



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stony point, NY (February 16, 2015) The Coptic Orthodox Diocese of New York and New England Issues a Statement on the Martyrdom of 21 Copts in Libya: His Grace Bishop David, the Clergy, the deacons and the Laity of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of New York and New England express their deep grief for the shedding of the innocent blood of the Twenty-One Egyptian Christians at the hands of militant extremists, and Extends an Invitation to a Service Honoring their Lives on Thursday, February 19, 2015 from 7-9 PM at Archangel Michael & St. Mina Coptic Church located at 4095 Amboy Road, Staten Island, NY 10308

The Coptic Orthodox Diocese of New York and New England grieves the heinous execution of 21 young men in Libya at the hands of the terrorist group that has called itself Islamic State. The brutality of this mass murder of innocents, combined with the inhumane way in which this group has sought to sensationalize its message of hate to the world, has struck the global community at its core, and drawn expressions of outrage and solidarity from the four corners of the earth.

Nevertheless, as a Church, we follow in the example of these martyrs, who are now removed from the violence of this world and reunited with their Heavenly Father. Just as they remained true to their faith in the face of such barbarity, and invoked the name of our Lord Jesus even until their last breaths, we also cling to our beloved Father during this time of mourning, in the knowledge that, through His love and grace, we are empowered to overcome any evil.

We pray that the Lord reposes the souls of Milad Makeen Zaky, Abanub Ayad Atiya, Maged Solaiman Shehata, Yusuf Shukry Yunan, Kirolos Shokry Fawzy, Bishoy Astafanus Kamel, Somaily Astafanus Kamel, Malak Ibrahim Sinweet, Tawadros Yusuf Tawadros, Girgis Milad Sinweet, Mina Fayez Aziz, Hany Abdelmesih Salib, Bishoy Adel Khalaf, Samuel Alham Wilson, Ezat Bishri Naseef, Loqa Nagaty, Gaber Munir Adly, Esam Badir Samir, Malak Faraq Abram, Sameh Salah Faruz and the martyr yet to be identified from Awr village, and gives comfort to the families and loved ones of all who have been victimized by the acts of savagery and cowardice that this group has perpetrated in Libya, Iraq, Syria and other areas.

We pray also for the protection of our beloved Church, our beloved homeland, and the brave Egyptian leaders and military personnel who are taking actions to protect their people throughout the world. As a Diocese and a community, we remain united in prayer for an end to all violence, and in gratitude to our Lord who, through His love, has endowed us with a spirit of triumph over evil.

About the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of New York & New England

The Coptic Orthodox Church is the largest Christian Church in Egypt and the Middle East. It is one of the oldest Christian churches in the world; the Coptic Orthodox Church began in approximately 55 AD when Saint Mark the Apostle arrived in Egypt. Today there are an estimated over 12 million Copts worldwide. The Coptic Orthodox diocese of NY & NE was established in November 16, 2014. The Diocese is presided over by His Grace Bishop David.