



The Holy See

***LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE AUXILIARY BISHOP OF JERUSALEM FOR LATINIS AND PATRIARCHAL VICAR FOR
JORDAN
ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARRIVAL IN JORDAN OF IRAQI REFUGEES***

Your Excellency Bishop Laham, Dear Brother,

I would like to take the opportunity of this visit to Jordan by Bishop Nunzio Galantino, General Secretary of the Italian Episcopal Conference, to convey a word of hope to those who, oppressed by violence, have been forced to abandon their homes and their land.

Many times I have wanted to give voice to the atrocious, inhuman and inexplicable persecution of those who in many parts of the world — especially among Christians — are victims of fanaticism and intolerance, often before the eyes and the silence of all. They are today's martyrs, humiliated and discriminated against for their faithfulness to the Gospel. My recollection, which makes an appeal of support, is meant to be the sign of a Church that does not forget and does not abandon her children exiled on account of their faith: may they know that daily prayer is raised for them, together with acknowledgement for the witness that they offer us.

My thoughts go out also to the Communities that have been able to take on the burden of these brothers and sisters, not allowing their gaze to turn elsewhere. You proclaim the Resurrection of Christ with the sharing of sorrow and the help and solidarity that you lend to the hundreds of thousands of refugees; by the way you bend down to their pain which threatens to smother their hope; with your service of fraternity, which also lights up the dark moments of existence.

May the Lord reward you, as only He can do, with an abundance of his gifts.

In turn may public opinion around the world be ever more attentive, sensitive and involved in the face of this persecution directed against Christians and, more generally, against religious minorities. I renew the hope that the international community not remain silent and inert in front of

these intolerable crimes, which constitute an alarming decline of the most essential human rights and impede the richness of cohabitation among peoples, cultures and faiths.

I ask that you please pray for me. May the Lord bless you and Our Lady watch over you.

Fraternally,

FRANCISCUS