



COPTIC ORTHODOX  
PATRIARCHATE



DIOCESE OF MISSISSAUGA,  
Vancouver and Western Canada



July 27, 2024

### **Strong Condemnation of the Sacrilegious Depiction of the Last Supper at the Olympics**

The Olympics have long been a celebration of human excellence, unity, and respect for cultural and religious diversity. This global event is meant to exemplify the highest ideals of human achievement, cooperation, and harmony.

However, we are deeply grieved and outraged by the recent sacrilegious depiction of the Last Supper by the Olympics Committee at the Opening Ceremony in Paris, France on Friday evening, which featured trans individuals portrayed as Christ and the disciples. This portrayal is a blatant disrespect to one of the most sacred and historically significant events in Christian faith. Any false depiction of the Last Supper, regardless of the identities involved, is offensive and undermines the spiritual significance of this sacred event. The Last Supper, as described in **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**, is a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice and a profound moment of spiritual reflection and reverence:

*“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.”*

Freedom of speech and artistic expression must be exercised with respect and sensitivity towards others. As **Galatians 5:13** reminds us, *“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”*

This act is not only an affront to Christians but also a violation of the principles of respect and unity that the Olympics are supposed to uphold. No community should feel marginalized and attacked during an event meant to celebrate global harmony and excellence. As **Romans 12:10** exhorts, *“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.”* This spirit of mutual respect and honor should guide our actions and words.

We call upon all faith communities and civil society to unite in condemning this sacrilege and to protect and respect each individual's right to observe their religion without attack. We demand that the Olympics Committee recognize the gravity of their actions and come to see the wrong in their portrayal, seeking repentance for the pain and offense caused.

At the same time, we must pray for those who have committed this act, asking God to lead them to repentance. In **Ephesians 4:15**, we are called to *“speak the truth in love.”* Let us pray fervently for these individuals, that God may open their eyes to the error of their ways and bring them to repentance. As Jesus said in **Matthew 5:44**, *“But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”*



COPTIC ORTHODOX  
PATRIARCHATE




DIOCESE OF MISSISSAUGA,  
Vancouver and Western Canada



Finally, we urge our community to find their voices, as Moses did in the Old Testament, to speak up and demand the protection of our religious values and beliefs. **Exodus 4:10-12** reminds us of God's assurance to Moses: *“Then Moses said to the Lord, ‘O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.’ So the Lord said to him, ‘Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.’”* Let us be courageous and steadfast in our advocacy for respect and sanctity.

We have faith that God will prevail, and that good will overcome evil as Christ overcame the devil and this world. As **John 16:33** assures us, *“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”* Let us stand firm in this truth, knowing that ultimately, God’s righteousness will shine through.

  
Bishop Mina,  
Bishop of the Diocese of  
Mississauga, Vancouver and Western Canada