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 5^{th} 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 cocelebrants 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. 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 plagues 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 cocelebrants 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 depositary 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 Othrodoxy 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

DOXOLOGY ON THE NATIONAL ANNIVERSARY OF 28 OCTOBER 1940

On Sunday October 15/28, 2018, at 10.30 a.m. there was a Doxology Service at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre according to the tradition, on the commemoration of the national anniversary of 28 October 1940, namely the fight and victory of the nation of Greece against the occupational powers of theNazis and Fascism of World War II.

There was also a memorial service for the repose of the souls and the remission of the sins of our ancestors who fought for their faith and country and died heroically on the battlefields of our nation.

The Doxology was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with co-celebrants Hagiotaphite Archbishops and Hieromonks, at the presence of the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos and members of the Consulate. The service was also attended by monks and nuns, members of the Greek Community in Jerusalem and visiting pilgrims from Greece.

After the Doxology, bells tolling, there was a reception at the Patriarchate for all who honoured the national anniversary, where His Beatitude addressed all present as follows;

Your Excellency Consul General of Greece

Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos,

Reverend Holy Fathers and Brothers,

Noble Christians and pilgrims,

October 28, is the day we hold the annual commemoration of our fathers and brothers who died in the fight for our national territorial integrity against the invaders of Nazism, which had born the monstrosities of Auschwitz — Birkenau and other concentration camps and camps of extermination of innocent fellow humans.

For this reason, clergy and the people along with the visiting pilgrims, came down to the All-Holy Church of the Resurrection, where we had the service of a thanksgiving Doxology to our God and Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who has given us the glory of good against evil, as John the Evangelist says: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world' (1 John 5:4).

Moreover, we have prayed for the repose of the souls of those who fought heroically and martyred for our pious nation and our home land.

The painful experience of World War II proved that the human-centered view of the purpose of human existence and of the world leads inevitably to man's self-destruction and nihilism. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1).

And we say this because the sacrificial fight of the Greeks for their homes and sanctuaries was inspired by the God-

centered view of the purpose of human existence, namely of the moral and spiritual values of the Greek-Orthodox wisdom.

This festal anniversary of the commemoration of October 28, 1940, incarnates precisely this Greek-Christian and Greek-Orthodox wisdom, and it is our duty to honour it.

The historic events of 1940 have a special place in the world history and especially in the glorious history of Hellenism and of the Greek nation. The historic events of 1940 proved without doubt to the world leaders of this era that "he darkness is past, and the true light now shineth", namely the light of Christ(1 John 2:8).

Unfortunately we cannot keep silent about the fact that the ideology of Nazism and Fascism threaten humanity once more, with new misleading movements and slogans.

And we say this, because all of us are witnesses of our contemporary experience of war conflicts in the world and clutter. Regional killings among both strangers and brothers intercede one another, religious fanaticism and its messianic syndrome cultivate violence and its produce, acts of terrorism and immoral financial interests are in conflict with the Divine Law of respect and freedom of humans and of the people in general, with the pretext of economic prosperity.

The anniversary of October 28, 1940, calls all of us that we "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 1:3). In other words, we are called to safeguard the sacred consignment of the moral and spiritual values of our tradition and faith, for which our Fathers and brothers sacrificed themselves.

Concluding, let us cry aloud;

Vive October 28 1940!

Vive the pious nation of the Romans!

Vive Hellas!

Vive our Hagiotaphite Brotherhood!

Consequently the Consul General of Greece delivered the following address;

Your Beatitude,

Most Reverend Archbishops,

Reverend Fathers,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today it is a day of honor and memory for Greece and for our nation. We celebrate one of the most enduring pages of our newer history and we are called upon to pay tribute to its protagonists and to learn the lessons that will enable us to be worthy of them and to follow where appropriate their example.

The historic NO to the ultimatum of 28 October 1940 to grant our sovereignty, was the unanimous denial of the Greeks to lose their freedom and their national honour. It was their collective refusal to renounce their history, their values \sqcap and their ideals. It was also a resounding reaction to the dark political forces of fascism and Nazism and to their conquering plans, a reaction that was highly valued and acknowledged by all the major countries, as contributing substantially to the final victory in the Second World War. The Greeks were the ones who made the first victory of the war against the Axis forces. The historic moment, when the Greeks said NO was not an easy time for the Homeland, since a few years earlier it had had an unspeakable plight. Greece seemed quite weakened economically and militarily so its enemies underestimated it. They calculated that the Greeks would not have the courage and the common will to engage in an

absolutely unequal conflict. And yet NO has unequivocally demonstrated the deep historical consciousness of the Greeks, the strong common understanding of their brilliant journey through the centuries that they fueled then, and always feeds on their patriotism, vigor, self-denial, and great sense of pride, with which they rush to defend their sacred tradition and faith. NO was precisely the refusal of the Greeks to forget their history and live as an insignificant and submissive nation.

The great historical fact that we celebrate today also demonstrated the moral stature and the strong sense of justice of the Greeks. Thanks to this infallible guide they did not hesitate to oppose those who wanted to impose the arbitrary law of the powerful.

