29/04/2026

His Beatitude Patriarch John X presiding over the Divine Liturgy at St. George’s Church – Iskenderun District.



Metropolitan Ephraim: “Our people in the Iskenderun District are a people of the Resurrection, their motto is ‘Christ is Risen.’”

St. George’s Church in the Iskenderun District captured all attention, as it took on a new Paschal apparel with the visit of His Beatitude Patriarch John X on one hand, and the ordination of Bishop Paul Ordologlu as Bishop of Tarsus on the other. It was both Nativity and Pascha combined, clearly manifested in the Divine Liturgy celebrated by

His Beatitude Patriarch John X, with the concelebration of the hierarchs: Athanasius Fahd (Latakia), Ephraim Maalouli (Aleppo), Arsenius (Dahdal), Paul (Ordologlu), in the presence of Metropolitan Ignatius Houshi (France and Western & Southern Europe), along with parish priests.

The Latin of Iskenderun Bishop Antoine Elgad also attended the Liturgy, along with heads of associations and parishioners.
During the Liturgy, His Beatitude bestowed the Holy Cross upon Fr. Nikolaos Papasoglu, parish priest of Iskenderun, elevating him to the rank of Protopresbyter.
At the end of the Liturgy, Metropolitan Ephraim of Aleppo (Greek Orthodox) delivered a sermon, saying: “On behalf of you all, we bless His Grace Bishop Paul in his first Liturgy among us. In this blessed time, we live the true joy of the Resurrection with the blessing and presence of His Beatitude.”

He continued:
“Beloved, the Resurrection for us is not an ordinary event but one live every day. It embodies your love and the will of the Holy Synod of Antioch, which also fulfills the will of our Lord risen from the dead.”

He added:
“Today we celebrate the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women, commemorating the holy women who brought spices. There were many such women, serving Christ and His disciples from their own means. They always followed Christ, never afraid, but adorned with courage and strength, hence our message: we are children of the Resurrection, and our faith overcomes our weakness. With faith, we are confident, and Christ is able to remove every stone in our lives. Therefore, we affirm that our people in the Iskenderun District are a Resurrection people, their life’s motto is ‘Christ is Risen.’”

Mr. Can Timur, head of the parish association in Iskenderun, also spoke:
“Your presence, Your Beatitude, gives us great strength and consolation. Today we live double pride: your presence with the hierarchs of the Holy Synod of Antioch, and the ordination of Bishop Paul Ordologlu to be with us and among us, so that together we may establish a rebirth for the diocese.”

After his speech, His Beatitude, on behalf of the parish of Iskenderun, presented an engolpion of the Virgin Mary to the newly ordained Bishop Paul.
It is noteworthy that His Beatitude entered the church surrounded by the hierarchs, priests, and faithful, at the sound of ringing bells, with flowers being scattered and welcoming banners being lifted as a sign of rejoicing in the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

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