

# Christian Events in the Holy Land\*

\* Partial List

A. Prologue

B. Glossary

## Part I – Christmas Time

1. Christmas Eve
2. Baptism of the LORD
3. Theophany
4. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

## Part II – Holy Week

5. Palm Sunday
6. Holy Thursday
7. Good Friday
8. Holy Light Saturday

## Part III – Spring and Summer

9. [Armenian Genocide Memorial Day](#)
10. [Procession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Statue](#)
11. [Ascension Day](#)
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## Part IV – Jubilees

13. Camino de Luz
  14. Benedictine Sisters Jubilee
- C. Epilogue

# Armenian Genocide Memorial Day\*

## Jerusalem

**The Armenian World** observes the Genocide Memorial Day on April 24<sup>th</sup>, commemorating the victims of the Genocide conducted by the Ottoman Empire during World War I\*\*.

**The Armenian community of Jerusalem** conducts a memorial ceremony in the Armenian Quarter, led by the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem. The ceremony opens with a prayer inside the St. James Cathedral, followed by a remembrance ceremony at the monument inside the Theological Seminary. After the official ceremony, many participants will go in a procession to the Armenian cemetery on Mt. Zion.

\* AKA Feast of the Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide

\*\* On April 24th 1915, the Ottoman authorities arrested and deported hundreds of Armenian intellectuals and community leaders from Constantinople, an act considered the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. Between 1915 and 1923, in a campaign led by the Ottoman authorities, most of the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire were deported and killed (estimates are between 800,000 and 1.5 million victims). More about the Armenian Genocide can be found at <http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/>

## Armenian Quarter – Flags Lowered to Half-Mast



Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem\*



Building of the Armenian Patriarchate



Republic of Armenia

\* Inside the circle are the initials of  
Sourp Hagop (St. James in Armenian)

# Armenian Quarter – Banners in Various Languages



Arabic



English



Hebrew



Armenian, English, Arabic, Hebrew\*

# Symbol for the 2015 Armenian Genocide Centennial\*

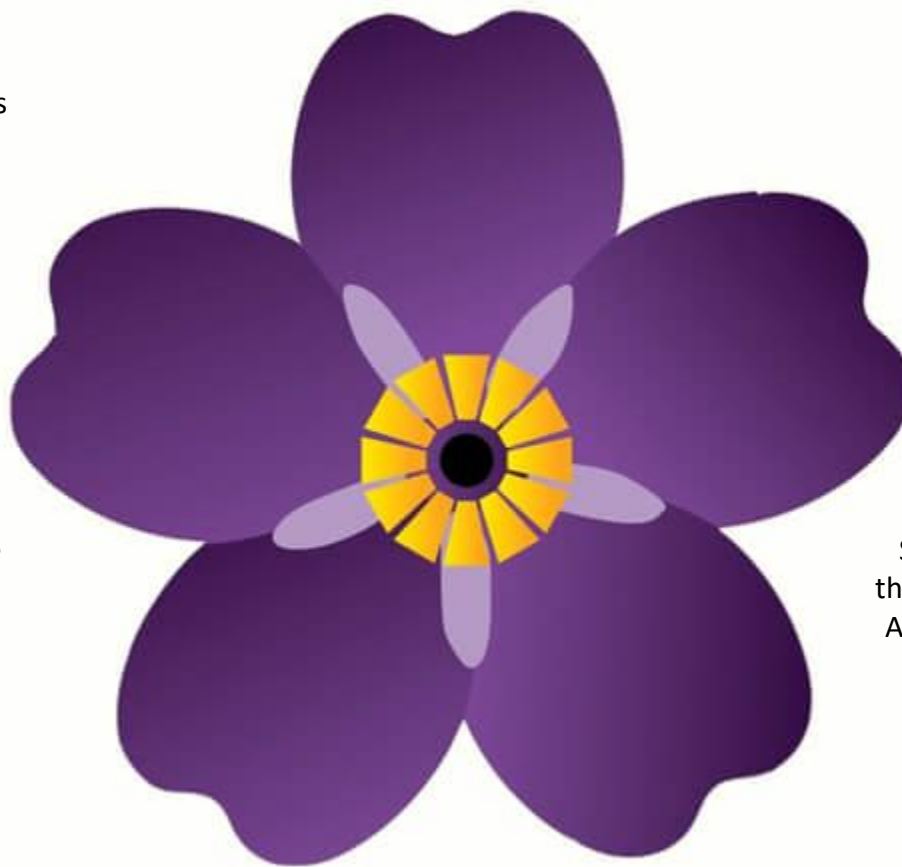
\* The symbol, chosen in a contest held by the Republic of Armenia, was used worldwide