Today, Greeks all over the world honour the fallen and fighters in the battlefields of 1940-41, in Pindos, Macedonia, Crete and elsewhere. We honour those who contributed to the National Resistance and those who continued to fight the conquerors in the battlefields of the Second World War in the Middle East and in Europe on land, air and sea. We do not forget the thousands of innocent victims of the occupation.

The national heroic effort that began with the NO of 28 October 1940 as in any other national effort was critical to the active participation and valuable contribution of Hellenism to the diaspora. The great contribution of the Diaspora in the Middle East has historically been recorded, and in particular that of the Hellenism of Jerusalem, for which Greece is proud and grateful.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the mother of the Churches, has always been a distinct point of reference in the effort of bringing together all the forces of the nation with a view to its moral and spiritual upheaval and resistance to many adversities, a centuries-old orthodoxy and a lighthouse of the universal values $\Box\Box$ of Hellenism.

Today's anniversary prompts us to reflect on the importance and relevance of the message of 28 October 1940 on modern Hellenism. This glorious page of our history was written by people who, like us today, wanted to live in peace, free, with democracy and social justice. The unbroken unity and consistency they have shown, the patriotism, the sense of historical responsibility and self-sacrifice, and the courage and persistence that steered them in the years of war and occupation remind us that our ability to recover and to prosper, was and remains inexhaustible.

It is a great responsibility for us to understand this message, to pass it on to the new generation, and to be united as it they were then, with determination and vigilance. Long live October 28, 1940 Long live Greece.

From Secretariat-General

DEACON'S ORDINATION AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Wednesday night to Thursday October 11 to 12/24 to 25, 2018, the ordination of Mr. Savvas Mahouli to Deacon took place during the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Sepulchre.

The ordination was held according to the decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, by the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, in order that the ordained will minister as a Deacon and consequently as a Priest at the parish of the Greek Orthodox Arab-speaking Community of Tarsiha, a town in North Israel.

Before the ordination His Eminence spoke in fatherly words to the ordained as follows:

"Most devout sub-deacon Savvas,

At this hour we are blessed by God to be at the most sacred place in the world. The place of Horrendous Golgotha and of the Holy Tomb. The place of the crucifixion and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are also blessed to officiate a sacred sacrament. The sacrament of the Last Supper, the sacrament of the Eucharist. Within the frame of this salvific sacrament there is another one. The sacrament of your ordination to Deacon, your settlement in the first degree of Priesthood.

You are called to accept this sacrament after the positive suggestion of your reverend father, steward Fr. Theodosios Mahouli, of the steward Fr. Gregory Houri and the Council of the Greek Orthodox Community of Tarsiha and of the Patriarchal Representative in Acre Ptolemais, Archimandrite Philotheos. This suggestion was approved and blessed by H.H. Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and the Holy and Sacred Synod, so that you are going to minister the Greek Orthodox flock of Tarsiha.

It is indeed a great honour and a great responsibility that the Church puts on your shoulders, because we have taken into consideration your Christian upbringing from your father and Priest, and your mother. Of course we have taken into consideration your studies in Theology at the University of St. Tyckon in Pennsylvania and your pedagogical studies in Ukraine.

Thank God first of all for this election, and all those who have suggested you, the Patriarchate which approved the proposal, and promise that from today forth, you are going to return the favour with your honest, devout and pure ministry. Let the Holy Bible be your reading, as well as the Fathers of

the Church and especially the two Epistles of St. Paul to Deacon Timothy, and let your work be the devout worship of God and the ministry of the people in the Church.

Come forth, therefore, in faith, fear of God but also in courage and hope, kneel in front of the Angel's stone of the Holy Tomb and by the placing of the hands of the Archbishop, entreat the Holy Spirit to come down on you, to purify you from all sin and establish you a vessel of holiness and all other virtue."

Through the placing of the hands of the Archbishop on the head of the ordained and the invocation "the Divine Grace….", the All-holy Spirit established him in the first degree of Priesthood. Those present witnessed the event by calling "Axios, Axios" in great joy. The ones who honoured the ordained were the Patriarchal Representative in Acre, Archimandrite Philotheos, the new Deacon's Father, Priest Theodosios, his mother, other relatives of his, the Priest of Tarsiha Steward Gregory, fellow citizens of his, Hagiotaphite Fathers and Monks and pilgrims.

The newly ordained Deacon offered a reception to all those who honoured him at the Office of Geronda Sacristan, Most Reverend Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis, who was represented by Monk Nikolaos.

