



Office of the President

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Most Reverend William S. Skylstad, D.D.
Bishop of Spokane

July 14, 2006

His Beatitude Michel Sabbah
Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem
P.O. Box 14152
91141 Jerusalem
Israel

BY FAX: 011 02 627-1652

Your Beatitude:

The tragic and escalating violence in the Holy Land is of profound concern to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. On behalf of our Conference, I want to express our fraternal solidarity with you as you lead and serve your people at this difficult time.

In a particular way we are deeply distressed by the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. We reject all acts of violence and terror, especially those that target civilians on both sides of the dispute and that destroy the infrastructure that serves the civilian population.

Our Conference supports your leadership in rejecting the path of violence and in calling for the negotiation of a just peace that provides security for Israelis and a viable state for Palestinians. The cycle of violence must be broken in order to open up the path to justice and peace in the Holy Land. Please be assured of our continuing prayers as you comfort your people and seek a just peace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend William S. Skylstad
Bishop of Spokane
President