

## THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER AT THE PATRIARCHATE



On Sunday, June 24/ July 7, 2019, the Patriarchate celebrated the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Forerunner at the Holy Monastery dedicated to him, at the town of Oreini – Ayn Karem, near Jerusalem, which is believed to have been his hometown.

On this feast the Church commemorates the Nativity of St. John the Forerunner, of Prophet Zacharias and Elizabeth the barren woman, as it is narrated by the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1:57-80).

The one who was born as promised by the barren woman, is according to the Lord's witness "the greatest man ever born from a woman", who lived in the deserts dressed with clothing made of camel's hair, and ate locusts and wild honey, the one who pointed at the Lord and said: "behold the lamb of God, who taketh upon himself the sins of the world", who baptized Him in the Jordan and was beheaded by Herod, because he reprimanded the latter for the commitment of adultery, as he

had taken his brother Philip's wife Herodias, for himself.

In honour of St. John the Forerunner, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the aforementioned Holy Monastery on the feast day, led by the Most Reverend Metropolitan Joachim of Helenoupolis, with co-celebrants Priest Nikitas and Archdeacon Mark, at the chanting of Nun Danielia and Monk Raphael. The service was attended by the Consul General of Greece in Jerusalem Mr. Christos Sophianopoulos and noble Christians.

After the Divine Liturgy, the good Caretaker of the Monastery Monk Chariton offered a reception to the Episcopal entourage and the congregation at the Hegoumeneion and the courtyard of the Monastery.

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