

Dear friends

I have been witnessing the difficult situation of an ever-growing number of people in different localities, especially in the Homs district, in the Damascus suburbs and elsewhere.

That is due to the tragic events that Syria has been experiencing over the last year (March 2011-March 2012). Many have had to leave their towns, villages, houses and estates. We have had refugees in Damascus, in our monasteries and in other localities.

Moved by our pastoral responsibility and by the love of Christ which constrains us, we, with our brother in Christ, H. B. Ignatius IV (Hazim), Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, have formed an emergency committee to help our brothers and sisters in need, without distinction between Muslims and Christians.

We began this activity as early as mid-February 2012. We have already distributed over two thousand parcels, each to the value of \$50 worth of food, milk, blankets etc., according to need.

The list of the names of families is growing by the day. Priests and lay-people give us these names. We are receiving local aid from both Christians and Muslims.

Through this letter, we are appealing to your charity, to support our charity. It is best to send your support to our account in Germany, which is most readily accessible.

Please note that I am currently on a trip around France, Great Britain, Germany, Strasbourg (the European Parliament), the Vatican and Rome to meet the heads of episcopal conferences and civil authorities, to plead the cause of dialogue, reconciliation and peace in the region, especially for Syria, which is currently the most affected.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the reception that you will give to this appeal and for any donation that you may provide for the families who will be most grateful to receive it.

United with you in praying for peace and harmony in Syria and the whole Middle East,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus

Gregorios III

Patriarch

Greek Melkite Catholic Patriarchate