**Black**  
Symbolizes the horrors  
of the Genocide

**Two shades of Purple**  
Symbolizes the present  
and the future

**Five petals**  
Five continents where  
Armenian survivors  
found a shelter

**Yellow**  
Symbolizes the light coming  
through the circle of 12 slabs at  
Armenia's official memorial\*\*



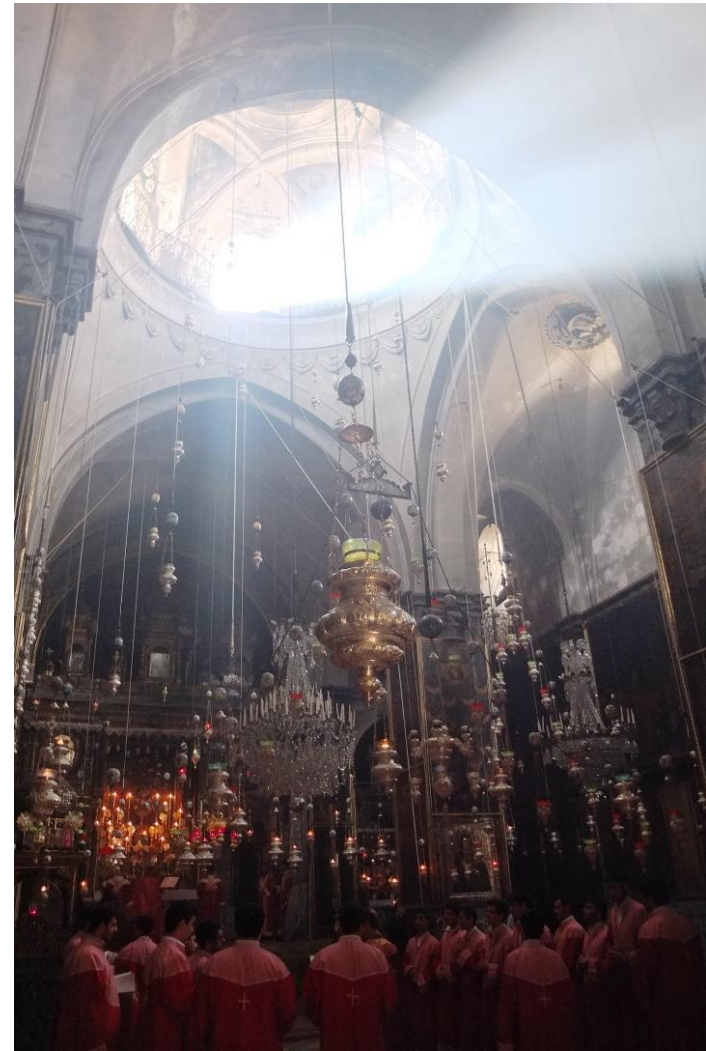
**Forget-me-not flower**

## St. James Cathedral – Prayer\*

\* St. James Cathedral, inside the Armenian Quarter, is the main Armenian church in Jerusalem



Students of the Theological Seminary



# St. James Cathedral – Departing to the Theological Seminary\*

\* The Theological Seminary, across the street, qualifies Armenian youths from all over the world for priesthood



**Archbishop Nourhan Manougian**  
Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem



Kavases of the Armenian Patriarchate followed  
by the Decorated Cross

## Theological Seminary – Dignitaries

**Archbishop Sevan Gharibian**  
Grand Sacristan\*

**Archbishop Nourhan Manougian**  
Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem\*\*



\* In the Armenian Patriarchate hierarchy, the Grand Sacristan is the 2<sup>nd</sup> after the Patriarch

\*\* The Patriarch holds a decorated staff, as he is leading the ceremony



## Theological Seminary – Ceremony at the Monument



Students of the Theological Seminary holding lit candles and thuribles

# Theological Seminary – The Monument\*

\* Commemorates the victims of the Armenian Genocide. The Crosses are dedicated to the provinces from which the Armenians were deported



Khachkar\*\*

Van

Sepasdia  
(Sivas)

Kharpuz

Garin  
(Erzurum)

Dikranagerd  
(Diyarbakır)

Bitlis

In memory of the 1.5 million  
Martyrs of Armenia

\*\* Khachkar (Cross-stone in Armenian) is a carved slab of stone bearing a Cross and often decorated with rosettes, interlaces, botanical motifs and birds. Being in use from the 9<sup>th</sup> century onward, it has become a hallmark of Armenian culture and heritage

# Theological Seminary – Decorated Monument



Posters of victims



Clergy



Intellectuals and community leaders

# Theological Seminary – Decorated Monument

Wreath by the Armenian Patriarchate



Wreaths of memory



Wreath courtesy of the Armenian Consulate

## Procession to Mt. Zion\*

\* The procession is organized by community members of various generations, with no involvement of the Patriarchate. It departs right after the ceremony and its objective is “Keeping Alive the Armenian Genocide Heritage”



**Armenian youngsters**  
Marching through the Armenian Quarter



**Armenian children**  
Departing through Zion Gate

## Procession to Mt. Zion

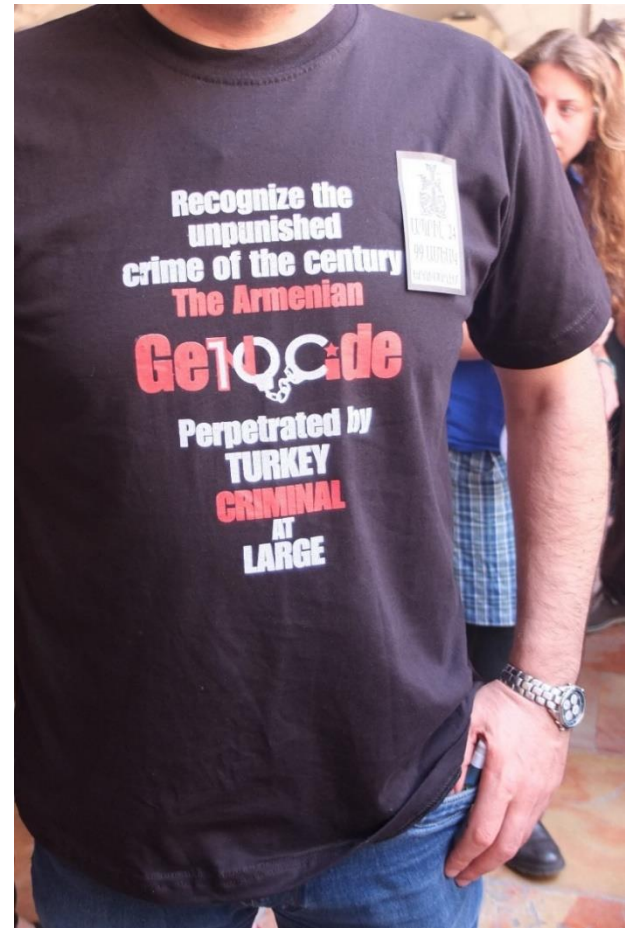


Various banners

## Procession to Mt. Zion



Banner criticizing the Turkish denial\*



Specially printed T-shirts

\* The official Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide is still a political dispute between Turkey and the rest of the world. Nonetheless, as of 2020, 32 UN member-states have officially recognized the Armenian Genocide (the State of Israel has not)