From Secretariat-General

https://youtu.be/j6U0CKNPjr8

THE CONSECRATION OF THE HOLY CHURCH OF THE DORMITION IN MADABA

On Saturday, September 9/22, 2018, day of the commemoration of the parents of Theotokos and Holy Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna, there was the consecration of the Holy Church of the Dormition, which is built in the Hannine area of the historic town of Madaba, where also lies the shrine of the historic mosaic map of the 6^{th} century A.D. that depicts the Holy Land during the time of the New Testament. The Church has been built by the supervision and funding of the former Patriarchal Representative in Madaba, Archimandrite Innokentios. The consecration ceremony and the Divine Liturgy were officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, having arrived to Madaba from Jerusalem and from Amman, after a warm welcoming reception for Him in the morning of the previous day. Co-celebrants to His Beatitude were the Most Reverend Archbishops; Aristarchos of Constantina and Secretary-General, Makarios of Qatar, Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis, with the participation in prayer of the Patriarchal Representative in Madaba Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba. There were also Hagiotaphite Hieromonks, among whom the Spiritual Father of the Lavra of Savvas the Sanctified Archimandrite Eudokimos, the Patriarchal Representative in Irbet of North Archimandrite Raphael, Arab-speaking Priests, among whom the Priest of the Shrine of Madaba Fr. Joseph, Archdeacon Mark, Hierodeacon Eulogios and Deacon George. The cantor from Greece Mr. Balogiorgos and his choir from the Music School of Athens delivered the hymns and the service was attended by a large congregation of the Christian faithful of Madaba. His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon congregation; "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new

creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17) St. Paul preaches.Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, Holy Fathers and Brothers, Your Grace Archimandrite Innokentios, owner of the Holy Church of the Dormition and its surrounding premises,

Today the historic town of Madaba, which is the cultural centre of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, rejoices along with the Mother of all Churches, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, on the consecration of the new beautiful Church and of the spiritual centre in the Hannina area of Madaba.

This project is of great importance for the people of the wider Madaba area and especially for the spiritual and liturgical needs of the local Greek-Orthodox community, because this project depicts the unceasing mission of the ministry of the word of love of Christ to our fellow men on the one hand; on the other, it displays the cultivated harmonious co-existence of the various religious communities that inhabit the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The Venerable Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem in its long term historic course, has never ceased to provide with both words and actions the sacred virtues of love towards the fellow man as well as the enemy, of peace and of the absolute respect towards our fellow man who has been created by God according to His image and likeness.

The historic great national-religious leaders such as Khalif Omar Ibn Khattab and St. Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem have significantly contributed not only to the respect of the co-existence of the religious communities, but also to the fee worship of God in His House.

Such a House of God have we consecrated today, in honour of the Dormition of Theotokos and for the glory of the Name of the Almighty God, but also for the praise of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, under the wise governmental expertise of our most respected King Abdullah II.

Each consecrated Church is in effect a projection of our own temple, namely our body, as St. Paul says; "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19).

And we say this because the House of prayer, namely the Church of God, is the place where the Holy Scriptures are preached. St. Paul says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

For all these, we would like to thank from the depths of our heart the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba and his dear associates, the Vestry-men of the Church and all those who contributed for this work, and those who strove to organize this festal ceremony of the consecration of the Church of the Dormition.

Finally, we consider it our duty to express the deepest gratitude of our Hagiotaphite Brotherhood to our noble congregation in Madaba, and a personal duty of Ours, to the tireless worker of the vineyard of the Lord, Reverend Archimandrite Innokentios, established member of the venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, who has made our Greek-Orthodox Community here an Ecclesiastical, educational and spiritual Centre. Righteously therefore, "there is laid up for him the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to him" (2 Tim. 4:8).

We also express our warm gratitude to all those who honoured this feast of the consecration of the Church with their presence, and especially the local civil, military and police forces of Madaba.

Many happy and peaceful returns."

Archimandrite Innokentios also addressed those present with the following words;

"This is the day that the Lord made; let us be glad and rejoice in it".

Your Beatitude, Most Reverend Archbishops, Honourable Governors, Representatives of the Parents' Association and of the Church,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The consecration of the Holy Church of the Dormition of Theotokos in Madaba, the Holy Altar of God, is being carried out today, after a series of 10 years of continuous efforts and many labours. This project includes the building of the Holy Church of the Dormition, and of classrooms at the Schools of this area and covers in total 8.000 sq.mt. of construction in 11.000 acres, in order to cover the needs of the town of Madaba in general and of the Orthodox Community in particular.

The town of Madaba has been a great Orthodox Christian centre in the past, as the most important Diocese of East Jordan; until today, Madaba has been a remarkable Shrine of the Orthodox Church of East Jordan and of the Hashemite Kingdom.

We consecrate today this new Holy Church in honour of the Dormition of the Most Blessed Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, due to the nearby existence of the Mosque which they have been pleased to name Mosque "Of Jesus Christ, Son of Mary", as they believe in His historic presence. This belief bridges the contrasts between Christians and Muslims and favours their peaceful co-existence in the town of Madaba.

I am in the pleasant position to count 30 years of Priestly ministry in Jordan, including 25 years in Madaba. I would like to thank the members of the Community of the Christian family

of Madaba for the love and commitment they have shown, as well as all those who contributed for the completion of this project and of all other projects that were completed in the Patriarchal Committee of Madaba.

