaboration of all Christians and of all the Churches of the region is needed and required. The current General Assembly of the Council of Middle East Churches is called in this effort to overcome the existing internal problems and other difficulties, and to give evidence of its contribution.

In conclusion, we would like to stress that the peace process is a matter of personal and institutional choice. The power either to increase the pain in the world, or to contribute to healing the wounds, is in our hands. Once again, we stress that it is a matter of choice. Today, we are here following the urgings of Holy Scripture: "my little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John, 3:18). We are here because we have made our choices: we have established peace over war, hope over despair, and love over hatred.

It is with these general considerations, that we welcome the work of the General Assembly and we wish, from the bottom of our heart, success of our efforts, so that soon the spirit of Christian love and Christian peace be established in our countries and our people. Our wholehearted prayer to the Archshepherd Christ is that the day will come on which his fervent desire "that they all may be one" (John, 17:21) will become a reality and his faultless prophesy "there will be one flock and one shepherd" (John, 10:16) will come true.

**+ THE ARCHBISHOP OF CYPRUS CHRYSOSTOMOS**

Holy Archdiocese of Cyprus, 29 November 2011.

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# **ADDRESS OF H. B. THE ARCHBISHOP OF CYPRUS CHRYSOSTOMOS II TO THE OPENING OF THE MIDDLE EAST INTER-ORTHODOX COUNCIL**

Al-Salaamu 'Aleikum, "Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν!" I greet you all in Peace.

Peace is not just a word for greeting or a word signifying the absence of war. It is something more than a simple word. The notion of Peace is signifying the presence of God among people regardless their religious beliefs and consists a core value in all religions and reaches out all those people, who seek peace according to their own religious traditions and commitments.

Unfortunately, in the area of the Middle East Peace is not present. We often witness, terrible acts of violence that spread death, terror and pain upon people. We are able to observe, also, acts of religious intolerance and discrimination. Recognizing the fact that working for peace constitutes a primary expression of our responsibility which is grounded on the essential goodness of all human beings by virtue of being in God's image, we gathered, today, the Primates and the Representatives of the Orthodox Churches in the Middle East ready to face the challenges and to move

forward, beyond mere rhetorical expressions. We are here to incarnate our ethical values into actions that will contribute to a culture of peace in the area.

Alternative ways that reject violence and war must constantly pursued and persistently proclaimed. For this reason we arrived here, in the Holy Land of Jordan Valley, to found an Inter-Orthodox Institution where the Orthodox Churches will be able to meet and discuss, searching for the answers to the many issues related to the Christian presence in the Middle East. However, our commitment must not be limited within the Christians. It is also our responsibility to develop harmonious relations and better understanding between Christians, Muslims and Jewish. Thus, we have to reaffirm our common values of love, mutual respect and understanding and we have to foster interfaith dialogue within the spirit of the Holy Scripture: *"Let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves, is born of God and knows God. He, who doesn't love, doesn't know God, for God is love"* (1 John: 4, 7). For this reason we would like to extend our greetings to the whole Muslim world, this very special day that signifies the beginning of the Holy month of Ramadan which is a time of reflecting, believing and worshiping God, a time of self-reformation, spiritual cleansing and enlightenment.

TheChurchofCyprus, remains true to the beliefs and ideas of love, peace and of mutual understanding. It is our commitment to promote dialogue between different religions globally, regionally and locally, not only in theory but also in practice. For theChurchofCyprusdialogue with Turkish Cypriots, in our own country is of existential importance, because of the fact that the northern part of our island is enslaved and under Turkish military occupation since 1974. Since then, basic Human Rights are violated daily and religious freedom is not respected. We have no right to worship in or protect and preserve our centuries old churches and monasteries. TheChurchofCyprusknows that only through sincere and open

dialogue with Turkish Cypriot Muslims, we will be able to overcome our differences and build trust with one another. Besides Cyprus problem has never been a religious problem, as Muslims Turkish Cypriots and Christians Greek Cypriots, used to live together in peace and harmony.

In this respect, the Church of Cyprus, promoting dialogue with the Turkish Cypriot religious leadership, organized last week a Faith Based Interfaith Youth Encounter with the participation of Greek and Turkish Cypriots together with Israeli and Palestinian youth. The main purpose of this initiative was for young people from different faiths (Christians, Moslems, Jewish) and different nationalities to come together and understand the aspirations, worries, and beliefs of each other. In addition, the Programme gave the opportunity to the youth to discuss the teachings of each religion regarding Human Rights -including the Rights of Religious Freedom and worship- justice, peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and how these could be applied in their daily lives. For this reason the youth were able to visit respective religious sites and follow Friday prayers in a Mosque, Shabbat in a Synagogue on Saturday and the Holy Mass in a Church on Sunday.

With these thoughts, we would like to express our gratitude to His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III for this initiative. That proves His real and sincere interest for peace in the area. His efforts consists an inspiration and encouragement for our people to reserve the right for the future generations, to live in a better, and more secure and peaceful world.

We would like also to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation and our warm wishes to His Majesty King Abdullah II King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. His Majesty's continuous efforts for peace and understanding have turn Jordan into an outstanding example of freedom of worshipping. You can observe this through its people and its

surroundings. What is more, His Majesty's initiatives starting from "Amman Message", to "The Common World" and to the recent "World Interfaith Harmony Week" have created channels for open dialogue between Christians and Muslims based on two common fundamental religious Commandments; Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour.

In conclusion we would like to emphasize that peacemaking is a matter of individual and institutional choice. The power either to increase the hurt inflicted on our world or to contribute toward its healing is in our hand. Once again, it is a matter of choice. Today, following the instructions of the Bible: *"My children, let's not love in words only, neither with the tongue only, but in deed and truth"* (1 John: 3, 18), we came here because we have made a choice: We have chosen peace over war, hope over despair, and love over hate.

**†Chrysostomos II Archbishop of Cyprus**

**Holy Archbishopric of Cyprus,**

**August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011.**

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# **THE PAST AND THE PRESENT OF THE GREEK COMMUNITY IN JERUSALEM.**

Between the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June / 6<sup>th</sup> of July and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June / 7<sup>th</sup>

of July, the Swedish Christian Study Centre (SCSC) located nearby David's Gate, organised an International Conference on the Christian presence and its heritage in the Holy Land, particularly that of the cities of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Gaza.