## Armenian Cemetery on Mt. Zion\*

\* The procession ends at the cemetery, adjacent to the Armenian St. Savior Monastery.  
Many participants will then visit the tombs of their family members and the Legionnaires monument



Monument over the common grave  
of World War I Armenian Legionnaires



In memory of the 23 Armenian Legionnaires  
who had fallen in the Battle of Arara on September 19<sup>th</sup> 1918\*\*

\*\* The Armenian Legion was a military unit of the French Army, consisting of more than 4,000 military-trained Armenian volunteers. In 1918 the unit was sent to Palestine to join the resumed offensive led by Edmund Allenby. The unit played a major role in winning the Battle of Arara (in Samaria) but lost 23 legionnaires. They were buried in Arara and in 1925 their bodies were re-interred in a common grave at the Armenian cemetery on Mt Zion



## Armenian Cemetery on Mt. Zion



Graffiti on the outer wall (1980)

# Procession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Statue Haifa

**The Catholic community of Haifa** observes this event on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Easter, commemorating the survival of the famous Stella Maris statue of Mary during WW I\*.

**On that Sunday afternoon**, a procession carrying the statue, will go from the Latin St. Joseph Church downtown up the road to the Carmelite Stella Maris Church. Christians of various communities will join the procession, making it a major event for the Arab-Christian communities of Haifa and the Galilee.

\* During the war, the statue was taken away from the Stella Maris Church and hidden a house downtown



Invitation for the procession



**Our Lady of Mount Carmel Statue**  
Placed above the main altar\*

\* The original statue remains in the church, while a replica statue is used for the procession

## Stella Maris Road



The replica statue is placed on a platform that is being pulled up the Stella Maris Road by the participants

## 10. Procession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Statue



A statue of Mary brought from another parish church



Banner specially printed for the procession



Banner of the Armenian Scouts from Haifa



Banners of the Catholic Scouts from Ibillin  
(Birthplace of St. Mariam Baouardy)



Banners of the Catholic Scouts from Haifa



**Young and old alike**  
Catholic Scouts



**Like father like son**  
Catholic Scouts



## Stella Maris Road



**Drummers**  
Catholic Scouts



**Bagpipe players**  
Catholic Scouts



**Brass band players**  
Don Bosco Scouts



**Drummers**  
Armenian Scouts

## Stella Maris Church Plaza



Waiting for the procession to arrive

## Stella Maris Church Plaza



Statue arrives at the Stella Maris Church



Closing prayer led by Archbishop Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

## Tchernichovsky Street – 2020 Version\*

\* Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the procession was limited to 10 cars, driving around the Christian neighborhoods of Haifa



Carmelite Sisters cheering from the Monastery's roof



The replica statue placed on a truck



Scout leaders wearing masks

# Ascension Day

## Jerusalem

**The Christian World** observes Ascension Day on Thursday, 39 days after Easter\*, commemorating the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven\*\*.

**The Christian communities** of Jerusalem, joined by many pilgrims, will celebrate the day in various sites on Mt of Olives, as follows :

**The Latins** inside the Edicule of the Ascension Chapel

**The Armenians, Copts, Orthodox, and Syriac** in the yard around the Ascension Chapel

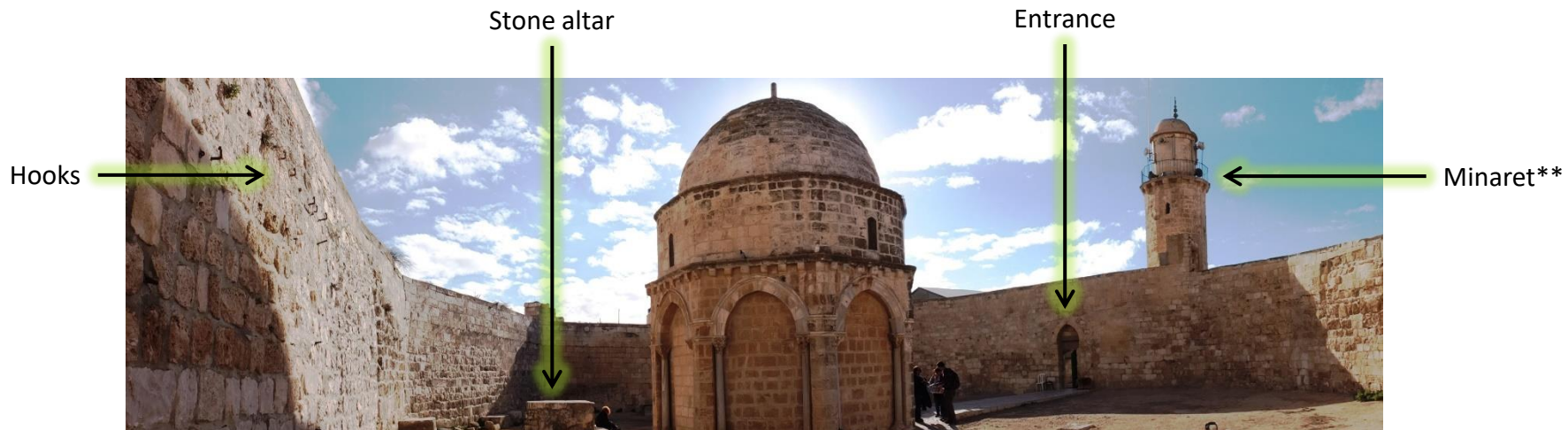
**The Russian-Orthodox** in the Russian Ascension Monastery

