



On the Eve of the Holy Theophany the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission took part in Patriarchal service on Jordan River



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On January 18th, the Eve of the Holy Theophany, Archimandrite Vassian (Zmeyev), head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, took part in the Great Blessing of Water at Jesus Christ's Baptism Site on the Jordan River. The rite was performed by Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem, website of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission **reports**.

Earlier that day, in the morning, His Beatitude prayed at the divine service in the Church of Saints Constantine and Helen, Equal of the Apostles, at the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. After the dismissal, he performed the rite of the Great Blessing of Water and departed for the River Jordan.

There His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos led a traditional procession with the cross from the

Monastery of St. John the Baptist to the Baptism Site on the bank of the Jordan River. Taking part in the procession were the clergy of the Church of Jerusalem and other Local Orthodox Churches, and pilgrims. In concelebration with the hierarchs of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem, the clergy of the Holy Sepulchre Brotherhood and Representatives of the Local Churches in Jerusalem, His Beatitude performed the rite of the Great Blessing of Water. Patriarch Theophilos got into a boat and three times immersed the holy cross in the Jordan River. All that time the Troparion to the Theophany “When You, O Lord were baptized in the Jordan...” was being sung.

After the service, Patriarch Theophilos, the hierarchs of the Church of Jerusalem and guests of honour were welcomed by the Hegumen of St. John the Baptist Monastery, Archimandrite Bartholomew (Patriarchate of Jerusalem).

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