

About the annual Paschal Holy Fire

M. Seraphim: I recall that long ago in Washington, a bishop from Palestine was visiting, and he talked about his own experiences as a student in the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

He said that his obedience after school every day was to trim the wicks, add the oil, and re-light the many oil-lamps in the Cathedral of the Holy Resurrection. But on Great Saturday, he did not light the lamps because when the Holy Fire came, it lit the lamps on its own. Here are some similar words from personal experience..



Patriarch Diodorus I (Karivalis) of Jerusalem (1981-2000), as head of the Church of Jerusalem, hosted the arrival and distribution of the Holy Fire for 19 consecutive years. In an interview, he shared the details of the miracle:

“When all the lights go out, I bend down and enter the front room of the Tomb (Kuvuklia). From there, in the darkness, I find the way to the inner room ...

There I kneel with sacred fear and... say certain prayers handed down to us through the centuries, and wait. Sometimes the wait lasts several minutes, but usually a miracle happens immediately after the prayers are read.

From the depths of the stone on which the Body of Christ lay, an indescribable Light emanates. As a rule, it has a blue tint, however, the colour can change ... Every year it appears differently. Sometimes it covers only the tombstone, sometimes it fills the Kuvuklia with light so that people standing outside ... see that the room is filled with Light.

This light does not burn. In all 16 years of my patriarchate in Jerusalem, I have never burned my beard while receiving the Light...

In a certain place, this Light rises upward, forming a pillar, the flame of which has a different nature, and so I can light my candles from it ...

This miracle... makes the Resurrection of Christ so alive for us, as if it happened just a few years ago...

I have lived in Jerusalem since 1939, ever since I came to the city at the age of 15. All these years, I attended the service of the descent of the Holy Light and witnessed the miracle 61 times. For me there is no question whether I believe in a miracle or not. I know it's real".