

Study Day for Greek Orthodox Clergy

On 4 October 2018, Yad Vashem coordinated a study day for a delegation of Greek Orthodox clergy and staff members from the Interorthodox Centre of the Church of Greece. In cooperation with the Israeli embassy in Athens, the visit afforded the delegation an opportunity to meet leading historians and broaden their knowledge about the Holocaust.

Dr. Birte Hewera, head of the Greek section of the European Department of the International School for Holocaust Studies of Yad Vashem, liaised from Israel. The delegation included Ioannes Sakellariou, Metropolitan of Thermopylae; Archimandrite Aristarchos Gkrekas; Presbyter Evangelos Markantonis; Presbyter Stylianos Anastasopoulos; Archimandrite Serafeim Leventis; Deacon Iakovos Andriopoulos; Mr. Sergios Voilas; Mr. Christos Nasios; and Mrs. Kalliope Mavragka.



Interorthodox Centre delegation with Greek-born Holocaust survivor Moshe Ha'Elyon (seated). Credit: Kalliope Mavragka



Interorthodox Centre delegation with Lea Micha (far right). Credit: Dr. Birte Hewera

The day began with a guided tour of the Museum of Holocaust History. The group then met Dr. Noa Mkyaton, the European Department's deputy director, and Ms. Lea Micha in order to process and discuss their reactions to what they saw.

Dr. Joel Zisenwine then spoke with the delegation about the Righteous Among the Nations, citing Greek Orthodox clergymen who took risks to save their Jewish compatriots. The program's high point was the meeting with Mr. Moshe Ha'Elyon, a Holocaust survivor from Thessaloniki, who told the group his story in Greek.

The Israeli embassy in Athens promoted the event on social media in [English](#) and [Greek](#), and the Interorthodox Centre posted some of the highlights of the visit on its webpage in [English](#). The delegation thanked Dr. Hewera, Ms. Micha and Ms. Richelle Budd Caplan, director of the European Department, for their hospitality and concluded the day's activities with a session to reflect and discuss possible future projects about the Holocaust and Jewish life in Greece.