



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN INTERNATIONAL

Aleppo – Message Thomas Heine-Geldern ACN press@acn-intl.org 22.04.2021

Dear Bishop Boutros Kassis, the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchal Delegate to Aleppo,
Dear Archimandrite Mousa Al-Khasi, the Greek Orthodox Vicar in Aleppo.

Dear Heads of the Churches in Aleppo,

Today marks the 8th 'anniversary' of the abduction of the Syrian Orthodox Bishop Youhanna Ibrahim and the Greek Orthodox Bishop Boulos Yazji, abducted on 22 April 2013.

During these eight long years the pontifical foundation Aid to the Church in Need has prayed and encouraged its benefactors around the world to come together and to implore in faith for their prompt liberation. We cannot forget them, as St. Paul tell us in his letter to the people of Corinth: “If (one) part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honoured, all the parts share its joy” (1 Corinthians 12:26)

ACN wants to join your prayers and commemoration ceremony today in St. Ephrem's Syrian Orthodox Cathedral in Aleppo: *Let us pray for Bishop Yohanna Ibrahim, the head of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Aleppo, and for Archbishop Boulos Yaziji, the head of the Greek Orthodox Church. Let us pray that they may be at peace, wherever they may be and in whatever circumstances.*

These two shepherds accompanied their flock in times of difficulty and set an example of faithful dedication. In his apostolic letter *Maiorem Hac Dilectionem*, Pope Francis wrote: “Worthy of special consideration and honour are those Christians who, following more than closely the footsteps and teachings of the Lord Jesus, have voluntarily and freely offered their life for others and persevered with this determination”.

Eight years after their abduction ACN never tires of asking for their life, liberation and peace. We know: the God of Life, the Lord of the History is and remains with them.

May God bless all of you, present in the Cathedral, but also the whole Christian Community in Syria.

United in prayers,

Thomas Heine-Geldern, executive president of ACN International