



PATRIARCHATUS LATINUS - JERUSALEM

بطريركية القدس للاتين

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Dear Rateb,

I am honored to express my congratulations and share words of encouragement in recognition of the HCEF 17th International Conference. For more than 17 years, HCEF has worked tirelessly at the grass roots level to support the people of the Holy Land. Your work is a true testament that you witness the 17th International Conference theme **"Our Faith is Commitment to Justice, Peace and Coexistence."**

This year has been an eventful one for Palestine with the Canonization of the first Palestinian Saints and the very disappointing reversal of the prior affirmative decision of the Israel Supreme Court on the Cremisan Valley Separation Wall case. Such events remind me of the words His Holiness Pope Francis spoke at the Canonization Homily that Disciples of Christ must "witness to Jesus' resurrection" but stresses this is "not an individual undertaking; it is to be carried out in common, with the apostolic college and with the community." HCEF understands this message very well; therein lays their recipe to success as it endeavors to *'replace despair with hope, fear with human security and humiliation with dignity'*. I am happy to have HCEF as our representative in the United States.

As we continue to raise our prayers to the Lord for the restoration of dignity, justice and prosperity, I commend my friend Sir Rateb and all at HCEF for your commitment to the continued presence, empowerment and well-being of Arab Christians in the Holy Land and to developing the bonds of solidarity between them and Christians elsewhere.

I also offer my heartiest congratulations to all the HCEF award recipients. To all of the participants in this conference I extend my warmest greetings and my blessing from the holy city of Jerusalem. Thank you for your prayers and your friendship to this noble cause for us, the Christians of the Holy Land.

With best wishes for a most successful 17th International Conference!

In Christ Our Savior,


+Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarch

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