Amongst the speakers at this Conference, was the representative of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem His Eminence Aristarchos Archbishop of Constantina and Chief Secretary, who held a speech on the theme of Saint Porphyrios Bishop of Gaza—'The life and Thought of St. Porphyrios'.

Invitee speaker was also Dr. John N. Tleel, as the representative of the Greek Community in Jerusalem. Dr. Tleel is an elder Jerusalemite, Rum -Orthodox and dentist by profession. He is one of the devoted members of the Patriarchate and author of the book 'I am Jerusalem'. Dr. Tleel gave a lecture with the title: 'Profile of the Hellenic Community in Jerusalem in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century' which is cited below:

"International Conference:

CELEBRATING THE FIRST 2000 YEARS OF CHRISTIAN HERITAGE IN THE HOLY LAND

'Profile of the Hellenic Community in Jerusalem in the 20th Century'

John N. Tleel, author of "I am Jerusalem"

This profile theme, is not a research, or a study, it is not a full history, it is not about personal experiences, it is not a living making of history, but it can be, a tentative and brief combination, of a huge and vast historical contribution, to the Holy City of Jerusalem, <sup>4</sup>of the Hellenic Community, or the Hellenic expression, the Hellenic Παροικία (Paroikia) in Jerusalem, in the 20th Century', and regrettably and sadly,

its ultimate decline, and almost fateful disappearance, as it looks today in 2011.

Hellenic civilization penetrated and expanded in this part of the world and especially in Jerusalem, in the fourth century BC, when Alexander the Great, sitting victorious on the back of his horse, entered and saw Jerusalem from Mount Scopus, not so far from this room, where we are gathered today, and Sune Fahlgren, our host, and Director of the SCSC, will, certainly and boastfully, ask us later on, to go upstairs on the roof, to view and admire the fantastic panorama of the surrounding Jerusalem area.

Alexander the Great, fourth century BC, Constantine the Great, fourth century AD, Patriarch Sophronios the Rum, seventh century AD, great makers of the Jerusalem history, are the interconnected inspirers, to all the 24 BC and AD centuries, of the rich and many-sided Hellenic history of Jerusalem.

Even before the 20th century, we can discover celebrated names, like Φιλοκτήτης Νέγρης (Philoktitis Negris) (1860) doctor, who published an essay "on cholera", also the famous doctor Χαράλαμπος Μαζαράκης (Charalambos Mazarakis) (1870), who acted as substitute for the Greek Consulate, Αστεριάδης (Asteriadis), a Government official, who was also Mayor of Jerusalem, Σταματιάδης (Stamatiadis), a doctor, Φλωρέντζου (Florentzou) and many others.

Until 1948 the Hellenic Community of Jerusalem, or the Paroikia, numbered 2000 residents. They were living in the Old City, within the walls, in the Hellenic Όμιλος (Homilos), called Greek Colony, in the upper Bakaa, in Katamonas, the ancient Hellenic name and location of the Katamon, and in all the neighborhoods of the Capital of Palestine, which was Jerusalem.

All the 23 Greek/Rum Orthodox convents and monasteries of

theOldCity, at that time, not as today, were full and vibrant with Greeks of all ages.

### 1902 to World War One

The residents were confined in theOldCity. Outside the Walls, making their appearance, sporadically and fearfully, were various neighborhoods. Institutions and Monasteries belonging to the French, Americans, Germans, Italians, Swedish etc.

At that time the few in number members were professionals, more merchants, employees and technicians.

Among the Professionals were, the doctors: Nikolakis Spyridonos, Photios Eukleidis, Nikiphoros Mazarakis, Nikolaos Papaioannou, Georgios Yerousis, Varnavas Vareltzis.

A parenthesis: Nikiphoros Mazarakis was also the President of the early and already Benevolent Hellenic Association "Ευποιία" (Eupoia) and served as director in theIsraeliteHospitalas well. Nikolaos Papaioannou was the physician of Patriarch Damianos. End of the parenthesis.

Chemists: Christakis Gaitanopoulos, Neoklis Ioannidis, Argyrios Mavromichalis.

A personal parenthesis, for the sake of the Hellenic History in the 20th Century: My mother came toJerusalemfrom Mathytos, sometime before its destruction in 1915. Mathytos is situated in the north of thePeninsulaofThraki, on the west side of the Hellisponte and not far from theDardanelles. Today it makes the western or European part ofTurkey. My mother came for an eye treatment, at theSt. JohnOphthalmicHospital. Her brother Evangelos, was already inJerusalem, but she stayed in the house of the Chemist Neoclis Ioannidis and his wife Euthalia, until she married my Palestinian father. Euthalia was the sister of the knownJerusalemhistorian of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Chrysostomos Papadopoulos, and later on, Archbishop of Athens and allGreeceand author of 'The History

of the Church of Jerusalem". Neoclis was the Pharmacist at the drug store and the hospital of the Patriarchate, located in the Old City, in the old and first floor, under the two upper structures, of today's, two-storied Gloria Hotel, built in 1951 and 1969. This much, much older part of the three stories building, during the Jordanian rule 1948-1967, served as the main office of the Palestinian/ Jordanian Mayor of Jerusalem, as well as the Municipality. Today, 201 1, this nearby Rum Orthodox monument in the Old City, a hospital and a pharmacy, during the Ottoman occupation, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, today, is an Israeli Municipal annex. End of the parenthesis.

Advocate: Symeon Petasis.

Architects: Nikiphoros Petasis, Christodoulos Spyridonidis.

Professors: Georgios Vrachyepedis, Konstantinos Eliadis, Georgios Modinos, Nikolaos Lodis, Agapitos Arfaras, Nikolaos Ka'iretlidou and many others.

Merchants: Theodoros Inglesis, Minas Spathopoulos, Christiphoros Christophorou, Antonios Kapelos, Sakelaris, Konstantinos Micha'ilidis, Avramidis, Konstantinidis, Lambrou, Dedas (Chadjipetrou), Sotiriou and many others.

Book-seller: Dimitrios Takos.