I would like to pay tribute to the memorable Patriarch of Jerusalem Diodoros I, who supported me in my first footsteps as a Hagiotaphite, and who contributed greatly in the development of Education in Jordan, with the schools of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, but also for all the other projects he accomplished in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Likewise, I would like to thank His Beatitude, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III, for his trust in me; May your days, Your Beatitude, be many, peaceful and blessed".

Finally, I should not omit to honour and congratulate for his election the new Patriarchal Representative, Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba, who is known to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem for his ethos, purity and honesty, but also for his particularly important skills and abilities. I wish the people of Madaba may take the Archbishop as an example and benefit from his virtues and abilities."

This festive ceremony and the Divine Liturgy were followed by a reception at the reception hall below the Church of the Shrine.

There, His Beatitude delivered the following address;

"By means of His coming, Christ hath filled all things with His Light; our souls are now consecrated, and by His Holy Spirit He hath renewed the world; for a house is founded to the Lord's praise and glory, wherein Christ our God, for the salvation of mortals, doth consecrate and hallow the hearts of all His faithful flock".

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Noble Christians,

The pre-eternal God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, who has set His Church as a tower of strength, and has founded it on the rock of faith, has gathered us today in this beautiful newly-built Church of the Dormition, in order to perform its consecration in Doxology and Thanksgiving.

"On Sinai long ago Thou didst show the God-seer Moses a tabernacle not made by hands, thereby depicting Thy Church, O Christ", the hymn writer says, referring to Moses' ascend on Sinai, where the Glory of God descended upon him, and he received detailed orders on how to make the Tabernacle of the Congregation (Exodus 24: 15-16 / 25: 8-9), which was made by the Lord and not by any man, as St. Paul says in his preaching: "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:1-2).

As far as this "true tabernacle" is concerned, behold what the hymn writer says: "When the Word dwelt among us in the flesh, the Son of Thunder (St. John the Evangelist) spake thus in his writings: We have radiantly beheld the glory which the Son hath from the Father in the grace of truth. And as many of us as have received Him with faith, to all hath He given the power to become children of God; and we, who were born again not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but have received increase by the Holy Spirit, have raised up this house of prayer, and cry out: Do Thou Thyself now establish this house, 0 Lord".

This house of prayer is no other than the New Tabernacle of the Congregation, in other words, the Church that our Lord Jesus Christ founded by His own Sacred and Redeeming blood. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17), St. Paul says.

In other words, my dear Brothers and Sisters, today's consecrated Church is a house of prayer, "whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28). And whereby, through our ArchPriest Jesus Christ, "we offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15). And in more detail; when I say sacrifice, St. Paul preaches, I do not mean the sacrifice of animals and of blood, but a sacrifice which as the fruit of honest confidence towards God, shall come forth from our lips, which will praise and glorify His Name.

"Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth" (Psalm 26:8), Prophet David chants. "The dwellings of the Lord are beloved unto them that long to see the glory of His countenance unconcealed" the hymn writer of the Church proclaims. "And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power" (Revelation 15:8), St. John the Evangelist says in his book of Revelation.

This means that the Lord used to manifest His Presence and Glory in a special place that was sanctified. And according to the true witness of the Holy Scriptures (Exodus 16:7, 16:10, 3 Kings 8:11), the glory of the Lord, in other words, the Grace of the Holy Spirit, filled the house, meaning His Church, in the form of a cloud during the times of the synaxis of worship, which was the prayer in public. Nevertheless, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24) the Lord says.

It is also noteworthy that this office of the consecration of Holy Church has as its reference point and source the renewed old Adam in the presence of the New Adam, who is the Incarnate Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and of the Ever-Virgin Mary and Theotokos, according to the witness of

the Holy Evangelists and Fathers of the Church. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14), St. John the Evangelist says. "Today hath the second Adam, Christ, shown this new tabernacle to be a spiritual Paradise, which beareth, instead of the tree of knowledge, the life-giving weapon of the Cross" the hymn writer of the Church proclaims.

The approved Father of the Church, St. Gregory the Theologian, comments on Jesus' presence at the dedication of the Church of Solomon by saying: "And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter" (John 10:22), the time of unfaithfulness, and Christ was present, the God and temple, God eternal, recent temple, which was demolished in a day and rebuilt in three days and remains for all eternity, so that I may be saved and I may be recalled from the old body to become a new creation, redeemed through such a philanthropy (St. Gregory the Theologian, Speech 44 on the New Sunday).

In other words, my dear ones, the temple of God as a place of worship is the workshop that operates through the Holy Spirit for the salvation of our souls. And the prayers are the way and the means for our communion with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father. For this reason, St. John of the Ladder says that the prayer in its quality is an intercourse and union of man with God, and when it comes to its effect, prayer is the constitution and the conservation of the world. Prayer is the mother of all virtues (St. John of the Ladder, Speech 28 on Prayer).

