

## Speech of His Beatitude Patriarch John X during his visit to the Church of St. Elias Douweila



“With the saints and through our prayers, as mentioned by their Beatitudes, Holinesses, Bishops, and all the Fathers—and with you—may the Lord heal all. May He heal all those afflicted, all the sick who are here in the hospitals.

Dearly beloved, tomorrow at one o’clock in the afternoon, we wish to inform you that the funeral prayers for our departed brethren—whom we lost yesterday—will be held.

It will, of course, be a collective prayer at the Church of the Holy Cross, at one o’clock. We will all gather to offer prayers for the repose of their souls.

Their prayer—and ours—is to the Lord: that He may have mercy on us, our country, and the whole world, and bring healing to all.

Undoubtedly, beloved, in such a moment, a person cannot express what lies within.

But tomorrow, during the funeral prayer, we will have a word to say. For now, I will simply mention—

especially for the families, for the loved ones, the families of our martyrs and our wounded—

that our Lord is the Comforter, especially in times like these.

Prayer grants us strength, grants us consolation, and brings comfort to the heart of a grieving mother who has lost her son or husband, or any beloved family member. Prayer brings down the mercy of the Lord to dwell in our hearts, to show us compassion and give us strength.

What happened—as I have said—words cannot describe it.

Syria, our Syria, does not know such events. What occurred is not only condemned, but utterly unacceptable—neither humanly, religiously, nor in faith.

In this country, in Syria, we were, still are, and will remain brothers—Muslims and Christians.

We shall all remain one united family.

What happened yesterday affected us directly—St. Elias Church, and our parish—we lost our brothers and beloved ones, our martyrs, and those who were wounded or injured.

Yet despite that, we hold fast to our great faith and cling to prayer, seeking the mercy of the Lord. And thus, we shall remain.

To anyone who thinks such an act could spark some kind of sedition, sectarianism, or the like—they are gravely mistaken.

We are steadfast in our faith, in our devotion, in our love, and in our loyalty to our families, to our Church, to our environment, our country, our neighborhoods, and neighbors—without exception.

Our gathering today, and a special thanks for the presence of the blessed patriarchs from all the churches in Damascus—

We are with you, beloved ones, and together we have prayed this prayer to bring comfort to everyone's hearts: the hearts of the parishioners, of our Christian children, and of all Syrians—without exception.

May the Lord protect you, strengthen you, grant you health, and say to you: Do not be afraid.

Yes, what happened is painful—but do not fear.

Remember the Lord's words when He affirmed to His disciples:

'I am in her midst'—He meant the Church—'and she shall not be shaken.'

St. Elias Church, built upon the rock of faith in the Lord Jesus,  
carries the intercession of the living St. Elias and this living parish.

And when we speak of a living parish, we mean you:

the youth, young women and men, children, women and men—all of you.

We know your fervor. We know your faith. And you are steadfast in that faith.

So we ask the Lord to grant everyone—especially our families—patience and solace  
in this moment and in these difficult times.

May the Lord shelter you all, protect you, bring you back—do not be afraid: "I am  
with you."