

Dear Friends, Brothers and Sisters,

I have just returned back from the prayer service which was held in the Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr in Jerusalem, in remembrance of all who have lost their lives in the United States of America, for a speedy recovery of all the injured, and for peace in the world.

This service was presided by the Most Reverend Bishop Riah Abu Al-Asal and attended by the consul General of the USA in Jerusalem, the consuls Generals of Britain, France, Belgium, Greece and the EU including heads of Churches in Jerusalem with a crowd of faithful. From our Church H.E. Bishop Kamal Bathish represented our Patriarch who is in Pastoral visit in Galilee.

Everybody was shocked and saddened by what happened in the USA and expressed his heartfelt sorrow and feelings to the Consul General of America. While returning back from Nablus road we saw in front of the American consulate a huge crowd of people and school boys and girls holding flowers in their hand to offer their condolences to the American people and government.

I will dedicate the whole Olive Branch of Today to share with you all the documents I collected from all the Churches in the Holy Land which all express their deep sorrow and solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the USA.

You will find the following important documents:

- 1) John Paul II Horrified at 'Inhuman Terrorist Attacks' in U.S. Sends Telegram of Condolence to President Bush**
- 2) A message of solidarity and condolences from His Beatitude Patriarch Sabbah to the American People and the church of America for the terrorist attack against the innocent people, which took place yesterday in New York and Washington.
- 3) STATEMENT From The ANGLICAN CHURCH IN JERUSALEM
- 4) A letter of condolence, sympathy and condemnation sent by Bishop Munib Younan to the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, George Anderson following terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.
- 5) Thoughts and Prayers From Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center
- 6) Palestinians Grieve Over USA Tragedy written by Rev. Mitri Raheb 12-Sep-01
- 7) Middle East Churches "Horrified by Violence" by Rev. Dr. Riad Jarjour General Secretary The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC)**
- 8) Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation Expresses its Sorrow
- 9) Statement of Pax Christi International who's president is our Patriarch Michel Sabbah.
- 10) "Prayers from the Holy Land" by Dr. Maria C. Khoury from Department of Education, English Language Studies
- 11) STATEMENT OF THE LAITY COMMITTEE OF THE HOLY LAND IN JERUSALEM

All these documents confirm the greed shock and the deep solidarity of our Christian Communities in the Holy Land and the concern of the entire Palestinian people for the fate of our brothers and sisters in the USA.

Therefore, we call upon the International Community to look on what is going in the Holy Land and understand that the Jerusalem is the key of peace and of war not only in this region but also in the whole world.

Best wishes from Jerusalem the key of peace and war.

Fr. Raed Abusahlia

Dear Friends, Brothers & Sisters,

As sign of solidarity with what happened in the USA, I would like to announce to you two forthcoming events in Jerusalem:

1) Silent Candlelight Vigil:

Today, Friday 14 of September, many of the Churches and faithful in Jerusalem will join hundreds of Palestinians, Christians and Moslems, to show our support for the victims of tragic events in the USA and American people. We will gather at 6.30 PM at Damascus Gate for silent Candlelight Vigil to honor the victims and their families and to pray for peace in the region and in the whole world.

This initiative is promoted by many peace movements in Jerusalem in coordination with the National and Ecclesiastical forces including the movement of "Seeds Of Peace".

We think that this will show the world that Palestinian Christians and Moslems are against any kind of terrorism and with just peace.

(For more details contact: Adam 052-642-709 Huwaida 052-290-173)

2) Invitation for Mass and Prayer:

His Beatitude Michel Sabbah, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, will celebrate Holy Mass on 10:00 AM. Sunday September 16th, 2001 in remembrance of those who have died in recent events in the United States and in solidarity with their families and for peace for all people. Mass will be held at the ConCathedral of the Latin Patriarchate in the presence of the Apostolic Delegate in Jerusalem, His Excellency Msgr. Pietro Sambì.

This mass is promoted by Catholic Relief Services in the Holy Land and all the heads of the Churches and Consul General in Jerusalem are invited to take part in it with many faithful from both local and foreign communities.

Please, join with us in these moments of prayer and solidarity and cover these events worldwide, because we believe the peace and security in the world begin from Jerusalem since is the key of peace war and peace not only in this region but in the whole worlds.

Let's join our efforts and hands to build peace for a better world.

For more details and information, feel free to contact me

Fr. Raed Abusahlia

Chancellor of Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem