



CONFERENCE ON WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM

COME HOLY SPIRIT - HEAL AND RECONCILE

Called in Christ to be reconciling and healing communities

Athens (Greece), 9-16 May 2005

Meditation 10 May

Embargoed against delivery

Document No **2**

MEDITATION GIVEN BY BISHOP RIAH ABU AL-ASSAL

Diocese of Jerusalem and the Holy Land

Anglican Church

Opening Common Prayer

Tuesday 10 May 2005

“All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself,
and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.” 2 Cor.5.18

We bring you greetings of Salam from the Mother-City of our faith, from Jerusalem. These greetings come from all who have been baptised in the name of Jesus, most of whom are Arab Palestinian Christians, who have kept the faith for close on 2000 years.

We carry with us the symbol of our salvation, our redemption: a cross made of olive wood, from olive trees uprooted in and around the City of Bethlehem, where Christ was born.

We come reaching out to you to join your hands and hearts with ours so that inasmuch as God, in Christ, reconciled us to himself, we might be enabled to be reconciled one with another, while also recognising that God entrusted us with this wonderful ministry of reconciliation.

What is this ministry but the work of breaking down the walls that separate, walls of mistrust and hostility wherever they exist. “To reconcile is to bring into right relationship, to re-order our relationships.” The mind of Christ is able to embrace all. I pray that we will claim what is at the heart of our mission.

As God entrusted this ministry to us, and not to the politicians, let us pray that we may prove trustworthy. And not only that but also totally committed, positively involved, not avoiding situations of conflict but becoming bridges of and for peace.

This, like being peacemakers, does not set aside the struggle against evil and all the causes for hostilities, nor does this set aside the search for justice. In struggling against the powers of evil, we need always to resort to the weapons of God, and in searching for justice, our objective needs to be healing the wounds, bringing hope in hopeless situations and sharing life even in the midst of death.