

# Holy Wisdom

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Peace: Showing that Others Matter!

VOLUME XXVII

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Publication of the Syrian Orthodox Church in America on United Nations Affairs. In fulfilling the UN Mission of SOCA, both Orthodoxy and Ecumenism are involved. SOCA is an NGO associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information. This publication is disseminated to the entire membership of the Church throughout the world on a quarterly basis. Please bring this information to the attention of your parishioners and all those under your care. The Earth is holy and a manifestation of God. Pray for peace and the UN.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: It is necessary through the collaboration of NGOs to raise awareness among communities as we promote peace. If you will, the need for community consciousness is a way we can connect parties and others. It is important at this time that all parties begin to realize that they are a part of a larger picture, that they are in it together and they have common concerns. If there is a conflict all parties have contributed to the conflict and they have the power to come together to develop a non-violent intervention to result into a resolution. It is time for us as people to acknowledge that there is something more that exceed our own individual positions and needs. The United Nations, religious institutions and NGO can be an avenue to promote community consciousness to encourage global consciousness, clear and realistic decisions as they promote non-violent solutions to conflicts!

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## Our Work at the United Nations

UN Item: United Nations Alt. Rep Joseph Cannizzo meets with H.E. Ms. Mirgul Moldoisaeva  
Permanent Representative of Kyrgyz Republic




Date: January 11, 2016

### Summary

The meeting was held to discuss new and innovative ways to leverage existing resources put forth by the UNESCO to improve global sports and physical education initiatives. This past fall, the Republic of Kyrgyz hosted its 2nd World Nomad Games. World Nomad Games. These games had more than 50 countries participate in approximately 23 games. Only the second time, since the very first games in 2014 have these games been seen all together on the world stage. This was a great way for the Kyrgyz Republic to reinforce the value of Sport and Physical Education all while staying in theme with customary games that have been played in this region for generation.

[Interfaith Harmony Week Event - Mon. Feb 6, 1:15pm-2:45pm](#)



The Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations (CRNGO@UN) presents

**Interfaith Harmony: Embracing the Other**


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HONORING THE 2017 WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK

Celebrating the principles of tolerance and respect for the other that are deeply rooted in the world's major religions

Please RSVP [HERE](#)

A dynamic program combining wisdom from many faith traditions with music and personal engagement.



Monday, February 6, 2017  
1:15pm - 2:45pm  
Tillman Chapel, Church Center for the United Nations  
777 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017  
(@ the corner of 1st Ave. and 44th St.)

## United Nations Headquarters - New York, January 19, 2017

Department of Public Information Inaugural Briefing, Planning for 2017: TOGETHER - Respect, Safety and Dignity for All

“Our duty to the people we serve is to work together to move from fear of each other to trust in each other. Diversity in all its forms is an asset, not a threat.” Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

Maher Nasser, Director, Outreach Division, Department of Public Information, moderated the morning session which featured Damian Cardona, Director Strategic Communications Division, DPI; Daniel Shepard, Public Information Officer, DPI; and Kim Quarles, Representative, NGO/DPI Executive Committee, World Jurist Association. Mr. Nasser talked about the future: for survival we need to “build” the future.

“Discrimination and marginalization characterizes the experience of many refugees and migrants around the world...To address this, I have decided to initiate a global campaign led by the United Nations to counter xenophobia.” In Safety and Dignity – Report of the Secretary General

The TOGETHER campaign is a global initiative that aims to change negative perceptions and attitudes towards refugees and migrants, and strengthen the social contact between host countries and communities, and refugees and migrants. All 193 Member States of the United Nations unanimously welcomed the TOGETHER initiative and committed to implementing it when they met at the Summit for Refugees and Migrants on September 19, 2016. TOGETHER will run until the second half of 2018, when member states are expected to adopt two Global Compacts on Refugees and Migrants. TOGETHER is a UN System-wide initiative led by the Secretary General, which will be implemented in partnership with Member States, the private sector and civil society. TOGETHER will speak to communities hosting refugees and migrants, as well as people concerned that refugees and migrants

may bring physical and economic insecurity to their lives. TOGETHER will engage and mobilize global citizens to show support for refugees and migrants. UN/DPI website [www.together.un.org](http://www.together.un.org) will be the interactive hub for finding out information and joining the initiative. Attended and reported by Dr. A. M. Riccitelli, SOCA Representative to UN/DPI