**The Lutherans** in the Augusta Victoria Ascension Church

\* The date may vary between denominations, according to when Easter is observed by each of them

\*\* See Acts of the Apostles 1, 9

# Ascension Chapel – The Circular Yard



The circular yard in its everyday look

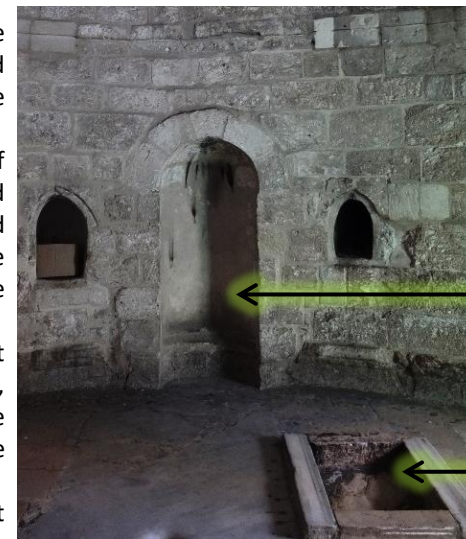


Octagonal Edicule\*

\* Inside the octagonal Edicule is a slab of stone known as the “Ascension Rock” and believed to be the spot of the Ascension, bearing the footprint of Jesus. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, following the conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin, the site was transferred to a Muslim Waqf (a charity organization) and used as a Mosque for few years (hence the South-facing Mihrab inside and the name “Ascension Mosque”).

Ever since, Christians can visit the place but are not allowed to conduct ceremonies, except on Ascension Day. All aspects of the onsite ceremonies on Ascension Day are regulated by the *Status quo*

\*\* The mosque is outside the circular yard, next to the entrance



Inside the Edicule

## Ascension Chapel – The Circular Yard

Armenian awning

Coptic awning

Syriac awning\*\*

Orthodox awning



The circular yard on Ascension Day\*

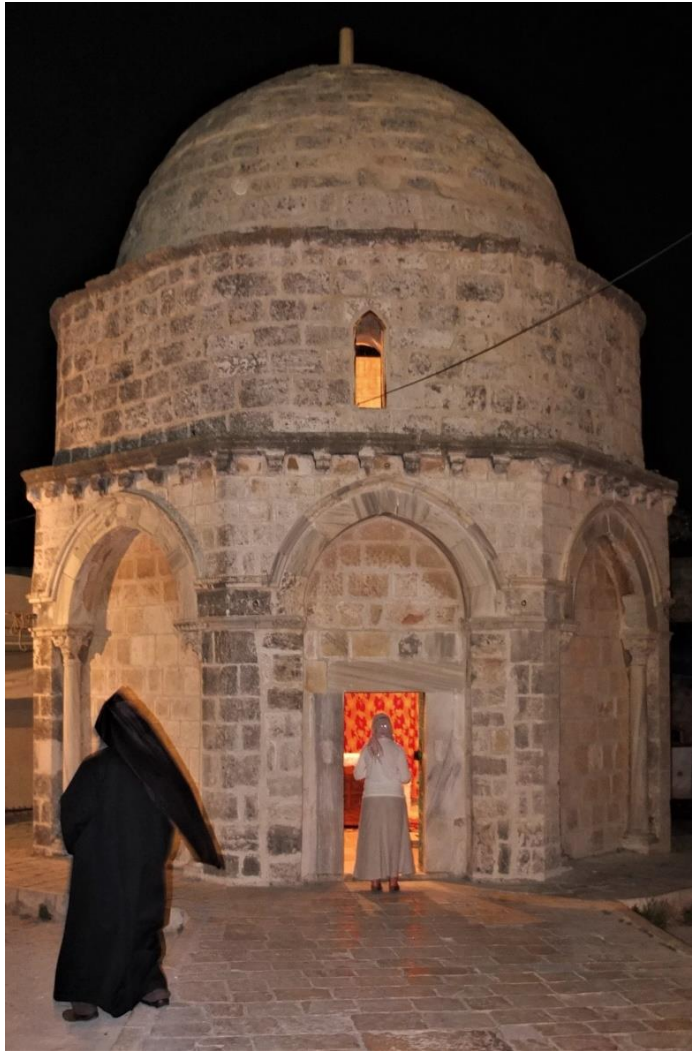
- The Armenians, Copts, Orthodox and Syriac hang their awnings from hooks in the wall around the circular yard. Each awning, built around a designated stone altar, is furnished and decorated to be used for the ceremony. The awnings are hung on the afternoon before Ascension Day and stay there for 24 hours. During the day, the Edicule will be visited by many pilgrims, except when the official ceremonies take place. The ceremony of each denomination is usually led by the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in the hierarchy, except for the Syriac and Copts. As the ceremonies take place in parallel, it sounds as if they all get interwoven into one ecumenical ceremony (almost like reverse engineering of The Tower of Babel...)

