



**Statement from the Archdiocese of Toronto concerning the destruction of the building of St. George Coptic Orthodox Church in Surrey, B.C**

Toronto July 21,2021

Peace to you and grace.

The clergy and congregations of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Coptic Orthodox Churches prayerfully stand in solidarity with the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Mississauga, Vancouver, and Western Canada and H.G. Bishop Mina as we grieve the destruction of St. George Coptic Orthodox Church in Surrey, B.C. The amassing images of this tragedy as the church burnt down broke our hearts. It was only a few days prior to the complete destruction of the church building that we witnessed an arsonist attempting to burn the building. As the investigation of this tragic loss continues, we encourage the authorities to take swift action against anyone who is implicated in destroying this place of worship.

Our comfort came as we saw the congregation of St. George Coptic Orthodox Church of Surrey praising God and promising to remain strong even in the midst of this crisis. We pray together, as one body in Christ, for every community across Canada to remain safe from any harm.