Religion and Gender Equality: SDG 5

## RELIGION & GENDER EQUALITY: SDG 5

### A CSW61 PARALLEL EVENT



**VENUE:**

The Salvation Army Auditorium  
221 East 52nd Street  
Manhattan, New York City

**DATE:**

16 March 2017, Thursday

**TIME:**

12:30 PM to 2:00 PM

For information about CRNGO@UN,  
please visit our website:  
<https://rngos.wordpress.com/>

The **Committee of Religious NGOs at the U.N. (CRNGO@UN)** is pleased to invite you to a **SUBSTANTIVE BRIEFING** featuring:

**PANELISTS:**

**Ms. Suzy Ismail**

Founder and Head Communication  
Counselor at Cornerstone

**Rev. Dionne P. Boissière, MDiv.**

Chaplain of the Church Center for the  
United Nations

**MODERATOR:**

**Ms. Ivy Gabbert**

Soka Gakkai International

Please [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)  
to ensure security access into the  
building. For questions about this event,  
please contact [religiousngo@gmail.com](mailto:religiousngo@gmail.com)

March 1, 2017



Father Verra, MSOC and Father McWeeney, Ecumenical Officer, Archdiocese of New York.





(left to right ) Archbishop Kawak,SOC, Father Verra, MSOC, Archbishop Titus, MSOC, H.H., Patriarch of Antioch, SOC, Chorbishop DeLuca, MSOC, Father McBride, MSOC.



Archbishop Demetrios, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese





Patriarch SOC , Ignatius Aphrem II and Chorbishop DeLuca, presenting chalice in behalf of Fathers Verra and McBride, MSOC.



Priest Serbian Orthodox Church, Archbishop Hilarion, Orthodox Church in America, Archbishop Demetrios, Greek Orthodox.

March 8, 2017



*Republic of  
Kazakhstan*



*Kyrgyz  
Republic*



*Republic of  
Tajikistan*



*Turkmenistan*



*Republic of  
Uzbekistan*



Flags of the "Stans" with current Ambassadors

Tajikistan, Uzbekekstan, Turkministan, Kyrgystan, Kazakstan (not in order)





Dr. Andrea DeLuca and Ambassador Moldoisaeva (Kyrgyzstan)



Ambassador DeLuca and Ambassador Moldoisaeva (Kyrgyzstan)

In 1992, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) collapsed. Soon the former republics sought their independence and accession as a member state of the United Nations. Those celebrating their 25th Anniversary are Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakstan, Turkministan, and Kazakstan.

Shortly after 1992, Dr. Anthony DeLuca offered his services gratis to the new republic and Kyrgyzstan Ambassador to the United Nations. He was appointed as adviser. Fully understanding this responsibility to the new independent state, Dr. DeLuca pursued studies in diplomacy, international relations and law at Princeton, Georgetown, Eastern Mennonite and James Mason Universities as well as completing a significant number of courses through UNITAR. While at Georgetown, he assisted at the Kyrgyzstan Embassy in Washington, D.C. He serves on Committee Six (Legal) of the General Assembly. In 2004, he was given the title of Honorary Ambassador by the government of the Kyrgyz Republic and in 2015 was invested with the chapin robe for distinguished service.

## Feb 21st Monthly CRNGO meeting

By Jin Chacko



Associate of SOCA and connected with the UN



On February 21st, I attended a monthly thematic business meeting of the CRNGO. The meeting was moderated and led by Rev. Levi Bautista, President of the religious CRNGO. The meeting was discussed on the topic of Religion, Reconciliation and Forgiveness focusing on the struggles of Indigenous Peoples and what repentance requires and what forgiveness demands.

Rev. Bautista had recently traveled to Norway to attend the hundred year anniversary of the Sami people congress meeting. The anniversary is celebrated annually on February 6th in Norway. The Sami people are an indigenous tribe that originated from the Scandinavian countries such as Norway, Finland and Sweden. They are the only ones that can kill reindeer in Norway which they use for food and the fur they use for clothing. Rev. Bautista had mentioned that the Seneca Native tribe has a treaty with a lot of European countries they have there very own passport which they show when they travel to nations such as France and it's accepted by the French government.