\*\* The Syriac awning is behind the Edicule, between the Coptic and the Orthodox



## The Edicule – Latin Decoration\*

\* The Edicule is decorated by the Franciscans in the afternoon of the day before

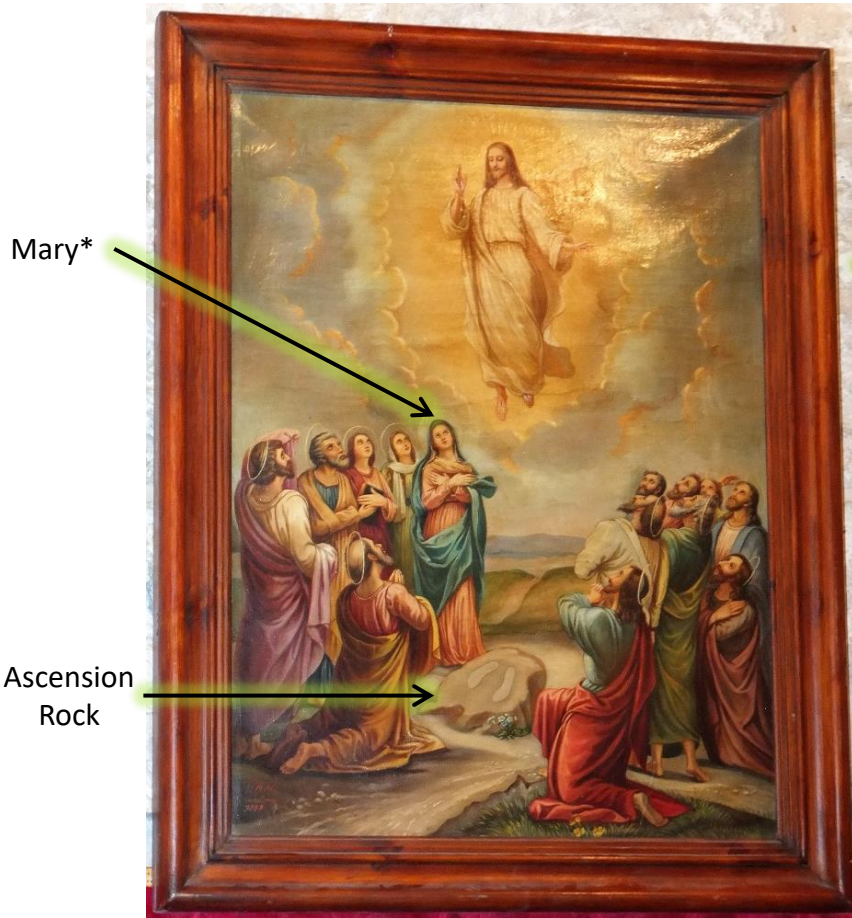


The Edicule lit at night



Lit candles around the Ascension Rock and a curtain temporarily covering the Mihrab

## The Edicule – Latin Decoration



**Mary, 11 Apostles and 2 men dressed in white**  
*...as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight...suddenly two men in white robes stood by them (Acts of the Apostles 1, 9)*



## Ascension Chapel – Orthodox Ceremony



Ceremony led by Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda



Decorated stone altar inside the Orthodox awning



**Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda**  
Holding a decorated staff and wearing an embroidered mitre\*

## Ascension Chapel – Orthodox Ceremony



Clergymen in solemn vestment inside the Orthodox awning

## Ascension Chapel – Orthodox Ceremony



Orthodox nuns



Orthodox clergymen entering the Edicule



Romanian pilgrims

## Ascension Chapel – Visit of the Orthodox Entourage\*



Solemn entrance of the entourage

\* On Ascension Day the Patriarch of Jerusalem and his entourage (members of the Synod) visit various sites on Mount of Olives. First, they visit the **Ascension Chapel** during the Divine Liturgy to venerate. Then continue to the adjacent **al-Alami Mosque**, the **Monastery of the Ascension** across the street, the **Russian Ascension Monastery** in the center of Al-Tur neighborhood and finally the **Viri Galilaei Monastery** at the northern top of Mount of Olives

## Ascension Chapel – Visit of the Orthodox Entourage\*



**Patriarch Theophilos III, Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem**  
Venerating the Divine Liturgy



Leaving to the adjacent Al-Alami Mosque

## Al-Alami Mosque – Visit of the Orthodox Entourage



The entourage at the entrance to the mosque



The Patriarch chats with a Muslim boy  
at the entrance hall of the mosque



# Ascension Chapel – Syriac Ceremony

**Archbishop Gabriel Dahho**  
Syriac Patriarchal Vicar of Jerusalem



Solemn entrance of the Archbishop



Procession around the Edicule

## Ascension Chapel – Syriac Ceremony



Clergymen in solemn vestment inside the Syriac awning

# Ascension Chapel – Syriac Ceremony



Altar boy carries a ripidion\*



Ball-shaped bells



Deacon carries a ripidion\*

\* Ripidion (AKA Seraphic Fan) is a disc usually made of metal with a figure of an angel minted on both sides and set at the end of a pole. It may also have 12 little ball-shaped bells attached all around the rim of the disc. It is usually used as a musical instrument at solemn points of the liturgy, when the person carrying it gently shakes the pole to produce tinkling and jingling sounds

