ROMANIAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE
Eparchy of St. George in Canton

Office of the Bishop

HOLY LAND COLLECTION

March 21, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

"May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14), Saint Paul was saying in his letter to the Church of Galatia, since he had clearly realized the fact that the Cross of Christ is the most important and the only focus of his life.

The Cross doesn't make sense though, from a human perspective, since some questions might raise: "What is the value of the brutal treatment of the Son of God?" "How could such a horrific incident ever be seen as something good, let alone the single boast of one's life?" "What is the value of suffering and death?" And even we know what the truth is, we doubt and sometimes we try to find an alternate truth, closer to what we'd wish to be the truth was. But faith in the Real Truth sometimes may overcome this and become a "modus vivendi", a way of living.

In this context, we should reflect to the challenges of our days in the Holy Land, where the Christians are about 2 percent of the population. They are present though, discreet as may be and they endure a lot of suffering as "a sign of hope and peace-building". When the people start coming together once again is a sign of reconciliation in bounds created, in meaningful ties, supporting groups and communities driving toward a profound transformation. That's why the Pontifical Collection for the benefit of the Holy Places is taken up this year on Good Friday, in the spirit of the sung psalm: "For the peace of Jerusalem, pray!" (Ps. 121,6), to support those who, as the Franciscan Custody, are committed to do.

Thank you for supporting the Pontifical Good Friday Collection, this way we all join with all the Catholics around the world to be in solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land, becoming an instrument of peace in a very troubled land.

Sincerely in Christ-God,

(Most Reverend) John Michael Botean, DD
Bishop of the Eparchy of St. George in Canton

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