

Jerusalem, Xmas 1994

Dear Mr. Kopan

Greetings and Blessings from Bethlehem.

Enjoy with your dear Family in our Incarnate Lord

A L W A Y S !

I was glad to receive your letter of Dec. 5, 1994 and the materials enclosed therein. I thank you for its content and want to assure you that our Patriarchate does its best to fulfill its mission and guarantee its Orthodox presence in the Holy Places and safeguard its ownership in the Holy Shrines. Times are difficult and may become more crucial, but we are committed in our ab antiquo posts. We try with all means to overcome the obstacles, but we don't find the Greek Government response. We trust in God's help and we are sure that our Lord won't disappoint us.

You are in right certainly to complain for certain things. We are in need and without money we cannot compete with other Communities- especially Latin, Greek Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, etc.

It seems You are misinformed. Mr. Abu Jaber has succeeded his father in fighting against our Patriarchate. We don't sell our property, but we long lease our lands to find money and continue our mission here.

Our Patriarchate does not despise the Community. We built for them Churches, ordain Priests, pay their salaries, built schools, appoint teachers and the Patriarchate pays for them all. Accepts Arabs to our Brotherhood and looks for their education. Unfortunately they seem ungrateful and allow me to tell you Dr. Kopan, You should not believe what you hear, read or tell you.

Concerning ex Bishop Nikiphoros, I am sorry to write you that he should have behaved & acted differently. Now, as I told him, he has to show penitence and ask the Patriarch's forgiveness. If you would like to help him, please write His Beatitude and ask him to have mercy on him.

With thanks for your donation & wishes I reciprocate them & warmly wish you a very Merry Xmas, Joyful Holidays and Blessed New Year.

With hugs in our Incarnate Lord

+ O M. K. Βασιλειος