



Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon
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November 9, 2010

Bishop Yousif Habash
Diocese of Our Lady
of Deliverance of Newark
502 Palisade Ave
Union City NJ 08087-5213

Dear Bishop Yousif,

Greetings in the Lord.

It was good to be with you both at the conference for new bishops in Rome, and again at the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops assembly last month. I am sorry to be writing now amidst such tragic circumstances. With the entire people of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, I share your tremendous grief at the news of those killed and wounded at the celebration of the Eucharist last Sunday in Baghdad. Our deepest condolences to you and your people.

We have followed news coming from the Middle East in recent years, and have frequently heard of the persecution of Christians, and in many instances of Catholics, in Iraq. I personally knew Fr. Ragheed Ganni, who was murdered in 2007, from the time when he was a student in Rome. This recent tragedy marks a huge escalation in the violence against the Catholic people of Iraq and the threats which accompanied this horrible attack will no doubt make life even more precarious for your brothers and sisters in the Lord that land.

Please rest assured of prayers at this time, in all the parishes of our diocese, and know that you are not alone in this time of crisis and tragedy. We ask God's protection and blessing on all of the Christian communities in Iraq and we ask the consolation of God's presence for all of the family members, friends, and members of the community of those who were killed or injured in Sunday's attack.

Fraternally yours in Christ Jesus,

Yours in Christ,

+ Donald Bolen
Bishop of Saskatoon

 In all things we are rooted in Christ,
in His desire to bring God's love to all peoples.