## Ascension Chapel – Coptic Ceremony



Solemn entrance of the Archbishop

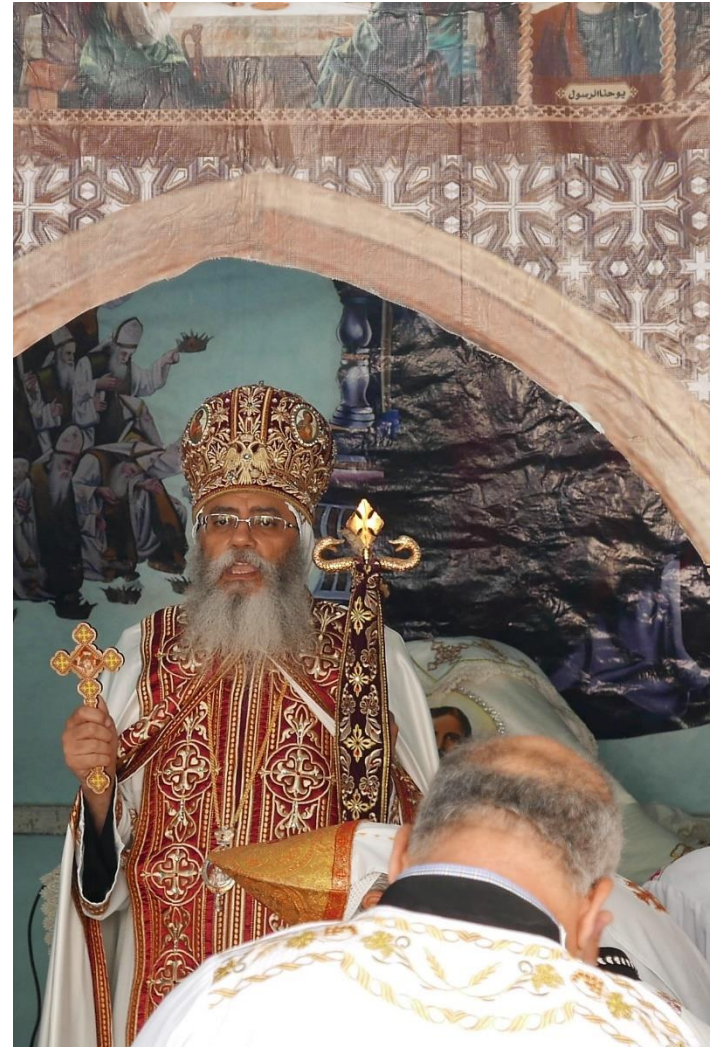


Kavases of the Coptic Patriarchate in solemn uniform\*

# Ascension Chapel – Coptic Ceremony



Decorated stone altar inside the Coptic awning



Archbishop Anba Antonius, Coptic Metropolitan of Jerusalem  
Leading the ceremony

## Ascension Chapel – Coptic Ceremony



Clergymen in white solemn vestment inside the Coptic awning

## Ascension Chapel – Armenian Ceremony



Inside the Armenian awning

## Ascension Chapel – Armenian Ceremony



Students of the Theological Seminary form the choir



## Ascension Chapel – Armenian Ceremony

Armenian awning



Gathering for the ceremony in front of the Edicule

## Ascension Chapel – Armenian Ceremony



Ceremony led by the Archbishop Sevan Gharibian

## Ascension Chapel – Armenian Ceremony



The Archbishop holds a decorated staff, as he is leading the ceremony



**Archbishop Sevan Gharibian**  
Grand Sacristan\*



Solemn vestment  
and embroidered mitre

## Ascension Chapel – Armenian Ceremony



Students of the Theological Seminary carry a ripidion



Ripidion\*

- \* Ripidion (AKA Seraphic Fan) is a disc usually made of metal with a figure of an angel minted on both sides and set at the end of a pole. It may also have 12 little ball-shaped bells attached all around the rim of the disc. It is usually used as a musical instrument at solemn points of the liturgy, when the person carrying it gently shakes the pole to produce tinkling and jingling sounds

