



# PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF LOCAL CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM

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## Statement

June 19, 2015

The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem condemn the act of desecration and vandalism of the Benedictine Monastery of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes on the Sea of Galilee (Tabgha) on Thursday, June 18, 2015. A fire set caused a severe damage to the Church's study and other parts of the Church compound, as well as a hateful graffiti in Hebrew on a nearby wall.

We call upon the Israeli authorities to act immediately in order to bring those responsible for this horrific attack to justice. Also, to fight this phenomena that has become epidemic in our society. This is not the first time this Holy Place gets vandalized by religiously motivated extremist groups. This is a criminal and outrageous act that should be strongly condemned by all people of faith and goodwill. No religion should accept or tolerate such an evil and inhuman behaviour.

We renew our call upon all people of this land to join hands in facing these kinds of provocative and insulting actions, and to find ways to defeat all acts of violence and desecration that bring about enmity and alienation of the people of God in this Holy Land.

At the same time, we thank all our friends who condemned strongly this action and have shown impressive solidarity with Christian churches.

## **Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem**

- +Patriarch Theophilos III, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate
- +Patriarch Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarchate
- +Patriarch Nourhan Manougian, Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Patriarchate
- +Fr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa, ofm, Custos of the Holy Land
- +Archbishop Anba Abraham, Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate, Jerusalem
- +Archbishop Swerios Malki Murad, Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate
- +Archbishop Aba Embakob, Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarchate
- +Archbishop Joseph-Jules Zerey, Greek-Melkite-Catholic Patriarchate
- +Archbishop Mosa El-Hage, Maronite Patriarchal Exarchate
- +Archbishop Suheil Dawani, Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East
- +Bishop Munib Younan, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land
- +Bishop Pierre Malki, Syrian Catholic Patriarchal Exarchate
- +Msgr. Georges Dankaye', Armenian Catholic Patriarchal Exarchate