During that early, important and active period, the Greek Government was no less active. Γρυπάρης (Gryparis) was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, and Μιλτιάδης

Ραφαήλ (Miltiadis Raphael) was serving as Consul of Greece in Jerusalem.

Some names as a tribute to the memory of the families of that time and period:

Avramidi, Aga, Anastasiadi, Argyriadi, Atseli, Attaliotou, Andread L Apergi. Alamanidou, Avgerinou, Valvi, Vasiliadou,

Vareltzi, Velazertou, Vozemberg, Voskopoulou, Gavrielidou, Galtanopoulou, Karafylaki, Yerasimou, Yerousi, Georgiadou, Georgiadou, Yerousi, Georgiou, Yianniou, Daga, Danielidou, Deda, Dimitriadou, Drakouli, Zafiriadou, Zographou Zographou, Inglesi, Inglesi, Ignatiadou, Ioannidou, Kaloudi, Kantopoulou, Kara'itlidou, Carnapa, Karaphylaki, Katsinopoulou, Keladitou, Kretekidou, Lambrou, Laskaridou, Louvari, Lykidou, Malafatopoulou, Matzaridou, Mauridou, Banes, Megasthenous, Meimaraki, Mykonos, Misyrlis, Michailidou, Moustaki, Moutafidou, Mylona, Mystakidou, Nikolaidou, Nikolaidou, Ninon, Panaretou, Papadopoulou, Patetsou, Patlakou, Petridi, Podia, Poteri, Protoppapa, Reveli, Repanidou, Savvidou, Saridi, Solomonidi, Strafti, Sphaellou, Philippidou, Flamba, Fokylidou, Chatzipetraki, Chnaroyannaki, Chouli, Antoniou and, and...

In 1902, with the Greek Consul General I. Alexandropoulos at the head, and some of the persons already mentioned above: Nikiphoros Mazarakis, Nikolaos Spyridonos, Photios Eukleidou, Nikolaos Papaioannou, Georgios Yerousis, Christakis Gaitanopoulos and Konstantinos Eliadis, and with the generous donation offered by the great benefactor and the known Jerusalem builder. Archimandrite Euphthymios, the Greek Orthodox Superior (Skevophylax) of the Church of the Anastasis (Resurrection), the area and the land of the GREEK COLONY was chosen. The holy earth of Jerusalem was dug and the foundations, for the building of the first houses and the Club (Λέσχη), were placed.

### The start of 1920

The war was over. The British entered Jerusalem. A new wind of hope began blowing, the community started again to reorganize itself, after the destructive effects of the war. New names of university graduates, doctors, chemists, teachers etc., were added to the list of the professionals.

In 1922 the "Φιλόπτωχος Ελληνική Αδελφότης" (Charitable Hellenic Brotherhood) was founded. The founders were seven members of the community.

In 1924 the first women's Association was founded: "η Ένωσις Ελληνίδων Κυριών" "η Οδηγήτρια", (The Hellenic Ladies Union). Photo Mavromichali was the foundress, and Sophia Spyridonos was the first President, of a committee of nine members.

The Hellenic Boy Scout Movement, the oldest in Palestine, was founded by Markos Lioufis, in 1920. He came from Cairo. He organized the movement and made it a member of the Universal Scout Family. In 1950, after participating in the Pan-Hellenic Jamboree, in Dionysos, Greece, the Boy Scout Association (1928) became a member of the Scouts of Greece. Some leading names for the sake of history: Evangelos Solomonidis, Elias Kareklas, Christophoros Christophorou, Konstantinos Papadopoulos, Panayiotis Ignelis, Kyriakos Papanastasiou, Chrysostomos Karathanasis, Ioannis Ardizoglou, Evangelos Kaloudis.

Back in Jerusalem from the Jamboree in Dionysos, in 1950, I was asked to contribute to the activities of the Greek Boy Scouts. Reluctantly, and with mixed feelings, I consented. It was a mission impossible, in difficult, uncertain and changing political times. From 1952 to 1973, I published the Greek Scouts Magazine "Το Τρίφυλλο", (To Triphyllo, the Trefoil), the Scouts emblem, and "Al-Zambaka" in Arabic. Initially it was stenciled and in Greek only, but blossomed, not only into a multilingual printed magazine, but also ecumenical, serving the entire population. In 1957, "Το Σώμα Ελλήνων Προσκόπων", the Boy Scouts of Greece, honoured me with the "Special Service Medal", "Μετάλλιον Ευδόκιμου Υπηρεσίας". It was not for me, but it meant "Ο! Hellene Scouts of Jerusalem, thank you for, τοις κείνων ρήμασι πειθόμενοι", (Thermopylai, "the hot gates," 480 BC, Leonidas with the 300 Spartiates). The Medal was conferred on me, by Greek Consul General Pavlos Pantermalis, on behalf of Greece, at the Greek Consulate in

theOldCity, in St. Anne's Greek Orthodox Monastery. The Consulate also became a 'distinguished refugee' in theOldCity!

Scouts are sometimes the mosaic mirror of Jerusalem. Parading in Jerusalem with their national Greek Scout flag waving, on Hellenic national days, the Greek Scouts, entered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with the flag, and then folding it, and placing it behind the door, on the right side of the Church of the Anastasis. This was an exclusive right.

In 1928, the "Social and Athletic Association "Ηρακλής, (Hercules)" was founded, and in the middle of the century, a new Association, the "Ολυμπιακός" (Olympic) replaced it.

In 1938 the "Hellenic Community of Jerusalem", "Η Ελληνική Κοινότης Ιεροσολύμων", was founded. The long awaited dream and event at last was realized. It was an official and historic recognition. The first Executive Committee: Themistoklis Saoulis, the first President, and members: Socratis Tokatlidis, Pangratis Vareltzis, Eugenios Philalithis, Argyrios Ignatiadis, Emmanouil Kasotis, and Antonios Antipas. M. Sakelariadis and Dimitrios Papas were the involved Consuls General of Greece.

In 1938, and for the first time, the Greek Government, injected some modern Greek education into the classic Gymnasium of the Patriarchate. They sent three professors: Georgios Chronopoulos, and Apostolos Chatziemmanouil, philologists, and Dimitrios Photopoulos, for mathematics, physics, and chemistry. My brother David and I, were fortunate, to have known them as our professors, as well as friends.

