



## *Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador*

October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Many of us have looked on in horror at the latest cycle of violence in the Holy Land. We mourn the loss of innocent life, we denounce the indiscriminate murder of civilians and we stand with all those who mourn, who no longer feel safe and whose lives are shattered. Together we pray for all those who have suffered, and continue to suffer, due to the blatant disrespect of human life.

As such, we mourn with Christ. Who, even in His day, mourned over Jerusalem for not choosing the way of peace. With Him we weep with those who weep, and call on our Father to send a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit to heal the wounds caused by sin and death. With Him we recommit ourselves to the work of reconciliation and healing, knowing that, to do otherwise, separates us from God's kingdom.

Please join me in praying for our brothers in sisters, the citizens of both Israel and Palestine, caught in the middle. Pray for their leaders, too. May they not be blinded by the path of retribution, a path that only guarantees further bloodshed, reprisals and loss of innocent life. May they choose the path of true dialogue, mutual respect of human life, recognition and peaceful co-existence. Recognizing that the road ahead will not be easy, nor without its sacrifices, and that Christ has set us an example, so that, as He has done, so we are called to do.

Please join with me in prayer each evening for the coming week and raise our cry for the Holy Land, and its people, to the Lord. May God bless all those who have suffered as a result of this crime against humanity, the violent loss of innocent life, and bring peace in the midst of strife. May peace be the heritage of both Palestinians and Israelis alike, and the city whose very name is "Peace" (Jerusalem).

Fraternally in Christ,

+ *Bart van Roijen*

Bishop Bart van Roijen

Bishop of the Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador

