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Archbishop of Athens condemns desecration of statue of Jesus in Southern Lebanon



His Beatitude Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens and All Greece has expressed deep concern over the desecration of a statue depicting the Crucified Jesus Christ in southern Lebanon, raising questions about the motives and intent behind the act.

In his statement, the Archbishop emphasised that Jesus Christ neither used violence nor led military actions but instead taught love, repentance, and forgiveness, ultimately sacrificing Himself for the salvation of all humanity. He also referred to the biblical phrase “I did not come to abolish but to fulfill,” highlighting the enduring spiritual significance of both the Old and New Testaments, as well as the Apostle Paul’s description of the Law as a “guide to Christ.”

At the same time, Archbishop Ieronymos noted that the swift condemnation of the incident by Benjamin Netanyahu was a step in the right direction. However, he stressed that war fuels violence and anger, often leading to innocent victims, especially children, recalling the tragic loss of 168 students in the Iranian city of Minab.

The incident came after the Israel Defence Forces confirmed that one of its soldiers had damaged a Christian religious symbol during operations in southern Lebanon. The military stated that it is treating the matter with “great severity,” adding that

such behaviour does not reflect its values. The confirmation followed the circulation of widely shared images on social media showing a uniformed soldier striking a fallen crucifix statue with a hammer.

The event occurred just days after American President Donald Trump announced a ten-day ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hezbollah.

Concluding his message, Archbishop Ieronymos stressed that the Church continually prays for peace throughout the world, as well as for peace within every human soul.

> The IDF is currently examining the reliability of the photograph.
> If this is indeed a real, recent picture, these actions do not align with the IDF’s values and the behavior expected of IDF soldiers.
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> The incident will be investigated thoroughly and in depth, and if… pic.twitter.com/xMTtEMp4dS
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> — LTC Nadav Shoshani (@LTC_Shoshani) April 19, 2026

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