Let us therefore thank the Lord, for the festive celebration in this day of the consecration of this Holy Church of the Dormition and say along with the hymn writer: "Sanctification is befitting to Thy House O Lord; for Thy Name O friend of man is glorified therein; therefore, along with the prophet we exclaim to Thee in faith; By Thine Holy Spirit do Thou now renew us all, by the prayers of the Theotokos (and the

Ancestors of God Joachim and Anna), Thou who art the only friend of man". Amen"

The Patriarchal Representative Most Reverend Archbishop Aristovoulos of Madaba also spoke, underlining the importance of the completed work which has been done by his predecessor Archimandrite Innokentios, a work that he is going to continue. His Eminence also stressed the importance of the presence of the choir that came from Greece for the continuation of the cultivation of the Byzantine Music.

From Secretariat-General

DEACON'S ORDINATION AT THE PATRIARCHATE

On Monday night to Tuesday August 1/14, 2018, subdeacon George Hader from the Baramki family was ordained a Deacon, by Geronda Secretary-General Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina.

The ordination took place according to the decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod, chaired by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with the prospect of the forthcoming ordination of Deacon George to Priest, in order to serve as a ministering Priest at the Cathedral of St. James the Brother of God.

The Archbishop who performed the ordination addressed the ordained as follows:

"Reverend subdeacon Fr. George (Hader),

Following the proposal of the Priests, Vestry men and of the Presidents of the Orthodox Institutions of the Cathedral of St. James the Brother of God and First Hierarch of Jerusalem, and by the blessing and approval of H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos and the Holy and Sacred Synod, the Grace of the Holy Spirit calls you today to accept the first degree of Priesthood, that of the Hierodeacon.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Mother of Churches, has appreciated your morality, character, the Christian upbringing you have received from your parents, your excellent Secondary Education, your Higher education at the University of Bethlehem, your Theological education at the Russian Orthodox University of St. Tychon in the U.S.A., your knowledge of the Greek language after your studies at the University of Thessalonica, your honest love for Christ and the Church and your work as a teacher of Religion at the Russian School of Bethany.

This hour is indeed great and sacred, because the sacrament of the Priesthood is being held simultaneously with the sacrament of the Divine Liturgy, and more especially, as these take place at the Horrendous Golgotha, where Christ shed His blood for the remission of our sins, and at His Life-giving Tomb, where He was buried and risen from the dead.

Accepting this sacrament, you will have the grace to enter the Holy Altar, to minister the Priests and Archbishops until the time for your becoming a Priest comes, and you should minister in a spirit of sacrifice and offering according to the Orthodox teaching, at the historic parish of St. James' Cathedral.

You should thank God for this calling and gift, and consider

thoroughly the great responsibility that you undertake; appreciate the trust that the Church puts on you and pray fervently, so that by the placing of the Archbishop's hands on your head, the Holy Spirit will come down on you and make you a vessel of the Grace of the Holy Trinity, in order to always please both God and the people.

Be sure that at this hour, you are accompanied by the prayers of your parents, your wife, your relatives, of Fr. Farah and the congregation of St. James and of all those who honour you with their presence here."

With the coming of the Holy Spirit and the prayer of the deacon's ordination, the Archbishop dressed the ordained with his liturgical vestments and the people hailed "axios" in great joy.

After the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy the ordained offered a reception at the Office of Geronda Sacristan for those who honoured him, the Archbishop who ordained him, the cocelebrant Priests, his parents, wife and relatives, who wished him to please both God and the people.

From Secretariat-General

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

On Friday July 28/August 10, 2018, the Patriarchate celebrated the commemoration of Saint Ioannis the New Hozevite at the Holy Monastery of his repentance and ascesis, ever since his arrival from his country Romania.

Having been distinguished in ascetic striving, writings of spiritual strengthening and having been glorified by God through many signs, and healing of illnesses, Saint Ioannis was canonized a Saint by the Church of Jerusalem in 2015.

On Thursday night there was an all-night vigil in his honour, officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos with co-celebrants the Most Reverend Archbishop Aristarchos of Constantina, and the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis. The choir was formed by Mr. Leonidas Doukas, choir leader of the Holy Metropolis Iliou, Mr. Gregorios Zarkos, choir leader of the Holy Metropolis of Pireaus, Mr. Christos Stavrou, choir leader of the H. Church of St. Paraskevi in Attiki, and Mr. Dionysios Thanasoulis, left choir singer of the H. Church of Faneromeni in Holargos, Attiki, while the service was attended by many faithful who prayed in contrition.

The Hegoumen of the Coenobitic Brotherhood and renovator of the Holy Monastery Archimandrite Constantinos addressed His Beatitude upon His arrival as follows;

"Your Beatitude Father and Master,

With Your Reverend Entourage,

Today, for one more time we celebrate the commemoration of St. Ioannis the New Hozevite, one of the myriads of the Holy Ascetics who turned the desert of Judea into a marvelous spiritual paradise.

Today's honoured Saint of the Lavra of Hozeva, despite having completed his earthly life in solitude, had had full cognition of the problems of his time, and could also foresee things in the future.

He writes in his epistle "The contemporary Babel Tower";

"Today's Babel Tower is neither a stone-building nor a building made of bricks, but the impetuous pursuit of new inventions. People say that the invention of new devices and weapons make man's life easier, and provide him with security, in other words, they protect him. How deceitful this opinion is! We see all this time, that since our world became 'modern' and the inventions multiplied, wickedness also multiplied. Nowadays, despite the progress of the civilization, the world has become more turbulent and desperate than ever before. As we see, this progress and fashion have taught people to walk naked, in other words it has driven away their sense of shame. It has taught people not to seek God any more. ... Science has become rich, while faith has become poor. The contemporary civilization has shortened men's clothes, and made people cut short their beards and hair. After that, it has made them abolish their Holy Tradition! In short, with this villainous progress in which the world boasts, the tears have multiplied more than ever, the cemeteries have become bigger due to the wars, the horizon has darkened by the smog of the engines, the sky has been filled with huge "fowls" with the iron beak which are ready to kill people".

The aforementioned description records the tenebrous condition of the time we live in with an amazing trueness.

Nevertheless, filled with optimism by the Divine Grace, the Saint writes in November 1952 the bright hope he foresaw in the future of the Jerusalem Church. And foreseeing the future, he wrote in his metaphorical poem "The granite castle of Hozeva";

"Today, however, in the Holy Land, a new tender plant blossoms, stemming from <u>an ancient root</u>, which springs up through the thorns"!

Your Beatitude Father and Master,

Welcome!

Let us begin the Feast!"

His Beatitude addressed the Congregation as follows;

"But the righteous live forever and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the Hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will cover them, and with his arm he will shield them" (Wisdom of Solomon 5:15-16). [The righteous live forever and their reward is at the Lord's hands; The Most High takes care of them. For this reason, from His hand will they receive the glorious Kingdom of Heaven and the Royal crown on their heads, because the Lord will overshadow them with His right hand and He will protect them from their enemies] according to wise Solomon.

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Noble pilgrims,

The sacred commemoration of God's luminary, our Father among the Saints Ioannis the New Hozevite, has gathered all of us in this sacred Church, where he had ministered the Lord for several years, so that we glorify the Name of the One Who glorified him, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Since the prime of his youth, our Father among the Saints Ioannis loved Christ with all his soul and mind, hearkening to the Lord's Gospel words; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37).

In order to reach this goal, he followed the ascetic path of monasticism, the path of righteousness that leads to the Kingdom of Heaven. And he chose the desert of the river Jordan to be the place of his striving, as well as the unwelcoming caves of Brook Chorath, the Monastery of Saints George and Ioannis the Hozevites, where a multitude of Saints and righteous men received the divine light, according to the

psalmist; "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart" (Psalm 97:11). Commenting on these words, St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "He has dawned [sown] instead of dawns [change of tense]. The divine light dawns on the mind and heart of every single pious and righteous man".

This very divine and noetic light dawned in the mind and heart of our Father among the Saints Ioannis. "Therefore he will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the Hand of the Lord" (Wisdom of Solomon 5:15). And this divine and noetic light dawned in the mind and heart of St. Ioannis, not only during his earthly life, but also during his heavenly life, as his incorrupt relics witness before our eyes, giving out the fragrant scent of the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Behold therefore, why the wise Solomon says; "the righteous live forever and their reward is with the Lord" (Wisdom of Solomon 5: 15), while Prophet David urges us saying; "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved" (Ps. 55:22). Likewise St. Peter says; "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

In other words, my dear Brothers and Sisters, the righteous in Christ is the one who by his "perfect manner of living" reaches the "likeness of God" according to St. Bazil the Great, or "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephes. 4:13) according to St. Paul. Righteous is the one who reaches deification, in other words, his perfection in Christ, not only by his own power, namely his own free will, but also with the cooperation of the Divine Grace.

Referring to the new life in Christ, St. Paul says; "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephes. 4:24). This "new man" did our Father Ioannis put on, "who has been created after God".

Today's commemoration of our Father among the Saints Ioannis calls us to consider our Christian name. To consider the fact that our faith has been built on righteousness and holiness of truth: "I am the way the truth and the life" (John 14:6) the Lord says.

In other words, putting away the old man of sin is not enough; we should put on the new man of the grace of the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul orders by saying; "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:12-14).

Having applied these God-inspired orders of St. Paul, St. Ioannis became indeed "a light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Luke 1:79), to the people of our contemporary era of confusion, where — according to the foreseeing words of our Holy Father "man himself is preparing again to build the Tower of Babel on earth, seeking to destroy the foundations of the "Divine Law". Almost all of the tongues [languages] have been established and the hour of conflict will not delay much longer".

Therefore let us entreat our Holy Father Ioannis the New Hozevite who dances with the Angels on high, and has become a luminary and friend of Christ, so that he may intercede for us along with our Most Blessed Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, for the salvation of our souls and the prevailing of peace in our tested region. Amen."

After the spiritual and sanctifying feast of the Divine Liturgy there was a hospitable monastic meal.

