



Office of the President

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3100 • FAX 202-541-3166

Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz
Archbishop of Louisville
President

June 30, 2016

Mr. Rateb Y. Rabie, KCHS
President and CEO
Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation, Inc.
6935 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 518
Bethesda, MD 20815

Dear Mr. Rabie:

May God bless you!

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I am happy to offer encouragement to the participants in the 18th International Conference and Awards Banquet of the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF). The theme of your gathering again lifts up principles of great concern to the Church, "Forging a New Bond of Solidarity for Equality, Prosperity and Peace."

Our faith calls us to forge a strong bond of solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land, the Mother Church of Jerusalem. For decades our Conference of Bishops has supported peace between Israelis and Palestinians, two states for two peoples, with security and dignity for both. Advancing equality and prosperity will certainly contribute to building a just peace.

Our Conference of Bishops remains profoundly concerned for our sisters and brothers in the Palestinian Christian community. We are aware of the ways they endure occupation, land confiscations and even hate crimes. Of late, we have been particularly cognizant of the pressing situation in the Cremisan Valley.

I was particularly pleased to learn that our brother bishop, the Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson, Archbishop of St. Louis, is being honored with the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation Award.

Our Lord calls us to solidarity with the two peoples and three faiths who share the Holy Land. By promoting equality and prosperity, we respond to His call to be peacemakers.

Sincerely yours in our Lord,

Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D.
Archbishop of Louisville
President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops