



317 Avenue E - Bayonne, N.J. 07002
Tel.: (201) 455 – 8151 , Fax: (201) 455 – 8152

OB 2010.11.03.036
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

November 3, 2010

Our Lady of Deliverance
Syriac Catholic Diocese
in The United States and Canada

Dear Eminences and Excellencies,
Reverend Monsignors, Priests and Religious men and woman,
My brothers and sisters in Christ,

May the Peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be always with you.

With deep sorrow and distress we communicate to you the passing away of two of our brother priests Rev. Fr. Tha'ir Saad and Rev. Fr. Boutros Wasim in the tragic and savage attack on Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Catholic Cathedral in Bagdad, Iraq on October 31st, during the celebration of Holy Mass this past Sunday. The Very Reverend Chorbishop Rafael Kotaymi, Rector of the Cathedral, was also hit and remains in critical condition.

In a total disregard of life and of holy place of worship, terrorists stormed our Cathedral in Iraq, violated the sanctity of the place and murdered innocent worshipers. Among the victims were several infants and children, almost seventy people were martyred. In the past ten years, we have witnessed an escalation to the attacks against the Christians in Iraq. Sixty two churches were destroyed; hundreds of victims lost their lives because they were Christians. Our communities in The Middle-East live this horror and pain on a daily basis.

Last June, before the American Congress, I echoed insistently that the Christians from The Middle-East or from Iraq in particular are full of fear that there is a plan to evacuate them from their countries. One congressman replied that it would be beyond tragic if this would happen.

I answered him that we are witnessing an ongoing genocide and a forced exodus of our people because they are Christians and only because of their faith. Unfortunately, the world does not care for the innocent and the poor. No matter what, the Iraqi Christians are holding on their faith for consolation and their resolve in our Lord Jesus Christ is their hope and joy.

We invite you to a Memorial Mass in memory of our brother priests and all victims of this attack. Please join us Friday November 5th, at 7:00 pm at Saint Joseph Syriac Catholic Cathedral at 317 Avenue E, in Bayonne, NJ.

I call on you, my brothers and sisters, to stand united with us in solidarity and prayer against this violence. Those who died in Christ shall be raised in Christ.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ Mar Barnaba Yousif Habash
Bishop of Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Catholic Diocese
in the United States and Canada