From Secretariat-General

THE UNDERTAKING OF DUTY OF THE PATRIARCHAL REPRESENTATIVE IN NORTH JORDAN

On Saturday July 15/28, 2018, according to the Synodical Decision, the appointed Archimandrite Raphael undertook his official duty as the Patriarchal Representative of North Jordan, in the town of Irbet.

This was serviced during the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Church of St. George in Irbet. The Service was officiated by H.H.B. our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos, with cocelebrants the Most Reverend Metropolitan Benedict of Philadelphia, and the Most Reverend Archbishops; Aristarchos of Constantina and Secretary-General, Christophoros of Kyriakoupolis, Aristovoulos of Madaba, Philoumenos of Pella, and the established Archimandrite Raphael as the Patriarchal Representative in North Jordan, the Ministering Priests of Irbet, Priest Abdullah and Priest Jordan, Deacon Eulogios, and the Deacon of Madaba Shrine Fr. George. The parish choir delivered the hymns in Arabic and Greek and many faithful attended the service, participating in the prayer for their new Pastor.

His Beatitude delivered the following Sermon to this congregation;

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of

God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:1-3), St. Paul commands the Priests.

Reverend Archimandrite Raphael,

By Our Patriarchal proposal Our Holy and Sacred Synod has appointed you Patriarchal Representative, at the North Hashemite Kindgom of Jordan at the town of Irbet, having considering your long-term fruitful ministry at the holy shrine of the God-receiving Cage in Bethlehem, along with your zealous pastoral activity,

You are called to undertake this new pastoral ministry at the vineyard of our Holy Church of Jerusalem the Mother of all Churches, hearkening to the words of the chief of the Apostles Peter who says: "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" (1 Peter 3:13).

And we say this because "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few" (Matt. 9:37), and "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word [of the Lord's Gospel]; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matt. 13:22), as it is being revealed by the signs of the time.

Our Holy Church of Jerusalem, having as its first Hierarch the Holy Apostle James the Brother of God, who was ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ, and received the lot of this spiritual jurisdiction at the Promised Land on either side of the River Jordan, has never ceased to evangelize the kenotic love of Christ on the cross, hearkening again to St. Peter words who says: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his

mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:21-24).

Irrefutable witnesses of the Evangelism of Christ's love are the Greek-Orthodox monuments which have been preserved throughout the ages in the inward parts of the blessed land of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and the living Christian Greek-Orthodox Communities which enjoy the respect of their religious identity and the total freedom of exercising their church services. This truth is witnessed in this town (Irbet) and its outskirts by its inhabitants, the Christians who live in harmony with their fellow citizens who follow other religions.

The venerable Hagiotaphite Brotherhood which has been established by God's providence as the guardian and minister of the Holy Shrines and our Christian Congregation, continues its mission following St. Paul's commandment to his disciple Timothy: "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:5).

Therefore, you, Father Raphael, genuine child of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, bring to a good end the ministry that has been given to you in the Church. Multiply the gift you have received by the Holy Spirit to be a steward at the house of God, continuing the God-pleasing work of your predecessor Most Reverend Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella "being an example to the flock" (1 Peter 5:3).

And honour your elders "as the congress of God and league of the Apostles" (St. Ignatios). "For Priesthood is ranked at the top of every good thing among men; and the one that is enraged towards it does not dishonor any man, but God and Jesus Christ, the first-born and the only High Priest by nature. Do therefore every single thing in good order in Christ. Let the laity be subject to the deacons; the deacons to the priests; the priests to the Bishop; the Bishop to Christ, as He was subject to the Father" St. Ingatios orders (BEII, vol. 2, p. 315).

It is precisely this good order in Christ what is being suggested by the care of the Spiritual Shepherd and especially of the leading Priests, to whom St. Paul says; "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:9-10).

Indeed, in this did all the saints and the martyrs of Christ's love bear witness, just like today's commemorated Saint Ioulita with her son Kyrikos, who became "bright stars at the fixation of the sky, brightening the whole world by their wonders" according to the hymn writer.

Let us entreat them, so that along with the Most Blessed Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary they may intercede to our Lord and God to grant us, Father Raphael, a leading and pastoral Spirit, mercy and peace to our souls, and to our Reverend King Abdullah II and His family and the Hashemite Kingdom of our beloved Jordan, strength, health, and longevity. We also pray for every good thing for the people of this country and for the preservation of the holy places and the Holy City of Jerusalem which are under the custody of His Majesty.

And now, reverend Archimandrite Father Raphael, receive the Precious Cross of the Lord, the weapon against the devil, so that by It, you may guide the footsteps of your flock to the working of the Lord's commandments. Amen."

The Patriarchal Representative replied to His Beatitude's

words as follows;

Your Beatitude Father and Master,

On behalf of the holy clergy and the people, we welcome You today in Irbet, the seat of the Patriarchal Region of North Jordan, with feelings of deep honour, due respect and spiritual joy, and we say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord", along with the words of Prophet Isaiah: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (in Romans 10:15).

