



PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF LOCAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM

**A Message for International Church Action for Peace
in Palestine and Israel June 3rd – 9th, 2007**

As Patriarchs and Heads of Local Christian Churches in Jerusalem we call upon our fellow Christians in this Land and across the world to join us in the **International Church Action for Peace in Palestine & Israel** particularly during the period **June 3rd to 9th 2007**.

This year marks the 40th Anniversary of Occupation by the Israelis of land previously held by Palestinians. It is totally unacceptable for the situation to continue where the Palestinians endure daily hardships and humiliations with deprivations of International Human Rights, allegedly to ensure the safety and security of the Israelis, whereas we believe the security of Israel is dependent on the freedom and justice of the Palestinians.

Already we have declared our considered opinion for the future of Jerusalem (see Status of Jerusalem November 2006) recognizing the rights of the three Faiths Jewish, Christian and Moslem - and the needs of the two Peoples. Now we sincerely believe it is time to intensify action, particularly through negotiation, to end Occupation, establish an independent Palestinian State - consistent with UN Resolutions 242 & 338 - and with borders clearly defined, thus giving both Peoples, Israelis and Palestinians alike, human dignity, security and equal opportunities.

Many injustices have to be reversed not least the restoration of land to lawful indigenous owners and the so called Security Wall demolished.

For us as Christians, this Land is unique since God chose to reveal His love for human beings here when He gave His Son to be born in Bethlehem; to die on the Cross

and on the third day to rise again here in Jerusalem. When Jesus revealed much of the Father's will to us in what we know as the Sermon on the Mount he particularly declared: "**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God**".

Matthew Ch.5 v.9

All of us, together, must clearly affirm we are God's children and so give specific support to work diligently for peace now.

So, on behalf of our Churches, Communities and Organizations in Palestine and Israel we call on people of goodwill, across the world and not least those in Government, to join us in our efforts for peace especially during the period **June 3rd to 9th 2007**. Naturally we ask our Christian sisters and brothers to make this period one of specific and diligent prayer for peace in this Holy Land.

The Prophet Micah shows us clearly the object and intention of all our efforts when he says; "**This is what the Lord asks of you, act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God.**" *Micah Ch. 6 v.8*

Feast of Pentecost 2007.

Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem

Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem

Patriarch Michel Sabbah, R.C. Latin

Patriarch Torkom I Manooghian, Armenian Orthodox

Fr Pierbattista Pizziballa, ofm, Custos of the Holy Land

Archbishop Anba Abraham, Coptic Orthodox

Archbishop Swerios Malki Murad, Syrian-Orthodox

Archbishop Abouna Matthias, Ethiopian Orthodox

Archbishop Paul Sayyah, Maronite

Bishop Suheil Dawani, Anglican

Bishop Mounib Younan, Lutheran

Bishop Pierre Malki, Syrian-Catholic

Bishop George Baker, Greek Catholic

Fr. Rafael Minassian, Armenian Catholic