

# The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

# NEWS RELEASE



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### **Three U.S. Cardinals Issue Statement in Support of Maronite Bishops**

*Three United States Cardinals, who serve as Honorary Chairs of the Religious Advisory Board for [In Defense of Christians](#), express fraternal solidarity*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the three (3) U.S. Cardinals who lead the Roman Catholic Archdioceses of Washington, D.C., New York and Galveston-Houston join with their Middle Eastern counterparts in a statement of support for the Maronite Bishops and Archbishop Moussa el-Hage, O.A.M., Maronite Archbishop of the Archeparchy of Haifa and the Holy Land, and Patriarchal Exarch of Jerusalem, Palestine and Jordan. Archbishop El-Hage was recently arrested, detained and interrogated by Lebanese authorities upon returning from his Episcopal See in Haifa.

Washington Cardinal Wilton Gregory, Galveston-Houston Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, and New York Cardinal Timothy Dolan currently serve as Honorary Chairs of the Religious Advisory Board for the organization, [In Defense of Christians](#). *In Defense of Christians* is the nonpartisan human rights and advocacy organization advocating for a Middle East in which the rights of every person are protected and respected regardless of religious creed, and in which ancient and diverse Christian and other religious minority communities of the Middle East thrive peacefully in their native lands.

Today, the three Cardinals, as the *In Defense of Christians* Religious Advisory Board Honorary Chairs, issue the following statement in support of the Maronite Bishops:

*“We join with His Eminence Béchara Boutros Cardinal Raï, the Maronite people, and others in the international community; we stand in fraternal solidarity with Archbishop Moussa el-Hage, O.A.M., Maronite Archbishop of the Archeparchy of Haifa and the Holy Land, and Patriarchal Exarch of Jerusalem, Palestine and Jordan.*

*Archbishop El-Hage is the spiritual shepherd of many peoples and he travels between those lands regularly. His recent arrest, detention and interrogation by Lebanese authorities upon his return from his Episcopal See in Haifa -- as well as the confiscation of medical and financial aid intended for the needy in Lebanon - - are most disturbing.*

*We applaud Cardinal Rai and the Maronite Synod for their firm support of Archbishop El-Hage. In the interest of regional stability and human rights, we further support calls for positive action to protect Church leadership, their charitable work, and lay Christians in the Middle East.”*

His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo  
Archbishop of The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan  
Archbishop of The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York

His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory  
Archbishop of The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

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*In Defense of Christians is a nonprofit and nonpartisan human rights and advocacy organization based in Washington D.C. In Defense of Christians advocates for the protection and preservation of Christians and Christianity in the Middle East.*

Learn more at [www.indefenseofchristians.org](http://www.indefenseofchristians.org)

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