Your presence is a great blessing to us, because You come from the Holy City of Jerusalem bringing us the grace and the blessing of the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb and of all the Holy Shrines of the Holy Land. Your blessed presence strengthens and supports us and also denotes the unity of our local Church.

Your Beatitude, in confession may I say, that obeying Your command and the decision of the Holy Synod, I came to this blessed place, repeating Christ's words, "I have come to minister". I have come to minister the mystery of the salvation of the flock and offer God's blessing freely. I came to share with these people their joys and sorrows. Since my first day in this blessed place I felt at home. I found open doors and hearts. I found blessed Priests who work for the good of the Church and the congregation silently, and who welcomed me with much love. I found noble people who respect and honour the clergy. But especially I found children, young men and women who love Christ and His Church. Your Beatitude, I came to minister this holy clergy and people of God, and I will stand by their side praying that God may grant them health and every good thing.

This sacred hour, before You, I call all of them to cooperate with me for the glory of God and His holy Church. I call upon

the Priests the members of the Ecclesiastical councils, our choir singers, the laity who work for the Church, men and women, those in charge of the Young and the Church Schools, the Scouts and all who work for the Church and I ask them to continue their work with the same zeal as before.

All together in the body of the Church should participate actively and use the gifts they have received from God. Today there is a new beginning at the ministry of our Region and they are a part of that. I will not be able to do a single thing by myself. We should do the best we can together. That is why I want them to be with me, the Clergy and the laity who work for the Church, I ask for their prayers, help and cooperation.

I strongly feel the need to thank from the depths of my heart all here present at the Church of St. George. I thank all the holy Bishops who came to participate at the beginning of my new ministry and ask for their prayers for me the unworthy. I also thank all the Priests, the choirs, the young people, the scouts and all of you, and I ask you to pray for my unworthiness.

I also would like to thank all the security forces, who have joined us since early in the morning. And we glorify God for the blessing of this security in our blessed country, which is owed to the wise Hashemite leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah bin Al-Hussein II.

Your Beatitude,

Especially I thank You from the depths of my heart, for Your trust in me, Your Fatherly advice and love, and I would like to ask You to pray that I may perform my duties in fear of God.

I ask Your Patriarchal blessing and as You son, I pray that the Trinitarian God may grant You many years to come, steadfast health, strong faith and a mind set in both the Cross and the Resurrection, so that guided by the Holy Spirit You may lead the Christian Congregation of the venerable Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem in continuous spiritual fruition and radiate the Light of the Cross and the Resurrection in our time."

Consequently there was a reception at the reception hall.

This was followed by a meal at a town restaurant offered by the Patriarchate. During the meal, His Beatitude addressed the quests as follows;

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Romans 12:9-10) "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Romans 12:17-18), St. Paul orders.

Dear and Reverend Fathers and Brothers,

Ladies and gentlemen,

We thank the Holy and Most Merciful God, Who has deigned us worthy to celebrate the Divine Liturgy at the Holy Church of St. George on this blessed occasion of the undertaking of duty of Reverend Archimandrite Raphael, our Patriarchal Representative at the town of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Irbet and its outskirts.

We are especially glad because the pastoral care of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem in its spiritual jurisdiction on either side of the River Jordan is being continued without any hurdle. This is owed to the free exercising of the religious and worshiping events that all the religious and thus the Christian Communities in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan enjoy.

The mission of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate, namely the Jerusalem Church, is based on the Lord's commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39).

The one who loves God "with all his heart" cannot help but love his neighbour also, as St. Paul preaches: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Romans 12:18).

The All-holy Shrines which have been ministered throughout the centuries in self-denial and self-sacrifice by the monastic order of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, evangelize and preach peace among men.

The contribution of the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate and its Hagiotaphite Brotherhood to both the preservation of the Holy Land as a place of worship and prayer, and the peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims, and of the Abrahamic religions in general, is recognized by all and especially by our reverend King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Abdullah bin All-Hussein II, since the Christian and Islamic shrines in Jerusalem are under His custody.

We, hearkening to the words of wise Paul: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Romans 14:19) have come to the appointment by our Holy Synod of the Patriarchal Representatives in Amman, Madaba, Irbet and elsewhere, in order to provide for the spiritual and social needs of our Christian congregation and to also reinforce the difficult but God-pleasing pastoring work of our beloved reverend Priests.

For all these, we think we should express our heartfelt thanks to all of you, who have honoured with your presence our reception, and especially the local civil authorities, the military and police forces and much more the reverend and most dear to Us King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Abdullah bin Al-Hussein II, whose leadership is a guarantee of stability and peaceful co-existence of the different cultural and religious communities living in this country and in the Middle East. Long live the King!

Finally, We should not fail to praise the pastoral and social work of the Most Reverend Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella during his ministry as our Patriarchal Representative in Irbet. To both Archimandrite Raphael and the Most Reverend Archbishop Philoumenos of Pella, we wish success in their new ministry and mission. Amen".

From Secretariat-General