A topic was discussed about Manifest Destiny In the 19th century, it was a belief in the United States that settlers were destined to expand across North America but it had serious consequences for Native Americans, since continental expansion implicitly meant the occupation and annexation of Native American land sometimes to expand slavery. This ultimately led to confrontations and wars with several groups of native peoples through the Indian removal act. The United States continued the European practice of recognizing only limited land rights of indigenous peoples. The U.S. government sought to expand into the west through the purchase of Native American land in treaties. Only the Federal Government could purchase Indian lands and this was done through treaties with tribal leaders. Whether a tribe actually had a decision-making structure capable of making a treaty was a controversial issue. A current issue we see today that is going in the world is the Dakota Access Pipeline that many indigenous peoples are protesting against. The US government has allowed drilling in the sacred lands of the indigenous peoples in which they believe in animism a sacredness of their ancestral lands.

The meeting ended with a discussion about the negative side effects of buying imported quinoa. The appetite of countries such as ours for this grain has pushed up prices to such an extent that poorer people in Peru and Bolivia, for whom it was once a nourishing staple food, can no longer afford to eat it. The idea that worldwide demand for quinoa is causing undue harm where it's produced is an oversimplification at best. At worst, discouraging demand for quinoa could end up hurting producers rather than helping them. The UN has declared 2013 the International Year of Quinoa, saying it has the potential to advance food security around the globe and prevent malnutrition.

## UN Interfaith Harmony Meeting

By Jin Chacko

Associate of SOCA and connected with the UN



On February 6th, I attended an Interfaith Harmony meeting embracing the other honoring world interfaith harmony week. A welcome speech and intro was given by Rev. Dionne Boissiere Chaplain of the Church Center for the UN. She had mentioned that often times when we do this work it's difficult to work together. United Nations alliance has helped to do this work of peace so that many opportunities can come together.

A reflections speech was given by the first speaker Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, a high representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations had mentioned the alliance is a platform for interrelations dialogue. He mentioned that we have achieved sustainable goals and we have a long way to go to eliminate hatred. Alliance strongly believes in the religious beliefs and differences. Last month UNASOC had a spread no hate meeting in Brussels. There were a hundred participants one of the topics that was discussed was the role of media and hate speeches against migrants and refugees. We need to promote dialogue between religion and cultures and promote religious tolerance. In a religious dialogue discussion, religion provides a unique platform the question was asked how has ones indigenous spirituality been looked inferior we have to ask each of us to embrace families and culture. It is more important that we learn to live in tolerance and learn to accept one another.

The second reflections speech was given by His Eminence Dr. Agshin Mehdiyev, Ambassador and permanent observer Organization for Islamic Cooperation to the United Nations. He talked about that there is a division that spreads hatred. We need to empower to embrace others and have mutual respect and understanding. Followers of different faiths and religious practices are misusing religious beliefs in a negative stern. There is a need to promote interreligious dialogue to raise awareness to humanity together. The European Union, Canada and USA had a forum and spoke about the discrimination against Islam. Religions are for peace and many international organizations are involved to promote it.



Participants of the event were entertained by music played by a Native American flute player and got to see a young girl perform a Chinese Dunhuang style dance. Prayers from the Islamic traditions and the Lord's Prayer from the Anglican book of common prayers were recited by different individuals representing their faith. The event ended with a short meditation with a group song and the final reflections were given by Rev. Dionne Boissiere.

2016 Newman Civic Fellows Announced

Campus Compact has announced the 218 students chosen to receive the 2016 Newman Civic Fellows Award.

This award honors the late Frank Newman, one of Campus Compact's founders and a tireless advocate for the civic engagement of higher education.

"We are fortunate to have the opportunity to celebrate such an extraordinary group of students," said Campus Compact president Andrew Seligsohn. "We are seeing a resurgence in student interest in acting to create lasting social change, and this year's Newman Civic Fellows exemplify that commitment."

In the spirit of Dr. Newman's leadership, Campus Compact member presidents and chancellors were encouraged to nominate undergraduate or graduate students who are proven leaders with both the motivation and ability to make substantial contributions toward public problem solving for this special recognition.

Those chosen to receive this honor will have also taken action in pursuit of long-term positive social change.

[Click here for a complete list of the 2016 Newman Civic Fellows.](#)

"My family taught me the value of engaging in and giving back to my community in order to be able to live in a society where everyone has a voice," said Cassandra Santos, a student at Greenfield Community College. "This work allows me to help others while giving back to the GCC community that has provided me with so many opportunities."

