



Jerusalem on 8 June 2022

**Statement of Condemnation from Bishop Sani-Ibrahim Azar Regarding  
Tragedy at the St. Francis Catholic Church in Owo, Nigeria**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan & the Holy Land (ELCJHL) is profoundly saddened by the recent shooting in Owo, Nigeria, and extends our deepest sympathies to the loved ones of the fifty victims of this tragedy and to our siblings in Christ at the St. Francis Catholic Church in Owo.

The ELCJHL strongly condemns all violence, particularly in holy places, and fully believes in the right to worship safely. It is especially disheartening and formidable that not even a place of worship can be considered safe from this violent hatred. When we pray, sing, and read the word of God as a community, we enter a space of reflection, trust, and emotional vulnerability. To prey on this vulnerability goes against every principle of consideration for human life and the rights that must accompany it.

From Jerusalem, we pray to the Almighty God to give the comfort of resurrection to the grieving families, to heal those who were injured and to give the politicians the necessary wisdom and strength to bring about just peace and stability in their home countries and throughout the whole world.

We share in our Christian belief that God is with you during these devastating times. Psalm 34:18: *"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and is with those who are crushed in spirit."*

Your Brother in Christ,

*+ Azar*

**+Bishop Sani-Ibrahim Azar**

**The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land**

