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ASIA/SYRIA - Archbishop Nassar: "In Damascus, Palestinian refugees forced exodus, just like the Holy Family"

Damascus (Agenzia Fides) – During the Christmas period "it is not uncommon these days to see Palestinian families wandering the streets of Damascus. Parents carrying their children, followed by older children carrying parcels and bags. Tears to the eyes of women, anger in the eyes of men, the sadness of children's eyes." In a message sent to Fides Agency, the Archbishop of Damascus of the Maronites, Samir Nassar, outlines the double tragedy of the Palestinian refugees overwhelmed by the Syrian civil war, comparing their painful exodus to that lived by Jesus, Mary and Joseph. "Thousands of Palestinians - says the Archbishop – have fled their camps where they have been living since 1948." Some try to reach Lebanon. But for the majority, the second exodus soon turns into the anxious search for any emergency refuge in urban centers, starting from Damascus.
In the desolation of the moment, Archbishop Nassar describes with deep gratitude the arrival of the new Patriarch Greek Orthodox, Ioann Yazigi X in the Syrian capital: "At a time when everyone is leaving the city, the new Greek Orthodox Patriarch Yohanna X arrives in Damascus on December 20, the feast of St. Ignatius of Antioch, whose he is successor ... The sounds of bells met with the busters of bombs." In the midst of such contradictory signs, the Patriarch - Archbishop Nassar notes "hurries to be in the middle of his people living in turmoil for the last 22 months confirming their faith, their mission, their identity and their testimony, inviting on the eve of Christmas for forgiveness, reconciliation and dialogue as only instruments of peace in a country torn by violence." (GV) (Agenzia Fides 08/01/2013)

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