

H.B. THEOPHILOS III WELCOMES ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY IN JERUSALEM AMIDST GAZA'S HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Jerusalem, The Holy Land

20 October 2023

His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem, welcomed this morning, The Most Reverend Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who has commenced a pastoral visit to Jerusalem, arriving at a critical moment marked by a severe humanitarian crisis in the wake of the Anglican Al-Ahli Hospital tragedy and last night's Israeli bombing of the Orthodox Church compound in Gaza City.

In a poignant display of Christian unity and compassion, His Beatitude welcomed Archbishop Justin to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and to the Holy Land at this time of war and humanitarian crisis.

These welcoming words were not mere pleasantries but a heartfelt acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of all Christians. Archbishop Justin's presence serves as a powerful symbol of shared Christian life during the pursuit of peace in turbulent times.

Amid the ongoing conflict, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Christian communities of the Holy Land have issued a joint call for an immediate ceasefire and a resolute commitment to the protection of all human lives.

The Israeli attack on the Orthodox monastery last night in Gaza emphasizes the urgent need to safeguard churches and their institutions, which often provide shelter to innocent civilians, including women and children who have lost their homes due to airstrikes. Such actions have raised pressing moral and international legal concerns about the sanctity of civilians and holy places during wartime.

Despite the grim circumstances of the ongoing war, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the other Churches in the Holy Land remain resolute in their religious and moral duty to offer assistance, support, and refuge to those in need, even in the face of mounting pressures to evacuate these civilian sanctuaries.

In this dark hour, Patriarch Theophilos and Archbishop Justin join in fervent prayer, appealing to Almighty God for a swift end to hostilities and a renewed spirit of understanding and commitment towards a brighter future for all the inhabitants of the Holy Land, born from the crucible of this ongoing conflict.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem expresses profound gratitude to Archbishop Justin for his solidarity, emphasizing that, together, as unified members of the body of Christ, they can be a beacon of hope in a world yearning for peace.