## 1940 World War TWO

October 28, 1940, the famous and historic: OXI-NO! The Greeks fought heroically an unequal war, against the invading

Italians and Germans, but eventually the Germans occupied Greece. The war and the occupation brought temporarily, a change in the Hellenic demographic map of Jerusalem. Greek refugees fleeing the German occupation, took refuge in Palestine and especially in Jerusalem. King George the second of Greece made a historic visit to Jerusalem. Patriarch Timotheos and the King, in the Church of the Anastasis (Holy Sepulchre). The Patriarch addresses the King: "Your Majesty, you are the first Hellene King,

who visits the Holy Places, after the triumphal entry of Emperor Heraclios, into the Holy City of Jerusalem", in 630 then, and today, 2011, in this Swedish room, we are "Celebrating the first 2000 years of Christian Heritage in the Holy Land". And eleven years more.

The Hellenic community took an active share and fought also in the war. Two young Jerusalemites, Anestis Zographos and Manolis Mykonos gave their lives serving in the submarine "Papanikolis", and in the destroyer "Adrias". Moreover the twenty years old, Chrysanthi Antipa, was one of the victims, at the King David Hotel explosion. Then, I was an eye-witness, of the passing by, in front of me, of the terrible mass of funerals.

A tribute to the valiant Jerusalem young men who fought:

- 1) Avramidis K., 2) Abouggelis N., 3) Arkeftidis or Ardizoglou S., 4) Yanniou An.,
- 5) Danielidis Str., 6) Dimitriadis Chr., 7) Iordanou Pan., 8) Kalamatianos P.,
- 9) Kalogeropoulos Γ., 10) Karaphylakis I., 11) Katsopoulos St., 12) Michailidis Γ.,
- 13) Papadopoulos Em., 14) Plakas G., 15) Potaris N., 16) Sophoulis Em., 17) Spathopoulos AI.,

18) Tsihlakis Gavr., 19) Christophorou Chr., 20) Anthopoulos A., 21) Dimitriadis P.,  
22) Dimitropoulos I., 23) Zacharakis Γ., 24) Zografou P., 25) Zographos F.,  
26) Kalogeropoulos D., 27) Kardasopoulos B., 28) Kosmidis Γ., 29) Kaskaridis N.,  
30) Bogdanidis D., 31) Papanikolaou K., 32) Mykonos AI., 33) Mykonos Manolis,  
34) Zografos Anestis, 35) Papadopoulos A., 36) Papadopoulos H., 37) Spathopoulos G.,  
38) Tsihlakis K., 39) Chavounitis Th., 40) Elenitsas K., 41) Elenitsas P., 42) Sophoulis Γ.

A solemn moment of History! Patriarch Timotheos, ατή Λέσχη, in the Hellenic club, addresses the newly mobilized and offers to each one of them a cross.

May 1948

Jerusalem was cut in two. When history is cruel, it is also indiscriminate and makes no distinction. The fate of the Palestinian Arabs, was also the fate of the Palestinian Hellenic Community. The majority of the families took refuge in the Old City. Many names, are immortalized in the last issue of the Magazine Triphyllo (1973), as well as in I am Jerusalem. It was the beginning of the bitter dispersal. For a little they continued struggling and coping with the situation and at the same time continuing faithfully their activities. To my profound conviction, this Jerusalem Hellenic Community of the 20th century, wherever in the world they settled, Jerusalem and only Jerusalem, was Jerusalem. And this should be our eternal tribute to them.

The result, two Communities emerged, one in the Jordanian Old City and around, and one in the Israeli side, and around the Hellenic club.

Today, and after the 1948 and 1967 wars, still two Committees exist for the few remaining persons, one in the Old City, East Jerusalem: Dr. Konstantinos Petrakis, Dr. Nikolaos Ninos, Vailios Triantaphyllidis, Ioannis Ardizoglou, Georgios Stavridis, and Georgios Varaclas, and one in the old Greek Colony, West Jerusalem: Vasilios Tzaferis, president, Konstantinos Anastasiou, vice-president, Vasilios Triantaphyllidis, secretary, Konstantinos Moumtzoglou, treasurer, Anastasios Damianos, commissioner, Panayiotis Secherlis,

Alexandras Korfiatis, consultants, and two members from the Old City, Nikolaos Ninos, and Sophia Vottarou.

And, I cannot leave out, the charitable Ladies of the Old City: Sophia Vottarou, Eleni Petraki, El I i Solomonidou, Mariana Banayan, Phano Papanastasiou, Theodora Panayiotopoulou-Vasiliadou and Artemis Anastasiou.

On the 15 of May, 2011, the Committee in the Israeli side of Jerusalem, invited me to attend an Easter Festivity at the famous and historic Greek Club, in the historic Hellenic Colony, known, as the Greek Colony. The Greek Consul General Mr. Sotirios Athanasiou, his wife, Mrs. Kantiana, a handful of the traditional Greek Jerusalemites, and more non Greeks were present. The nostalgia for the glorious past was deeply felt.

Ending wishfully, and thinking hopefully, I feel confident, that the Hellenic Phoenix of Jerusalem, shall rise again from its ashes, and this time, before being completely burnt!"

Sources:

– Archimandrite Kleopas koikylidis, 1905.

-Konstantinos Mavridis, Bulletin, “Ελληνική Ζωή”, (Hellenic Life, 1946)

-Irini Philalithi- Mavromichali, Magazine, “To Triphyllo” (1972-1973 No. 110-113)

-John N. Tleel, “I am Jerusalem” (2007 Second Edition)

OldCity Jerusalem July 6,2011 Bilda

Swedish Christian Study Centre

**Chief Secretary’s Office.**

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## **VISIT OF THE ARMENIANS TO THE ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE, H.E. METROPOLITAN NOURHAN SPEECH.**

On Monday the 2nd of May 2011, during the visit of the Armenians to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, on the occasion of the feast of Easter, His Eminence Metropolitan Nourhan has addressed His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem with the following words:

“Your Beatitude and dear Brothers,

When on that first Sunday of Easter, the Oil Bearing Women went to the tomb of the Lord, they were worried about who would roll away the rock that served as the door of the tomb. But when they got there, they found it had already been rolled

away.

