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## **Statement of His Beatitude Theophilos III on the Passing of Pope Francis**



The Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem

Jerusalem, April 21, 2025

“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.” (John 11:25)

Dearest brothers and sisters in Christ,

With a heart heavy in sorrow yet anchored in the promise of the Risen Lord, I join the faithful around the world in mourning the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis, Bishop of Rome, who today has returned to the house of the Heavenly Father.

Pope Francis’ life was a luminous testament to the Gospel, a tireless witness to Christ’s boundless mercy, a steadfast champion for the poor, and a beacon of peace and reconciliation among all peoples. According to the Lord’s call: “Blessed

are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

Even in frailty and suffering, the late Holy Father revealed the strength of true discipleship, embracing the Cross with humility and hope, teaching that the life of a Christian is one of sacrificial love. His final wishes, for a funeral marked by simplicity and faith, reflect his soul’s devotion to the Risen Christ, and to the Church as a humble flock of believers, not as a worldly kingdom.

We entrust his noble soul to the infinite compassion of our Lord, and pray: “Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of your master.” (Matthew 25:23)

May the memory of Pope Francis be eternal, and may his spirit of love, justice, and peace continue to inspire many spiritual and secular leaders for generations to come.

Theophilos III

Patriarch of Jerusalem

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