\*\* Year of minting

## Ascension Chapel – Armenian Ceremony



Priests in embroidered mantles

## Ascension Chapel – Armenian Ceremony



Singing hymns

## Ascension Chapel – Archbishops



**Archbishop Sevan Gharibian**  
Armenian Grand Sacristan  
of Jerusalem



**Archbishop Anba Antonius**  
Coptic Metropolitan  
of Jerusalem



**Archbishop Theophilos III**  
Orthodox Patriarch  
of Jerusalem



**Archbishop Gabriel Dahho**  
Syriac Patriarchal Vicar  
of Jerusalem

# Ascension Chapel – Kavases



Armenian



Coptic



Orthodox



Syriac



We'll be back soon



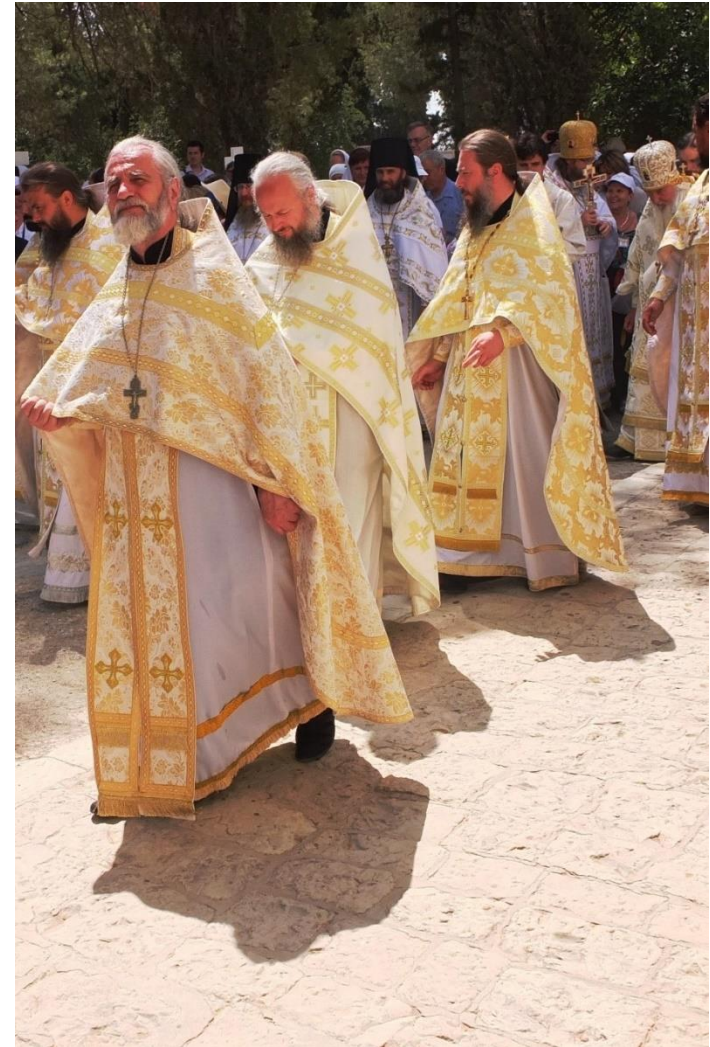


Solemn procession outside the Ascension Chapel

## Russian Ascension Monastery – Russian-Orthodox



Nuns carrying framed icons



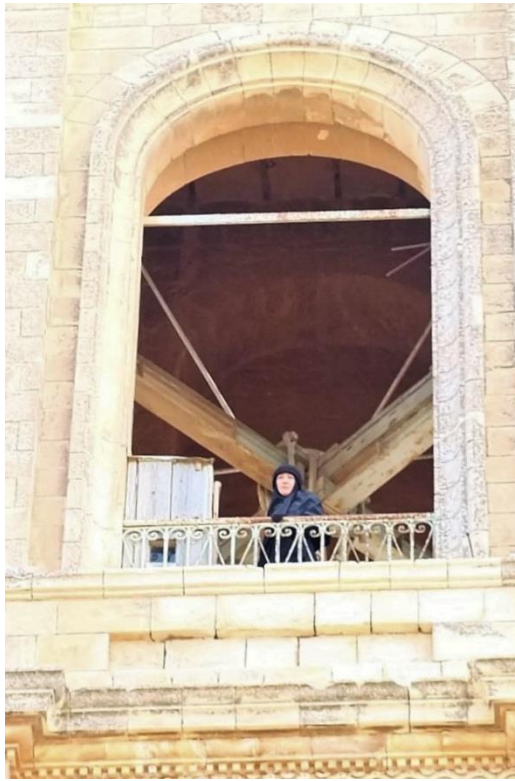
Clergymen in solemn vestments

## Russian Ascension Monastery – Russian-Orthodox

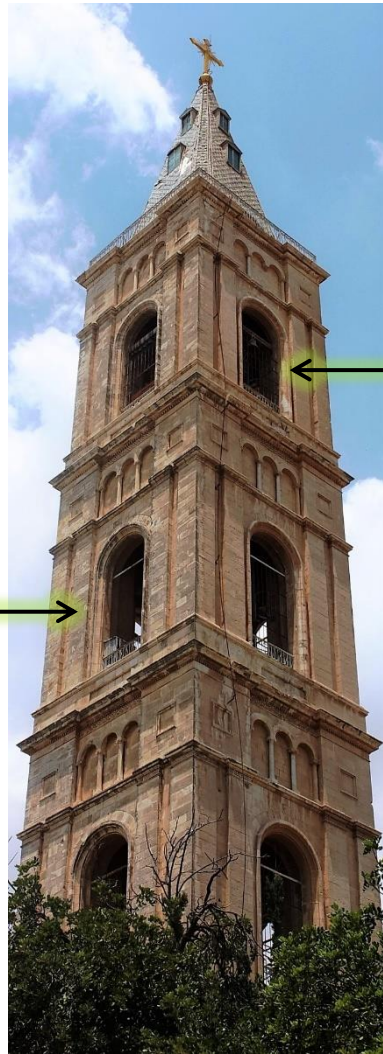


Nuns and lay women

# Russian Ascension Monastery – Russian-Orthodox



**Nun on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor**  
On her way to ring the bells



The 64 m high bell tower



**Nun on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor**  
Ring the bells at the end of the ceremony

# Procession of the Dormition Icon of Theotokos\* Jerusalem

The Orthodox community of Jerusalem conducts some local ceremonies before and after the Feast of the Dormition\*\* which is observed on August 28<sup>th</sup> (the Gregorian-Calendar equivalent of the Julian August 15<sup>th</sup>).

On August 25<sup>th</sup>, the Dormition Icon of Theotokos is carried in a nocturnal procession from Metochion of Gethsemane to the Church of the Dormition of Theotokos\*\*\* in Gethsemane, where it will be kept behind the Tomb until September 5<sup>th</sup>.

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, a Lamentation ceremony of Theotokos will take place at the Tomb.

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, the Icon will be carried in a procession back to Metochion of Gethsemane.

\* Mother of God (in Greek) - a title of Mary in the Orthodox World

\*\* AKA Assumption of Mary. The dormition, tomb and assumption of Mary are only mentioned in apocryphal gospels and later traditions. Their theological importance and interpretation may vary between denominations

\*\*\* AKA Tomb of Mary

# Metochion of Gethsemane\*

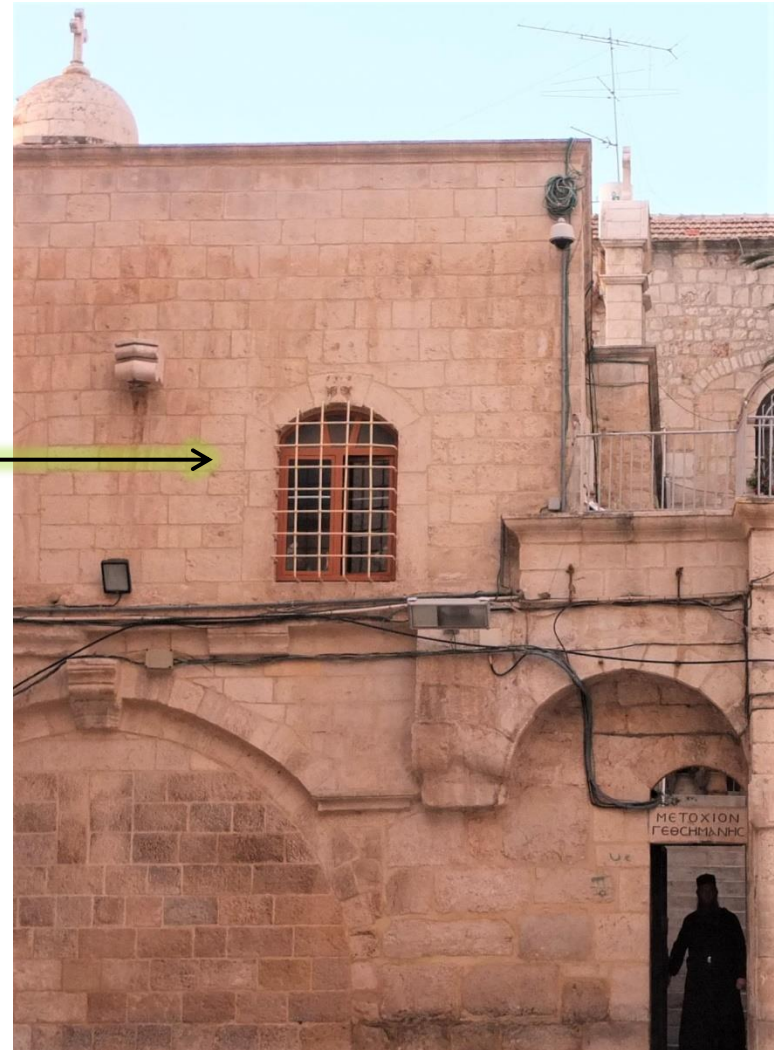
\* Dependency of Gethsemane (in Greek)



