



Christian leaders in Jerusalem called for an immediate and sustainable ceasefire in the Gaza Strip



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The heads of Christian Churches and communities in Jerusalem have issued a joint message timed to coincide with the feast of Easter, which a number of churches celebrate in 2024 on the 31st of March.

"We, the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem, while observing two distant dates of commemoration this year, nevertheless join together in unity to proclaim to the world the Good News of Christ's Resurrection, first announced by angels nearly two millennia ago at the empty tomb here in the Holy City of Jerusalem," said the authors of the appeal, **quoted** by the Ορθοδοξία news agency.

Referring to the situation in the Holy Land, they emphasised: "...We repeat our denunciation of all

violent actions in the present devastating war, especially those directed against innocent civilians, and we reiterate our call for an immediate and sustained ceasefire". There was also a renewed call for the rapid distribution of humanitarian aid, the release of all prisoners, unimpeded access for fully equipped doctors and medical personnel to care for the sick and wounded, and the commencement of negotiations aimed at ending the cycle of violence.

Only in this way, the heads of the Christian Churches of Jerusalem are convinced, can finally " we believe, can a comprehensive solution be finally advanced for a just and lasting peace here in the land where our Lord sacrificed his life, breaking down the dividing wall of enmity, in order to offer the world the hope for reconciliation."

They also made a special appeal to the Christians in Gaza who are currently going through difficult trials, including those who have found refuge in the churches of St Porphyrios and Holy Family, as well as the staff and volunteers of Al-Ahli Hospital and the patients they care for. " To them and to all who look to Christ's Resurrection in faith, even in the midst of the present darkness, let us affirm with St. Paul: 'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8. 38-39)', the message reads."

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