

Speech of His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III for the Feast of the Holy Spirit



His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III presided today, Monday June 9th, the liturgy of the Feast of the Holy Spirit, a major holiday which is usually celebrated the Monday after Sunday of Pentecost.

The liturgy, per tradition, took place at the Church of the Holy Trinity of the Russian MISSIA in Jerusalem, where many believers attended, including the Greek Consul in Jerusalem H.E. Mr. Dimitrios Angelosopoulos, and the Russian Ambassador in Tel Aviv H.E. Mr. Anatoly Viktorov in Tel Aviv.

Towards the end of the Liturgy, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III delivered the following speech to commemorate the feast:

"Your Eminences,
Your Graces,
Dear Archimandrite Vassian,
Dear Fathers,
Beloved Monastics,
Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We greet you with great joy on this blessed feast, when we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit.

As we keep this feast we recall some words of a beautiful prayer to the Holy Spirit of Saint Simeon the New Theologian:

Come, true light.
Come, life eternal.
Come, Alone to the alone.
Come, for you are yourself the desire that is within me.
Come, my breath and my life.
Come, the consolation of my humble soul.
Come, my joy, my glory, my endless delight.

We rejoice today in the gift of the Holy Spirit, for it is by the gift of the Holy Spirit that the Church is grounded and maintained in unity.

The Holy Spirit has sustained and guarded the institution of the Church and the unity of the faithful in our common Orthodox faith from the first Pentecost in this Holy City.

Today we celebrate this descent of the Holy Spirit, and we remember our Lord's words, God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth (Jn 4:24).

It is precisely this Spirit that is to say the Paraklete of peace that enlightens all in the truth. We pray especially at this time of conflict, death, displacement, and great difficulty in Gaza, in our region, and around the globe, that the Holy Spirit will enlighten the hearts and minds of the rulers of the world to bring an end to all violence and establish true and lasting peace and reconciliation. As our Lord tells us, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God (Mt 5:9).

We pray also for a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict between sisters and

brothers in Russia and Ukraine, that peace and reconciliation may prevail between these nations as well, and that the unity of the Church may be restored.

The Church of Jerusalem is privileged to be the unwavering witness to mystery of the Incarnation, which is nothing less than the divine-human encounter in our sacred history.

This is why today we are blessed to celebrate the message of Pentecost, which is the assembly of many peoples, ethnicities, and languages, in the peace and enlightenment that comes only from God.

At Pentecost we affirm that the disunity of the human family, which had afflicted us from time of the confusion and unbridled ambition of Babel, was overcome by God's own Spirit of unity and harmony, so that all may know and understand that the human family shares a common human destiny.

For as we read in the Scriptures, God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline (2 Tim. 1:7).

In this difficult season for our region and our world, let us not forget that the unity of the Church is a powerful sign to the world for the unity of all humankind, and we cannot falter in our call for peace and reconciliation.

We pray fervently that the Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who is everywhere present and who fills all things will continue to strengthen us in our sacred and spiritual mission to serve the values of the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May God bless you, and may the Holy Spirit be our light and our inspiration.

We raise a toast for His Holiness Patriarch. Mnogaya leta"

en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info