

A Statement Issued By The Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem



Palm Sunday Grief: A Sanctuary of Healing Struck in the Land of the Divine Healer

Jerusalem, April 13, 2025

On this sacred Palm Sunday, as the faithful around the world raise palm branches in remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ's entry into Jerusalem—an entry marked not by conquest, but by meekness, peace, and divine compassion—we find our hearts weighed with sorrow over the suffering endured in the very land upon which He walked.

In the early light of this holy day, the al-Ahli Arab Baptist Hospital in Gaza, a place consecrated to healing and long rooted in the Christian vocation of mercy, was struck by an Israeli air assault that rendered its emergency and other critical departments inoperative. Patients in fragile condition, including children, were forced into the open streets. Among them, a twelve-year-old who perished during the chaotic evacuation. This death, like so many others, is a silent cry, a reminder of the innocent who suffer where care should prevail.

This hospital, already strained by months of siege, stood as one of the last beacons of medical hope in Gaza, where dozens of healthcare institutions have been systematically destroyed. The stripping away of such sanctuaries of life and dignity is a tragedy that transcends all boundaries of politics and enters the realm of the sacred.

Yet even amidst devastation, the light of faith remains unextinguished. In Gaza's Zaytun Quarter, within the heart of the Old City, the historic Church of Saint Porphyrius held Palm Sunday prayers—quiet, steadfast, and full of grace—affirming that the witness of Christ's peace endures, even when sorrow surrounds the sanctuary.

As the Church that guards the Tomb of Christ and walks daily in the path of His Passion and Resurrection, we cannot turn away from this anguish. Yet we respond in prayer, bearing witness to the truth that mercy remains stronger than hatred, and that humanity, even when wounded, is never defeated.

For as it is written: "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Revelation 21:4).

Lord Jesus Christ, Divine Healer, have mercy on Gaza.

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