



Office of the President

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3100 • FAX 202-541-3166

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan
Archbishop of New York
President

September 7, 2012

His Beatitude Fouad Twal
Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem
P.O.B. 14152
91141 Jerusalem


Your Beatitude:

It was with great sorrow that we learned of the most recent manifestation of hatred and religious intolerance in the Holy Land. The arson and wanton vandalism at the Cistercian monastery in Latroun in the early hours of September 4, 2012 is reprehensible. Reports have indicated that this attack may have been politically motivated in retaliation to a recent decision to close an Israeli settlement in the West Bank.

We appreciate the question that was raised in the Declaration of the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land: “Why are Christians again the target? What is going on in Israeli society today that permits Christians to be scapegoated and targeted by these acts of violence?” We join in your call to Israeli authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice and “to ensure a ‘teaching of respect’ in schools” so as to put an end to acts of discrimination, intimidation and violence.

In our Christmas 2011 letter to Your Beatitude, we expressed prayerful solidarity for all persecuted persons, but “in a particular way to our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering in the region of our Savior’s birth.” We realize that this is yet another cross the Christians in the Holy Land have been forced to bear. We are encouraged that some prominent Jewish leaders in Israel, the United States and throughout the world have condemned the offensive, anti-Christian graffiti and damage done to the monastery in Latroun. Our prayers continue to be with you in this trying time as we continue to hope that dialogue and understanding involving all parties in the Holy Land will triumph over division and intolerance.

Fraternally in Christ,

- + 

Timothy Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York
President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

+ 

Most Reverend Richard E. Pates
Bishop of Des Moines
Chairman, International Justice and Peace