The Icon is kept inside the chapel on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor



The Dormition Icon of Theotokos



**Metochion of Gethsemane**

Orthodox monastery opposite the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

## Metochion of Gethsemane



The procession departs before dawn



The Icon is carried by Archimandrite Nektarios,  
Hegoumen at Gethsemane\*

## Russian St. Alexander Nevsky Church



**Russian-Orthodox nuns and novices**

Watching the procession as it pauses for a supplication in front of the church



## Via Dolorosa Street



Rows of monks and nuns on both sides of the street



Large crowd of locals and pilgrims



Lights and shades

## Via Dolorosa Street



All carry lit candles and bundles of Basil leaves

## Via Dolorosa Street



... some also carry a folding chair

## Lions` Gate



Departing through Lions` Gate at dawn

## Jericho Road



Walking down the road to Gethsemane

## 12. Procession of the Dormition Icon of Theotokos

## Gethsemane



Participants

## Gethsemane

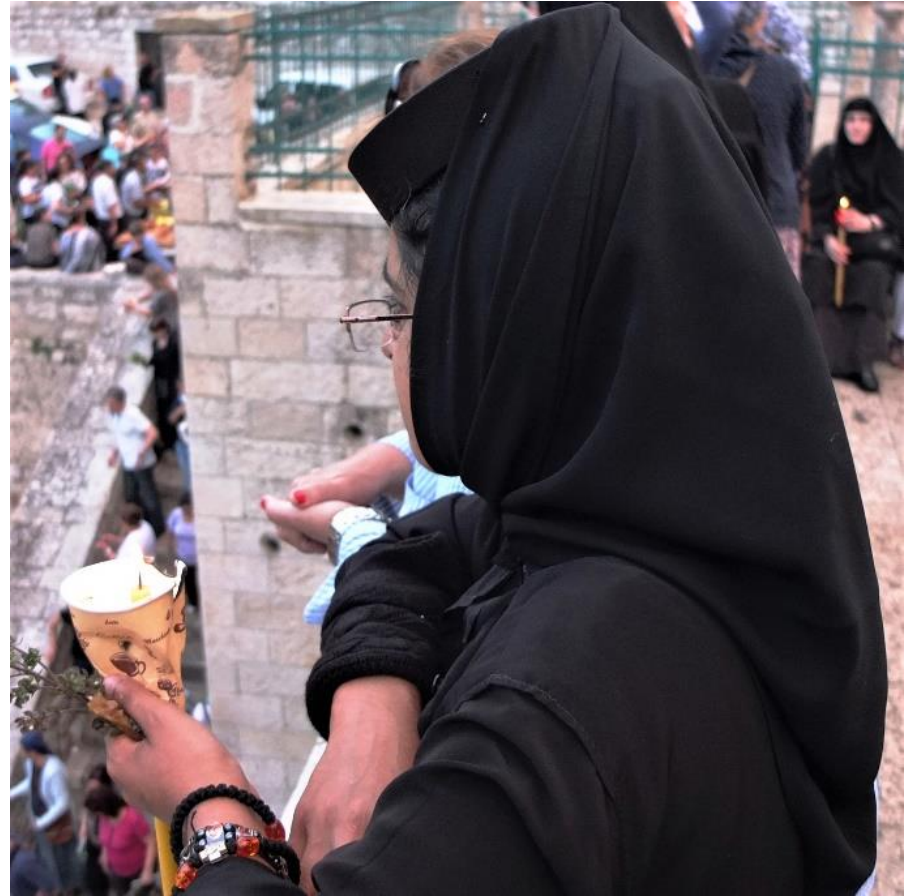


Participants

## Gethsemane



Taking a break



Improvising a candle holder



## Gethsemane



*Do two walk together unless they have made an appointment ? (Amos 3,3)*

## Gethsemane



Participants crammed through the narrow staircase leading to the church

## Gethsemane – Church of the Dormition of Theotokos\*

\* The church, regulated by the *Status Quo*, is under joint control of the Orthodox and the Armenian



Entrance to the underground church



48 stairs leading down to the Tomb

## Gethsemane – Church of the Dormition of Theotokos



Monks in daily clothes



Monk in solemn vestment\*



Kavas of the Orthodox Patriarchate  
in solemn uniform\*\*

## 12. Procession of the Dormition Icon of Theotokos

\* A Divine Liturgy takes place inside the church  
after the Icon is placed behind the Tomb

\*\* Blue suit, red tarboosh and staff

## Gethsemane – Church of the Dormition of Theotokos



The staircase stays covered by lit candles until September 5<sup>th</sup>