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Christian hierarchs in Syria issue urgent plea for faithful in the country, wider Mideast



The heads of the major Christian Churches in war-torn Syria on Monday issued an urgent plea to the world over the dramatic reduction in the number of Christians in the country, and the wider Middle East – the birthplace of Christianity.

A meeting at the Monastery of St. Ephaim the Syrian, in Damascus, was attended by the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, His Beatitude John X, the Patriarch of the Syriac Orthodox Church, Mar Ignatius Aphrem II, and the Patriarch of the Melkite Church, Youssef Absi, while the papal nuncio in Syria, Cardinal Mario Zenari also attended.

The hierarchs discussed the situation in the wider region and the conflict's effects over the past few years on the people, in general, and Christians in particular.

The participants affirmed the necessity of remaining firmly attached to the land of the forefathers despite the current dire circumstances. They also prayed for the safe return of the two abducted Bishops of Aleppo: Boulos Yaziji and Mar Gregorius Youhanna Ibrahim.