ARCHBISHOP HOVHANNES OF JERUSALEM

Posted on April 10, 2015 by Keghart

Category: Did You Know?

In the 17th century it was unsafe to travel in the Mediterranean Sea because of pirates. In 1685, before sailing with a group of pilgrims from Italy to Palestine, Archbishop Hovhannes of Jerusalem received two protective medallions from Pope Innocent XI and a patent from a cardinal. He also had a letter of recommendation from the Vatican ambassador to Istanbul. However, these guarantees didn't help the archbishop. Near Piscot Island a French pirate fleet attacked the pilgrim ship. Captain Monsier Furonya, leader of the pirates, ripped the recommendation of the ambassador and took the two medallions given by the pope. He also took a ring with diamond worth 960 kruses, 300 gold coins, and a cross made of pure gold. When the archbishop complained to the pope and asked that he be sent other medallions, the Council of Cardinals decided not to reply.

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