



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 18th International Conference. The theme of this year's gathering, "Forging a New Bond of Solidarity for Equality, Prosperity and Peace," offers a vitally urgent message for our entire world. Nowhere is that message more compelling, more *needful*, than in the Holy Land itself.

I commend you for reflecting on this subject in a solemn, intellectual, and public manner. Your conference is yet another example of how HCEF, with its many charitable and humanitarian efforts, continues to be a blessing to all Christians—indeed, to all *people*—living in the regions where our Lord once walked and preached, and where His ministry, no less than his passion, continue in our own day.

The Holy Land's Christian communities have often known times of trouble—as I witnessed at first hand during my early years as a clergyman attending the seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Our brothers and sisters in the region have borne Christ's cross since ancient times. And today, the entire world bears witness to the hardship and affliction 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.

Such a story certainly has much wisdom to impart to the region, and to the world, we all share.

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

With prayers,

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian
Primate

October 15, 2016