For the past few years the rock of misunderstanding, distrust and intolerance acted as a rock that divided two religious institutions that worshipped the same Lord, and separated brothers from seeing and communicating with each other. We created for ourselves an unhealthy atmosphere of distrust. I am very glad that after a few years of sad incidents we have made the right decision to emerge from the dark tunnel of mutual suspicion and self-humiliation. I think we are perfectly capable of minimizing and marginalizing details and only by doing so we will be able to uphold the spirit and the true meaning of our feasts.

Last week, when Armenians marked the 96<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of their Genocide, our thoughts naturally went also to our Greek brothers and sisters who were martyred in Pontus and Smyrna. Christianity until today feels the immense loss of the Byzantine Empire and consequently thousands of our sanctuaries and holy places that are in ruins in Turkey today. Our pain is common, and only Greeks and Armenians realize what it means to lose a huge part of their spiritual as well as historical heritage. Our two nations, who have experienced martyrdom and live daily with the pain of loss, have the responsibility to collaborate closely to be a witness to other churches. We can do this best in Jerusalem and this should be our main task and guiding spirit. We are One Body and One entity, when one is weakened the rest will start caving in.

Your Beatitude, on behalf of our Patriarch, Abp. Torkom Manoogian and members of the St. James Brotherhood, please accept our sincerest wishes for a Happy Easter to you and to the members of your brotherhood. We wish you well, a long and healthy life.

Christos Anesty!"

**Chief Secretary's Office**

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# THE LEADERS OF THE CHURCHES OF THE HOLY LAND VISIT THE PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL FOR THE NEW YEAR 2011.

December 29, 2010

On Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> / 29<sup>th</sup> 2010, the Leaders of the Christian Churches of the Holy Land visited the Presidential Mansion of the State of Israel on the occasion of the New Year, as has been custom during the last few decades. This visit initially included a reception and, later, a ceremony that comprised the performance of fine musical compositions by the musician Mr. Yair Dalal from Bagdad. Following that a ceremony was held during which the President of the State of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres, greeted and welcomed the Leaders of the Christian Churches and their escorts, Archpriests, Priests and laymen and wished them and their Communities a peaceful and blessed New secular year 2011.

Specifically he said: *«I am happy about your response to the invitation for this event. For us, the state of Israel, each person or religious institution is free to believe in all things of his, her or its own choice. We have a common Father in God and common heavens in the skies, therefore it is the duty of the religions, irrespective of their differences, to bring peace to the world just as it is the duty of the politicians.»*

*The peace process is difficult; however, peace is a dire necessity. I think that we have no other choice because we*

*live in an era of high technology particularly regarding weapons. Please allow me to caution that time is running out. Palestinians are preparing to establish their own state. The wiser means towards peace is to desire the progress of your adversary. The better your adversary, the better it is to make peace with him. Additionally, the necessity of peace is more imperative for the reason that we have moved from the war on the battlefields, as was most often the case in the past, and have entered the era of the terrorist phenomenon which, in order to confront it, requires the cooperation of many civil and religious entities.. We, the state of Israel, are preparing ourselves for the 'two states' solution, in which you, the religious leaders, will most likely assume a very important role. Please pray for peace to our one Father and God. I wish for you and your Communities that the new year of 2011 will be a year of peace, prayer, understanding, hope, cooperation, progress and success».*

After that, His Beatitude The Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III was invited to speak on behalf of the leaders of all the Churches of the Holy Land that were present. His speech, in English, is as follows (please access URL <https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/2010/12/29/1093/> )

Whereupon the event, on the occasion of the new secular year 2011 held at the Presidential Mansion, ended.

Chief Secretary's Office.

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# **ADDRESS OF THE GENERAL MANAGER OF THE WEBSITE OF THE PATRIARCHATE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENTHRONEMENT OF HIS BEATITUDE.**

Jerusalem, Monday, November 22, 2010.

Your Beatitude,

Five years have passed since the assumption of Your duties on the Throne of the Mother of Churches. During the time of Your Patriarchy our Directorate of the Patriarchate's Website was created which now includes more than 20 associates who, though they are dispersed in 6 different cities, collaborate harmoniously having as their goal the respectable presentation of the work done by our Patriarchate on the World Wide Web via the Internet.

The central website of our Patriarchate [www.jerusalem-patriarchate.info](http://www.jerusalem-patriarchate.info), according to the posted welcoming message, aims at «the presentation of those Holy Places where the immaculate feet of the Lord paced and of the people who are set as guardians of them». The website was created with the decision of the 6<sup>th</sup> Holy Synod on October 10, 2006 becoming operational on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 initially in Greek and later in English and Arabic, and is continuously being enriched since then with new material. It contains, amongst others, descriptions and historical notes regarding the Most Holy Venerable Sites as well as their full contact information, the administrative organization of the

Patriarchate and a multitude of pictures.

Subsequently the website of the Non Governmental Organization «Romiosini» [www.romiosini.org.gr](http://www.romiosini.org.gr) was constructed. This website, which acts synergistically with the central website of the Patriarchate, aims at the presentation of the Holy Venerable Sites worldwide.

Finally, on November 21 of last year, the News Portal of the Patriarchate [en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info](http://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info) was activated through which the current state of events and the communiqués and press releases of the Patriarchate are made public, not only in Greek but also in Arabic and English.

It is true that the aforementioned three World Wide Web ventures owe their existence to Your benediction and personal care, and rightly for all of the above we hereby express and offer You the acknowledgment, appreciation and credit for this.

It is also true that with Your personal benediction and support we have further enhanced the presence of our Patriarchate on the Internet with three further Internet ventures, the «Romiosini Radio», the «Romiosini TV» and the web [electronic] presentation of the journal of the Patriarchate «New Zion». Through these new Internet ventures which, with God's help, will come into operation in the coming year, the liturgical life of our Patriarchate and the rest of its activities will be more readily visible both to its flock as well as to its friends around the world.

Due to all of the above, on behalf of the more than 20 associates that engage themselves for the dignified and respectable presence of our Patriarchate around the world via the Internet, I wish You good health and a long life for the glory of our Trinitarian God.

