



## **Patriarch Kirill visits the Greek Monastery of St. John the Baptist on the Jordan River**

[gallery]

November 14, 2012 – the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church visited the Greek Monastery of St. John the Baptist in the religious archaeological reserve ‘The Place of the Baptism of Jesus Christ on the Jordan’.

The land on which the monastery stands has belonged to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem since 1700. Since that time the monastery’s buildings have been built thrice to be later destroyed. In 2005, there began a new construction. Through the efforts of Metropolitan Benediktos of Philadelphia, a church was built and adorned with frescoes. This work was financed by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, while the work to gild its cupola and cross was financed by Russia and carried out by Russian masters. At present, there are two chapels, the abbot’s house, a reception hall, a refectory, a hospice for pilgrims. The construction of a building for monastic cells is underway.

There are ruins of the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine churches built on the place of the Lord's Baptism and a chapel on the spot where the Lord is believed to put off His robe before coming down to the water. Today these monuments stand at some distance from the Jordan since the riverbed has changed several times through centuries.

His Holiness Kirill venerated the Icons of St. John the Baptist.

During his visit to the monastery, Patriarch Kirill had a talk with Archbishop Theophylaktos of Jordan.

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