Campus Compact 2016 Newman Civic Fellows will represent their higher education institution in a national group of student leaders. These students will receive an award certificate and an invitation to join the Newman Civic Fellows online network. They will also be featured prominently on the Campus Compact national website and, in many cases, invited to participate in state-specific activities.

"For me, service work is crucial because I believe in supporting those in our community who have the least resources and political voice," said Christianie DePina, a sophomore at Stonehill College. "Service is both a responsibility and a great joy."

Campus Compact is grateful to the KPMG Foundation and Newman's Own Foundation for their support of the 2016 Newman Civic Fellows Award.

Source: <http://compact.org/resource-posts/2016-newman-civic-fellows-announced/>

## January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017

SOCA NGO Rep Joseph Cannizzo hosted a Jacket Drive at his local martial art school in Staten Island, New York. This Jacket Drive collected winter coats from members, friends and family which were then sent to children and teen agers in Aleppo, Syria. Many kids in Syria are unable to keep warm during the Winter and can fall victim to conditions like hypothermia. After these jackets were collected, they were delivered to a Brooklyn Mosque which has arranged a monthly delivery of charitable items from groups in New York to Aleppo, Syria.

In addition to collecting and sending winter coats to kids in Syria, Joe partnered with Soles4Souls. They provide winter coats for people in need within the continental United States. For every 10 people who



checked into Joseph's school using social media, he provided a coat to someone in need via an online platform named Sweat Angels. Soles4Souls collects and ships gently used winter coats to those that need it the most. There are 50 million Americans living in poverty today and many of them will need a warm coat this winter. Over 85% of all clothing in the United States ends up in landfills instead of being recycled. By sharing gently used clothing with people in need, Soles4Souls not only serves others, but also helps protect the environment.



**SOLES4SOULS**  
WEARING OUT POVERTY

Proud member of **Causesly**

*Thanks*

We helped provide  
**45,460**  
coats for people  
in need.

#givewarmth

**JANUARY RECAP:**  
FEATURED NON-PROFIT // SOLES4SOULS

### February 23, 2017

Through SOCA NGO Rep Joseph Cannizzo's partnership with Guiding Eyes & Sweat Angels, Joseph Cannizzo and his school helped the blind by caring for their trusted guide dogs.



For every 3 people who checked into his martial art school during the month of February Joseph provided a bowl of food for a guide dog in training.

Guiding Eyes for the Blind trains guide dogs and partners them with people who are blind or visually impaired. Once a dog is trained, Guiding Eyes pairs their exceptionally trained dogs to people who are seeking increased freedom and independence, so that together, they can experience all kinds of life adventures.

Proud member of **Causely**

*Thanks*

We helped provide

**74,857**

bowls of food for guide dogs in training

#GuidingEyes

**FEBRUARY MID-MONTH RECAP:**  
FEATURED NON-PROFIT // GUIDING EYES FOR THE BLIND

March 15, 2017

This March, SOCA NGO Rep Joseph Cannizzo took an aggressive stand to help stop hunger. 66 million primary school-age children attend classes hungry across the developing world. No child should ever go hungry! Through his partnership with feedOne, every 2 social media check-ins at Joseph's martial art school enabled him to provide 1 meal to a child in need.

feedONE Children's Feeding Initiative serves over 146,676 children. The goal of feedONE is to see lives changed as they promote healthy children and communities that are free from poverty and hunger. Many of the children enrolled in this initiative have their only meal of the day at school. FeedONE feeds and monitors the health and growth of children each day in El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Ethiopia, South Africa, Guatemala, and Tanzania.

Proud member of **Causely**

*feed* **ONE**

*Thanks*

We helped provide

**251,743**

meals for  
children in need

[#meals4kids](#)



**MARCH RECAP:**  
FEATURED NON-PROFIT // FEEDONE

## Inside Look at Major UN Actions & Events

### Ambassador Nikki Haley Delivers Remarks to the UN Security Council on Conflicts in Europe

Ambassador Nikki Haley, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, delivered remarks this afternoon at a United Nations Security Council briefing on the maintenance of international peace and security and conflicts in Europe.

“It can be tempting to take Europe’s peace and security for granted. Europe is a continent of strong, stable democracies...But Europe faces serious challenges – most acutely, Russia’s attempts to destabilize Ukraine and infringe upon Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.”