**Dr. Christos Th. Nicolaou**

**General Manager of the official Website of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.**

**Chief Secretary's Office.**

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# **THE PRIME MINISTER OF GREECE HIS EXCELLENCY MR. GEORGE PAPANDREOU VISITS THE PATRIARCHATE**

Within the framework of his two day visit to the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the Prime Minister of Greece, His Excellency Mr. George Papandreou, visited the Patriarchate of Jerusalem on Wednesday, the 8<sup>th</sup> / 21<sup>st</sup> of July 2010, around 7:00 pm.

The Prime Minister was received at David's Gate, by the Elder Chief Secretary of the Patriarchate His Eminence Aristarchos Archbishop of Constantina and by the coordinator of Ceremonies Rev. Archimandrite Fr. Porfyrios.

Thence, approaching the Patriarchate, he was shown around the grounds of the Christian neighborhood of the Patriarchate surroundings and of the Greek Community. At the junction of the streets of the School of Saint Demetrios and of the Patriarchate, and below his house, the physician Mr. John Tlyle, one of the elders of the Greek Community, received him and presented him with his book entitled "I am Jerusalem".

The Prime Minister was accompanied by Mr. Demitrios Droutsas, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. George Petalotis, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Government Spokesperson, Mr. Yiannis Zeppos Ambassador and Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with members of his political entourage and by the Ambassador of Greece to Israel His Excellency Mr. Kyriakos Loukakis, the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem His Excellency Mr. Sotirios Athanasiou and a number of Greek and international journalists. The Prime Minister was received and welcomed with honour and acclaim by the Archbishops members of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre, Priests and monks of the Patriarchate and members of the Greek Community at the entrance of the Central Monastery, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The Prime Minister was then greeted by His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III at the entrance of the Throne Hall.

Following the Greeting, His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos addressed His Excellency the Prime Minister of Greece as follows:

*“Your Excellency Prime Minister,*

*The eminent Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre today receives and welcomes Your Excellency and distinguished escorts at the august Patriarchate of Jerusalem, with abundant joy. Your peaceful and mediating visit to this region of the Holy Land, which exhibits a political and religious turmoil and where the three Monotheistic religions namely Judaism, Christianity and Islam coexist is of important significance.*

*It entails particular significance, both for our Patriarchate, which embodies the holy and secular history of Jerusalem diachronically, a history which is connected with the multicultural amplitude of Romiosini and thus, with the history of the Christians in Palestine, Jordan, and of course Israel, and moreover for our venerable genus and nation which*

*said nation constitutes the moral and material patron and, even more so, the natural guarantor of the inalienable and ab antiquo vested privileges and sovereign rights on the Holy Shrines with a worldwide character.*

*The religious and spiritual mission of the Rum Orthodox (Greek Orthodox) Patriarchate, based on the holy scriptures and evangelical commandments: "love thy neighbour as yourself", (Mathew 19, 19), as well as "love thy enemies . . . you are rightly doing so to your enemies", (Mathew 5, 44), this constitutes a vehicle of respect towards the each person and on the other hand provides us with a place of peaceful coexistence and conciliation among the followers of other religions and dogmas.*

*We say this now more than ever before, that the Patriarchate today emerges as a natural and moral institutional factor, one which can contribute towards the solution of the theocratic or the religious Gordian knot that pertains to the diplomatic and political status quo of the future of Jerusalem (it is understood of the Old City of Jerusalem).*

*This is attested by the fact of the local and international recognition of the standing of the Patriarchate via its participation, not only in interreligious and interchristian dialogues but also, in international political – social conferences.*

*Your Excellency, Prime Minister,*

*Being grateful for your genuine interest in the Holy Places and in the Palestinian people as affirmed by the respected Greek Government and You personally, we ask you to accept the wishes of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre and Our Patriarchal blessings towards the success of Your peace mission to the region.*

*Furthermore, please accept this decoration of the Grand Cross of the Holy Sepulchre, as an expression of our deep*

*appreciation towards your person and support to the governance and the financial-political task that you are undertaking with such patience and determination.*

*Thank you”*

Following the address, His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III, decorated His Excellency Mr. George Papandreou the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic with the Order of the Grand Cross of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre along with the golden necklace as a sign of recognition and accolade for his services to the Hellenic Republic, the nation and to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Visibly moved, His Excellency the Prime Minister of Greece Mr. George Papandreou responded with the following:

*“Your Beatitude, it is for me and for the whole of Christianity an exceptional honour to have bestowed upon me this highest medal, that of the Grand Cross of the Holy Sepulchre, and I will carry this cross with the utmost honour and respect, as a symbol of the unbreakable bond between Greece, Fatherland of the Greek People and the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Holy Places. I thank you especially for this honour, which will remain unforgettable for me”.*

In addition, His Beatitude offered the Prime Minister an icon of the Nativity, done on the occasion of the celebration of the 2000 years of Christianity. The Prime Minister reciprocated by presenting His Beatitude a round silver plate with the depicting the 12 Apostles.

Subsequently His Excellency the Prime Minister signed the visitors book and venerated at the Chapel of Sacred Pentecost adjacent to the Throne Hall.

Following this, His Beatitude and His Excellency, accompanied by members of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre, descended to the Church of Resurrection where they venerated the Stone

of Anointing, the Life Giving Tomb of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ-the Holy Sepulchre, and then proceeded to the Catholicon of the Church, venerated the Holy Calvary and the Holy Cross which is located at the Office of the Church of Resurrection.

From the Church of Resurrection the Prime Minister departed in order to carry out his peace mission to the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

**Chief Secretary's Office.**

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# **THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY THE MOST REVEREND DR. ROWAN WILLIAMS VISITS THE HOLY LAND**

The Archbishop of Canterbury of the Anglican Church the Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams, a scholar and writer, well disposed towards Orthodoxy, has visited the Holy Land again. Previously he had visited mainly with the aim of aiding the residents of Bethlehem and had invited His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III to participate in the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church (19 July -3 August 2008). On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> /21<sup>st</sup> of February a reception in his honour was held at the Anglican Church of Saint George the Great Martyr in East Jerusalem by the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem His Eminence Right Reverend Suheil Dawani. Invited to this reception, amongst others were the representatives of the

Christian Churches in the Holy Land, representatives of the Department on Christian Communities of the Ministry of Religion, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel and representatives of the Israeli Police in Jerusalem.

