



E.Kt. Rev'd. Niall Johnston

Deputy Great Almoner  
Provincial Prelate

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023

*My dear Brother Knight,*

You will be only too aware of the terrible scenes of violence and destruction that we are witnessing in the Holy Land, particularly around the Gaza Strip.

My heart breaks for the countless dead, injured and missing, especially the children, and I ask you to pray for all those who are affected by the violence and those who have fled their homes, Jews, Muslims, Christians and all those who live in the Holy Land.

For those who have accompanied me to Jerusalem, our good friend V.Rev'd Canon Richard Sewell, the Dean of St George's College, sends his best wishes and, on behalf of the Archbishop of Jerusalem and the Middle East, has sent me a special prayer that I have attached to this letter and I would encourage you to use it and to share it widely.

Many of you have contacted me to ask about the situation of the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group and I was in touch with the CEO on Saturday and have spoken with the team in Jerusalem earlier this morning.

I am relieved to say that, as I write, the staff are all safe and the hospital in Gaza has suffered only minor damage although the situation there is changing rapidly. In Jerusalem and the West Bank, patients continue to be cared for and normal services carry on although a number of staff, including doctors and nurses have been refused permission to cross the Separation Barrier and so the main hospital is operating at a reduced capacity.

As we pray for all those in the Holy Land at this time, please remember especially the fantastic staff of the Eye Hospital Group and those whom they serve. On your behalf, I have assured them that, across our Province and the wider Order, we hold them in our prayers.

Yours in Christ and in the Bonds of the Order,

*Niall*

Mob: 07808 724575

Email: [masonic@nialljohnston.org](mailto:masonic@nialljohnston.org)