

Welcoming note of His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos

To the Readers

Beloved children in the Lord of Our Mediocrity,

The Holy Shrines are the visible tokens of the earthly incarnate presence of the Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the humankind. The Shrines are the consignment of the First Church of Christ, the first Ecclesiastical Community of Jerusalem which was promoted to Patriarchate in the year 451 A.D., and they have been preserved by it throughout the centuries, with the help of the Hagiotaphite Brotherhood, through many sacrifices, fights of the spirit and of blood, and huge amounts of money.

This consignment of the places of Grace conveys to the souls of the pilgrims who visit them from all over the world, feelings of contrition, repentance, love for God and our fellow men. These places are sanctified because Christ walked on them; He became incarnate; He was born from the Virgin in Bethlehem; conversed with people; preached; He was crucified at the Horrendous Golgotha; He was buried and resurrected from the dead from the All-holy and Life-giving Tomb; He was ascended in heaven and sat at the right side of the glory of God the Father, raising and deifying our human nature.

This sanctifying and redeeming mission of Christ on earth is being continued by the Jerusalem Patriarchate at the places where it was revealed, while it is promulgated and projected through this website, in order to make all those who follow it, viewers and participants of the Patriarchate's life, and

encourage them to a self-sanctifying pilgrimage which will also offer support to the Christians of the Holy Land.

This website of the Patriarchate is the fruit of reverence and selfless effort of friends and contributors of the Holy Sepulchre, and by the grace of God, it will be continuously enriched with data referring to all sectors of ecclesiastical life. The "aerial" electromagnetic data of contemporary technology, though inferior to the tangible writing with ink and paper, can however contribute to conveying concepts of salvation which may initiate a life in Christ, leading to perfection and redemption.

We pray that the Grace of the Holy Sepulchre and the other Holy Shrines may be an unerring guide of the Orthodox faith and life for all the devout pilgrims of Jerusalem, which is the city of the Great King, "the eye and the beacon of the world" the one that "was the first to receive the remission of sins through the Resurrection".

To all the followers of the continuous revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through the website of the Patriarchate, we bestow our Fatherly wishes and Patriarchal blessings.

In the Holy City of Jerusalem,

Fervent Supplicant for all before God

THEOPHILOS III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