At the reception the Archbishop of Canterbury the Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams was welcomed on behalf of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem by the Anglican Bishop His Eminence Suheil S. Dawani who thanked him for his visit to the Holy Land, the land where, he said, Lord Jesus Christ deigned to visit in body and was Incarnated for us, the land where a small flock resides, a Christian Community which is now decreasing due to the political tension. His Eminence Suheil Dawani expressed his wish that the mutual respect between the followers of the three Abrahamic religions will constitute the basis and the foundation for peace in Jerusalem whilst retaining its beauty, which is also essentially its diversity.

In the name of the Christian Churches in the Holy Land His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III addressed the Archbishop of Canterbury the Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams. His Beatitude was escorted by His Eminence Isihios Archbishop of Capitoliass, His Eminence Aristarhos Archbishop of Constantina, His Eminence Dorotheos Archbishop of Avila, Hierodeacon Fr. Athanasios and the Rum-Orthodox Dr. Halil Andraous.

The address of His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III is as follows:

“Your Grace, the Most Reverend Dr Rowan Williams

Your Eminences

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Distinguished guests

“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven”. (Mathew 5:13-16).

On behalf of church leaders in the holy land, We welcome His Grace, The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. rowan Williams to the holy city of Jerusalem.

We are physically only a few hundred meters away from the church of the Holy Sepulcher and a relatively short travel away from Bethlehem’s Church of Nativity.

Despite this close proximity between the two Holy cities, the faithful cannot visit one or the other freely. This situation can only be described as tragic. It is hugely unacceptable when political failures are expressed in restricting freedom of worship especially at a time when we, religious leaders, push for inter-religious dialogue and the principles of convergence and coexistence.

But not all dissimilar ideologies deal with their differences using the same methods practiced by politicians. The convergence between the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion carries in its spirit a role model for bringing together diverse ideologies throughout the world.

The dialogue between Orthodox Churches and the Anglican Communion began in 1973, when the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions held its first meeting in Oxford. Through its first phase of 1976, second phase in 1984 and the conclusion of its third phase concluded in the Cyprus Agreed Statement, considerable agreement was reached over a range of

issues.

We and Our Jerusalem Patriarchate of Jerusalem share these important intentions and drive for these honorable fraternal relations.

Our convergence should be developed to include more faiths and take hands –on forms of manifestation through cooperation to achieve justice and peace so as to ultimately bridge the distance between the church of Nativity and the church of Holy Sepulcher.

The current political misfortune lived in the Middle East, especially in our beloved Holy Land, carries within its reality tragic human experiences. We church leaders, guardians of faiths and carriers of holy messages intend and persevere to effect a continuation to merge through dialogue that produces practical unified vision on how responsibility can be taken towards achieving justice and peace and forming a conduit for diffusing tension and support for positive political action.

We speak with utmost sincerity about our existence as clergy and about efforts towards the realization of justice, peace and stability. At the same time, we have to be very cautious in taking the religious dimension of the political conflict and not to mistaken it for a political tool but rather as an integral part of the conflict's resolution.

Such responsibility may touch upon causing a change in the moral climate that governs this part of the world. Such change, given the nature of the relation between human and religion in the Holy Land, can only be achieved through the solid will of religious leaders and when encouragement is given to our respective congregations to rediscover the true

meaning of justice and peace in the ultimate spiritual context.

We believe that we are in the company of one of the world leaders in promoting dialogue and coexistence. The work of Your Grace in this aspect has been inspirational, to say the least, to many of us who share the same values and vision, We commend the statement given Al-Azhar University in Cairo in the Third anniversary of the 11<sup>th</sup> of September terrorist attacks, when Your Grace pointed that the followers of the will of God should not be led into ways of violence. This drives Us to say: no doubt in my mind that The Most Reverend Rowan Williams is one of the utmost "Orthodox" believers in justice and peace for all human kind.

We would also like to extend our thanks and gratitude to our host and friend Bishop Suheil Duawani who has showed great responsibility in supporting and cooperating with many initiatives and events that serve the purpose of promoting Justice and Peace in the Holy Land.

Thank you".

In response, the Archbishop of Canterbury the Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams said the following:

'For someone to live in Jerusalem or to visit it is a grace, a blessing, a gift from God, a challenge and an opportunity to self-reflect. The work of God for mankind in the Holy Land urges and implores us to empathize with Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a city in which all nations are called upon to live 'Let's rise to the mount of the Lord'. This happened on the day of Pentecost and it happens also today. Jerusalem is destined to have its gates open to everyone, but for some they are closed.

For some, entrance is excluded.'

'The way of life for the inhabitants throughout the centuries in a Jerusalem which had its doors open to everyone, sets the example for peace in the present. Let's remember the words of the ancient ascetic hermits "our life and our death entirely depends upon the life and death of our neighbour. If our neighbour lives, we live also with him; if he dies we also die with him".

The following Monday 9<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010, the Archbishop of Canterbury the Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams, escorted by His Eminence Michael Jackson Anglican Bishop of Ireland, His Eminence Suheil Dawani Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem and other clergy, visited His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III at the Patriarchate.

During this visit His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III addressed the Archbishop of Canterbury as follows:

"Your Grace, Archbishop Rowan

Bishop Suheil,

Bishop Michael,

Your Eminences,

Dear Fathers

With great joy we welcome you, Your Grace Archbishop Rowan, and those with you, to our Patriarchate once again.

As we welcome you, we remember with deep gratitude our time

with you at the Lambeth Conference in Canterbury and the Walk of Witness against Global Poverty in London in 2008. We honor you in your archpastoral ministry of peace and justice both at home and around the world, and we recognize the care and concern that you have always shown to the Holy Land. We commend your thoughtfulness, and the wisdom and discretion that always mark your words and deeds.

We are also appreciative of the way in which, by your writings and your primatial ministry, you have helped to deepen the knowledge of Orthodoxy among Western Christians and thereby helped to lay a further foundation for the unity of all Christians.