Ambassador Haley continued, “The United States is committed to the institutions that help keep Europe safe. We will not waver in our support for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which is the strongest alliance in history. We are working to make NATO even more effective – deepening cooperation among existing members and keeping the door open to new allies who fulfill the requirements for membership, while seeking to increase burden sharing.”

**Transcript of remarks:** <https://usun.state.gov/remarks/7683>

## Religious News from Around the World

### Forum on Christians in the Middle East

Earlier this month, Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, Diocesan Legate and Ecumenical Director, and the Very Rev. Fr. Aren Jebejian took part in a “Forum on the Persecuted Church,” organized by the ecumenical organization Christian Churches Together. The forum was held at the First Presbyterian Church in Newark, NJ.

Participants discussed the persecution of Christians in the Middle East and ways in which churches in the United States might become more involved in assisting and advocating for the cause. They also heard from His Holiness Patriarch Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, on the threats facing Christians in the Middle East and on the work of the Syriac Orthodox Church in the region.

Archbishop Aykazian delivered formal remarks on the persecution of Middle Eastern Christians, offering observations from his recent trip to Iraq. “Christian minorities in the region are often overlooked, marginalized, or encouraged to depart from the Middle East entirely,” he said. “Their voices must be enhanced, and magnified, by voices of others throughout the world—Christians, Jews, and Muslims alike—who stand with them in the cause of justice and peace.”

### Other Related News

#### St. Joseph's Day, 26 Mar 17

History of the Saint Joseph’s Table

In the Middle Ages there was a terrible drought in Sicily it hadn’t rained for a very long time and all the crops had failed and the people were starving. They prayed to their Patron Saint, St. Joseph and promised that if it would rain they would make a great feast in his honor; and the rains came, the famine was over and the people in all the towns got together to create this great Feast, since it was St. Joseph’s Feast Day, March 19, and it fell during Lent, traditionally there is no meat served, all the Feast was made from vegetables and fish and the fruits of the season.

When the Sicilian people emigrated to the United States they brought this Feast with them and wherever Sicilian peoples settled they created the St. Joseph Tables. The most famous ones were in Brooklyn, Hoboken, NJ, Louisville, Ky, Chicago but the biggest and largest of them were in New Orleans.

We, here at the Scoglitti Society, are people from a town in Sicily in the Province of Ragusa called Scoglitti we have been making this “Tavola di San Giuseppe” as it is called in Italian since the 1940’s. We are a non-profit Italian Society that uses the monies from the Table and other charitable events during the year to help our Society members and Italians in general throughout our area, providing scholarships, funds for other notable charities and support some charities in our hometown of Scoglitti in Sicily.





In this picture from l-r are: President of the Society Vincent Fede, Councilman Franco Caramagna, Fr. George McBride, Society Chaplain, and State Senator Sandi Balasteri.

Over 200 people attended this year's Table and Mass along with dignitaries.

by Rev. George McBride, D.D.

Assistant to NGO, Syrian Orthodox Church in America, United Nations

bringing message of peace from the UN.



Father George McBride at altar.





Donations of food for feast.



Father McBride celebrating St. Joseph Day Mass.





Holy Family ( Mary, Jesus, Joseph)

### [Rage at abandonment by the state as Egypt's Christians dig graves after bombing](#)

TANTA, Egypt (Reuters) – Egyptian Christians wept with rage on Monday as they recovered the bodies of loved ones killed in twin church bombings, furious at a state they believe will no longer protect them from neighbors bent on their murder.

Forty-four people were killed in the attacks on Palm Sunday, a joyous festival a week before Easter when Christians celebrate the triumphant arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem.

At Tanta University hospital morgue, desperate families were trying to get inside to search for loved ones. Security forces held them back to stop overcrowding, enraging the crowd.

“Why are you preventing us from entering now? Where were you when all this happened?” shouted one woman looking for a relative. Some appeared in total shock, their faces pale and unmoving. Others wept openly as women wailed in mourning.

