



DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP



Lent 2024

Dear Friends in Christ,

Recently I received a letter from Fr. David Grenier who leads the Commissariat of the Holy Land in Washington, DC. Fr. Grenier expressed his gratitude for the great generosity you showed last year when we took up the Holy Land Collection on Good Friday. As you can imagine, his letter also described the incredible challenges currently faced by Christians there as they deal with the war that began on October 7.

My previous letters have described the great need faced by those Christians who represent less than 2% of the population there. They rely heavily on pilgrimages to the Holy Places there as the main source of their income. The limitations related to the pandemic years were difficult as pilgrims did not come to the Holy Land. After dealing with that impact for two years, they were just beginning to recover financially when the war broke out. Now they find themselves again without income and confronted with the cruel realities of war with its devastation, maiming, and loss of life.

Pope Francis calls us each year to gather a collection that will help sustain the Christian presence in the Holy Land. In these times of crisis, the need is even more profound. Our gifts this year are necessary to meet the basic needs of the People of God still living in this land and maintain a Christian presence where the Church was born.

Please join me in offering a gift to this special collection on Good Friday. Together we become instruments of peace as we stand in solidarity with Catholics around the world and in the Holy Land.

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Rev. William M. Joensen, Ph.D.
Bishop of Des Moines

Attachment