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ASIA/HOLY LAND – The Christians of Jerusalem write to the Nuncio: we want to see Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew

Jerusalem (Agenzia Fides) - "On the eve of the visit to Jerusalem by His Holiness Pope Francis, and his meeting with His Holiness Bartholomew I, we seek our legitimate right to greet our spiritual leaders". This is what is said in a letter sent by a group of Christians in Jerusalem to Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto, Apostolic Delegate in Jerusalem and Palestine, just days before the Pope's pilgrimage to the Holy City. The initiative was launched by some Catholics of the Latin parish of St. Saviour in the Old Town. "But our considerations are the expectations of all the Christians in Jerusalem" refers to Fides Agency Hania Kassissieh, Orthodox Christian married to a Catholic of the Latin Rite, who helped to write the letter.
"We" reads the letter, "are aware that the Holy Mass will be held in Bethlehem for the Palestinian faithful, yet we believe that as the indigenous Jerusalem population and descendants of the first Christians, meeting our fathers will be hindered in Jerusalem. We see attempts by the Israeli occupation to impose a curfew on the streets including the Christian Quarter during the visit. The curfew is yet another attempt by the occupying power to deny our existence. It is unacceptable for the Pope to pass along the narrow streets of the Christian quarter, yet find devoid of any signs of life and the faithful. As local church communities", reads the message "we are the hosts of the Holy Fathers in our city. We do not want to be excluded from a historic religious event, and want to offer our good will and cooperation towards the visit's success". (GV) (Agenzia Fides 15/05/2014)

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