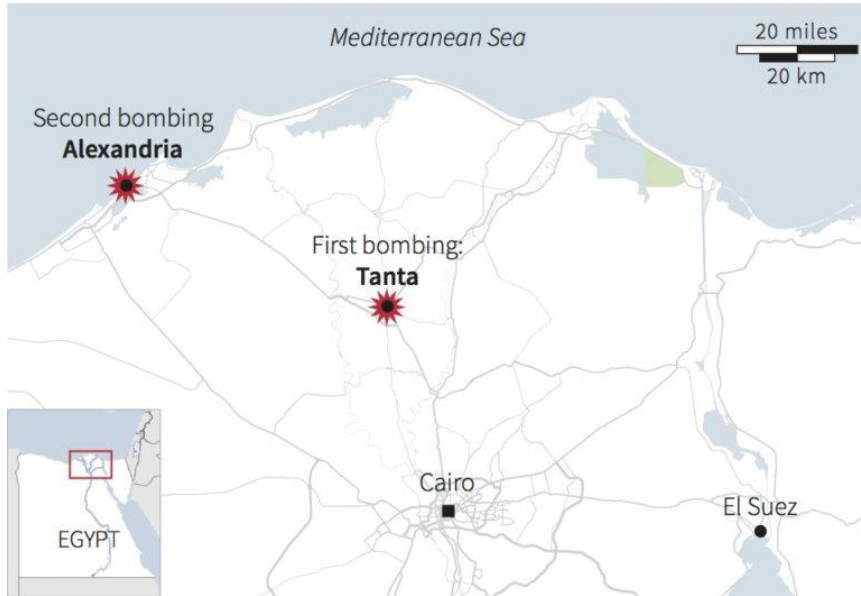
A middle-aged man who had just stepped out of the morgue after seeing his dead brother stood with his face buried in his hands weeping. “You sons of bitches,” he shouted as his family tried to calm him.

Hours after the attack, Kerols Paheg and other young Coptic Christians were already digging graves in the basement of the devastated St. George Church in the northern Nile Delta city, where the first of the bombs exploded, killing 27 and wounding around 80.

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## Bombings of Egyptian Coptic churches

The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the bomb attacks at a church north of Cairo and the cathedral of the Coptic Pope in Alexandria on Palm Sunday, prompting anger and fear among Christians and leading to troop deployments and the declaration of a three-month state of emergency.



Source: Reuters

J. Wang, 10/04/2017

REUTERS

### Bombings of Egyptian Coptic churches

He showed photos on his phone of the carnage: human remains, blood and shattered glass strewn across the floor of the church on one of the holiest days in the Christian calendar. “Today was supposed to be a day of festivity,” he said.

From now on, Christians will have to protect their churches themselves, rather than rely on the police, “because what’s happening is too much. It’s unacceptable,” he said.

### Sectarian bloodshed

Copts make up about 10 percent of Egypt’s 92 million people, the largest Christian minority in the Middle East. Yet despite a presence dating back to the Roman era, the community feels increasingly ostracized and has repeatedly been targeted in attacks, including by Islamic State, which claimed responsibility for Sunday’s bombings.

Hours after the blast in Tanta, the second bomb blew up at the entrance to Saint Mark’s Cathedral in Alexandria, the historic seat of the Coptic pope, killing 17 people including three police officers and wounding 48.

Pope Tawadros had been leading the mass at the time of the blast but escaped unharmed, the Interior Ministry said.

Reuters video report on the Coptic church bombings

Though Islamic State has long waged a low-level war against soldiers and police in Egypt's Sinai peninsula, its stepped up assault on Christian civilians in the mainland could turn a provincial insurgency into wider sectarian conflict.

On Sunday, the group warned of more attacks and boasted of the number of people killed by three church bombings it says it has carried out since December: 80.

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has promised to protect the Christian minority as part of a campaign against extremism. But Copts in Tanta said security was almost non-existent on Sunday despite repeated warnings in recent weeks.

A senior police official told Reuters a bomb was discovered and disabled near the Tanta church about a week ago.

"That should have been an alarm or a warning that this place is targeted," said 38-year-old Amira Maher, who was waiting for her injured brother at a nearby hospital.

"Especially Palm Sunday, a day when many people gather, more than any other time in the year... I don't know how this happened," she said.

Mulling about the charred church interior, as if trying to take in the enormity of the attack, several members of the community expressed dismay at what they said was lax security.

Tanta priest Tawfik Kobeish expressed perhaps the most common of all emotions among the grieving: disbelief.

"We were not expecting people who live with us in the same country, people with whom we've shared love and friendships, and with whom we're familiar, to do these things," said Kobeish, the sound of ambulances bearing the wounded echoing outside.

Source: <http://religionnews.com/2017/04/10/rage-at-abandonment-by-the-state-as-egypts-christians-dig-graves-after-bombing/>

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