Your efforts to articulate the message of the Gospel in an increasingly secularized society are a reflection in a different place of the ministry of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem here to maintain the sacredness of Jerusalem and the integrity of the Holy Places in our region.

Jerusalem forms a kind of “universal parish”. Here millions of pilgrims come every year – Jews, Christians, Muslims and even those of no particular religious affiliation – and it is the special ministry of the Patriarchate to offer spiritual consolation and encouragement to all who come in search of the presence of God.

We know that you understand that a strong and vibrant Patriarchate ensures a strong and vibrant Christian presence in the Holy Land. We value your efforts on our behalf and we continue to ask for your prayers as we seek to be a living sign in the Holy Land of the message of mutual respect, reconciliation and peace that is our responsibility in the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

And in asking for your prayers we assure you of our own prayers for you and for the unity and well-being of the Anglican Communion with which, for so many generations, the Orthodox Church has enjoyed such close and mutually beneficial relations.

Despite the current tensions within the Anglican Communion, we continue to be committed to dialogue. Our dialogue helps us all to re-discover the shared sources of the fullness of the Christian faith, especially in the Holy Scriptures as well as the Church Fathers and Saints whom we hold in common. It is by returning to the shared heritage, we believe, that we shall find the best way of healing the divisions that keep us separated from each other. For it is not in administrative structures or any form of accommodation, but in faith, that our unity in Christ will be firmly established.

This year Christians in both the East and the West enjoy the opportunity of celebrating the Feast of the Resurrection on the same day, and so we have also entered into the fast of Great Lent together.

‘Attend, O Heaven, and I will speak, and will sing of Christ, who came to dwell among us in flesh which he took from the Virgin’.

We sing these words at the beginning of Great Lent in the Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete, and they remind us of the truth that we begin Lent with the remembrance of the Incarnation of the Logos. Our celebration of the Sunday of Orthodoxy yesterday is just this, an affirmation that God came to share our human nature, and so to teach us that our human nature comes from the same divine source.

In this spirit of our common humanity redeemed by Our Lord Jesus Christ, we bestow our Patriarchal blessing on your trip to the Holy Land, and we thank you again for your visit to the Patriarchate”.

To this address the Archbishop of Canterbury the Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams responded broadly as follows:

‘It is for us, Your Beatitude, Bishop of the Jerusalem Church, a particular pleasure to meet with you again. We highly appreciate the stance of your Church and Your acceptance and participation in the Lambeth Conference. We pray for your Church as the local Church of Jerusalem that contributed greatly in conserving the Christian presence and identity in the Holy Land. The increasing presence of Christians in the Holy Land is a gift from God to the world. This is indeed possible because the Lord said to Paul, the Apostle of the Nations: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (B’ Corinthians 12,9)

Regarding the ‘Sunday of Orthodoxy’ which You celebrated yesterday, the Anglican Church views the decision of the 7<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Synod on the reinstatement of the Holy Icons that they truly reflect the uncreated Light of the Lord and from Him as a source is diffused to the (faces) Saints. For all this we thank God and we thank Your Beatitude for the testimony which You give.

In light of the forthcoming visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury to Gaza the following day, His Beatitude spoke regarding the support of our Patriarchate for the people who were affected during last year’s clashes. His Beatitude spoke to the Archbishop of Canterbury about the financial and managerial crisis of the Middle East Council of Churches and

the efforts of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem to upgrade its role as a Christian organization, empowering it to be a single unified Christian voice and a testament for Christians in the Middle East and for the peaceful co-existence of Christians and Muslims. For this His Beatitude requested the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

When asked about his Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury explained that it is founded on the apostolic faith and tradition, in which its structure is not hierarchical but based on a collective way of life and administration. However this system has a weakness in co-operation which sometimes creates difficulties, because each of the thirty one (31) Anglican Churches sometimes decides on its own regarding issues which require a collective undertaking and decision making process such as bioethics, sexuality and women in the priesthood, etc.

The Most Reverend Dr. Rowan Williams said 'This is why we invited other Christian Churches, like Yours, to the Lambeth Conference to listen and to be of help. We have accepted the ordination of women into the priesthood and we are already facing the ordination of women to the level of Bishop which has become a serious problem for us.

In addition the Church of England takes part constitutionally in the issuing of state laws. This privilege is difficult because the truth has to be confessed in a secular environment'.

'The Church of England has experienced a decline in the participation in sacraments of its believers over the last fifty years. In the last twenty years protestant groups have emerged with intentions rather of evangelizing and not so in participating in the sacraments.

However in the last five to six years around five hundred New Congregations of our Anglican Church have surfaced. This is encouraging, as well as the advent of approximately twenty people who were ordained into the priesthood. I consider these to be signs of God's Grace within our Church, for which we implore Your prayers'.

His Beatitude concluded by referring to the historical connections of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem with the Anglican Church and the British Commonwealth. His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III thanked the Anglican Church for their help towards the church of Jerusalem in Qatar during the first stages of its founding there and accepted an invitation from the Archbishop of Canterbury for an official visit to the Anglican Church when time permits.

His Beatitude offered the Archbishop of Canterbury a commemorative gift for his visit to the Patriarchate, a ceramic icon of 'Theotokos of Bethlehem' and the Patriarchate's precious publication of sacred objects with illustrations from the Church of Resurrection edited by Professor Nikolaos Olymbiou. To the escort of the Archbishop, His Eminence Michael Jackson Bishop of Ireland, His Beatitude offered a book of illuminated manuscripts of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem by Professor Vokotopoulos. To the rest of the escorts, medals were given depicting 1500 years of the history of Jerusalem together with a photo album on ceremonies of Jerusalem by photographer Ms. Gali Tibbon.

The Archbishop of Canterbury kindly reciprocated by offering his Beatitude a volume of prose by English authors regarding the spirituality of the Anglican Church.

Also present at the meeting was the elderly Jerusalemite Dr. Ioannis Tlil, an old and distinguished member of the Church and Jerusalem's community, who offered to the Archbishop of

Canterbury a book entitled 'I am Jerusalem'. This was followed by a commemorative photograph taken for the visit of the Anglican delegation with His Beatitude at the Throne.

**Chief Secretary's Office**