



DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA (EASTERN)
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Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate

A MESSAGE FROM HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP KHAJAG BARSAMIAN
Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern)

IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE to extend my greetings to the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF), on the occasion of its 17th International Conference. The theme of this year's gathering, "Our Faith is Commitment to Justice, Peace and Coexistence," is an idea people of all backgrounds need to acknowledge, celebrate, and exemplify before the world.

This year's gathering coincides with the worldwide commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, which has given deeper significance to all our activities. As we honor the memory of those who were martyred 100 years ago, it is fitting that we should do so beneath the cross of Christ. The cross illuminates the meaning of the Genocide. It is the universal symbol of human suffering; a reminder of our Lord's passion, in which our people most assuredly shared a century ago. I know that so many of those in attendance at the HCEF conference likewise carry their own personal experiences of pain and exile.

The Holy Land's Christian communities have often known times of trouble—I witnessed this at first hand during my early years as a clergyman attending the seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem. As for today, the entire world bears witness to the hardship of Christian community life in the land that gave birth to our faith.

Yet in the shadow of our Lord's cross, we recognize that our history is also a story of achievement and endurance; a story of reverence, respect, and resilience. Above all, it is a story of different peoples illuminated by a single Light, seeking in common a tranquil way on a turbulent sea.

I commend you for reflecting on our common roots and bonds in this solemn, intellectual, and public manner. Your conference is yet another example of how HCEF—with its numerous charitable and humanitarian efforts—continues to be a blessing to all Christians, and to all people, living in the regions where our Lord once walked and preached—and where His ministry continues to this day.

May our Risen Lord guide and protect you all, as you continue to answer His call and perform His will.

With prayers,

Abp. K. Barsamian

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate

October 17, 2015