



PATRIARCHATUS LATINUS - JERUSALEM

بطريركية القدس للاتين

PALM SUNDAY
9 APRIL 2006

Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord.

Brothers and Sisters,

We have sung, we have prayed. With Jesus we have entered the Holy City, to begin our Holy Week, a week of penitence and prayer, as we listen to the words of Jesus: Repent because the kingdom is close.

All the coming week, we shall pray and keep saying: blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord, blessed is He Who came to save us, to teach us love and fill us of His strength. Blessed the Eternal Word of God who became flesh and dwelled among us. Blessed is He Who came and gave His life for us.

Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to all of you, from our parishes from all the diocese, welcome to all those who could come, and we will pray for those who, for security measures, were forbidden to come. Welcome to all the pilgrims, of all countries and languages. Welcome Your Grace, Archbishop emeritus of Canterbury Gerge Carey, accompanied by our brother, Bishop Riyah Abou-l Assal, of the Anglican communion.

Welcome to our new Nuntio who joins us for the first time in this Palm procession, and to all of you brothers bishops and priests, and religious .

Brothers and Sisters, Jesus came and sent us to be His witnesses in this land, witnesses of love and peace to all. Therefore a believer, a Christian, must be strong and patient in all the aspects of his life, in order to be able to witness to the love of Jesus to all the society.

Of course, we keep in mind all the difficulties in our Holy Land, occupation, killing, prisoners, demolition, new occupation of houses, and inside our Palestinian society, perplexity, anxiety, confusion. We are all asking ourselves: where are we heading? Towards a new reality in which there is truth, wisdom peace and justice, or we will go on with untruth, false information, living without end in violence and reprisals? And the victim of all that situation is the human person, the main holy place of God; the human person here will remain the victim of the incapacity of men, of our political leaders here, and of the incapacity of the international community.

With all that, we say: we, Christians, we are sent to bring a small light, a message of strength, patience, love and peace. We believe in God, and we believe that when the time comes that God alone knows, He will show us His love and inspire the hearts and minds of our leaders as well as the leaders in the international community.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is he who comes to announce us peace and justice, who announces to this land the return of holiness to it, the reconciliation of all its inhabitants with God and between themselves. Blessed is he who comes to guide us in this Holy Week, so that it will be for us a week of prayer, penance, conversion and peace with God and with all the inhabitants of the Land.

+ **Michael Sabbah**, *Patriarche*