

**ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY
OF THE CONGREGATION FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES**
Clementine Hall

21 November 2013

[Link](#)

[...] Great concern arises from the condition of life faced by Christians who in many parts of the Middle East suffer gravely as a consequence of the current tensions and conflicts underway. Tears still flow in Syria, Iraq, Egypt and other areas of the Holy Land. The Bishop of Rome will not rest while there are still men and women of any religion, whose dignity is wounded and who are deprived of their basic needs for survival, robbed of their future, or forced to live as fugitives and refugees. Today, we join the Pastors of the Oriental Churches, in appealing that the right of everyone to a dignified life and to freely profess one's own faith be respected. We must not resign ourselves to thinking of a Middle East without Christians, who for 2,000 years have confessed the name of Jesus, and have been fully integrated as citizens into the social, cultural and religious life of the nations to which they belong.[...]