



Date: 26.05.2017

Our ref: 17/04021-1

Your ref:

Condolences

H.H. Pope Tawadros
H.E. Bishop Thomas

Today our prayers and thoughts are with You and Your community, after one more brutal assault on Coptic Christians. This time pilgrims on their way to the monastery of St. Samuel were targeted, and also children were among those killed and wounded. We want You to know that we are with You in the pain and mourning of these losses.

Today terrorism has become a global problem. More than others, however, Copts in Egypt have been the specific target of recent terrorist attacks. We are therefore particularly concerned by the many atrocities against Your community and the Christians of Egypt, and we express our strong objections to such brutal attacks on fellow Christians. This concern also includes the legitimate demand for their protection and wellbeing.

The history of the Coptic Orthodox Church goes back to Mark the Evangelist in the 1st century, and today Your community is the largest Christian Church in the Middle East. Throughout the centuries You have experienced suffering because of Your Christian faith and identity, carrying the cross of Christ. At Easter this year we were moved by the testimony of an old lady who had lost her husband in the suicide bombing at one of your churches and then spoke about the need and hope of reconciliation.

Today we share with You this prayer of hope for reconciliation and a different tomorrow. We bring our pain and lamentations as well as our hope to the God of peace and commit Your community and all of us to His greater mercy.

Remembering the pilgrims who were killed, and praying for the wounded and the bereaved, I greet You and Your community with the words of the Apostle Paul: "I am convinced that neither death nor life ...nor any powers ... or anything else in creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Oslo May 26, 2017

Yours,

+ Ole Chr. M. Kvarme
Bishop of Oslo