

# Endorsements

“I have been impressed with history’s paradox—the birthplace of the Prince of Peace and the three great monotheistic religions is also a center of human suffering and conflict. *Bethlehem Besieged* is a wonderful book by a man of rare insight who fully understands those familiar lines, ‘Yet in the dark street shineth the everlasting light. . . .’”

— George McGovern, former U.S. Senator and President of the Middle East Policy Council

“A Palestinian narrative of suffering and sacrifice that is infused with hope—this is a story that has cried out to be told.”

— James J. Zogby, President of the Arab American Institute, Washington, D. C.

“Once again ‘the hopes and fears of all the years’ seem to focus on Bethlehem. Its painful history, stubborn hopefulness, and indefatigable spirit shine through the pages of this remarkable but deeply troubling book. It is required reading for anyone who wants to understand the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its importance for the whole world.”

— Harvey G. Cox, Hollis Professor of Divinity, Harvard Divinity School

“This is a heartrending account of what has happened to ordinary people...and how they have lived and survived under siege by Israeli soldiers in Bethlehem, the birthplace of the Prince of Peace. It should shake us out of complicity with the injustice being visited on ordinary people. I hope it will do that for many...in the West who have perhaps too easily accepted the stereotype of violent Palestinians. Peace without justice for the Palestinians is impossible. Israel will be safe and secure only when justice happens for the Palestinians.”

— Desmond Tutu, former Archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa

“A pastor’s home under military bombardment, his young daughters dodging machine-gun fire, elderly neighbors bleeding to death because ambulances are denied access—these are the painful and poignant images of war hidden behind the headlines of the Israeli siege of Bethlehem. Mitri Raheb’s personal account replaces faceless statistics with traumatic stories of innocent persons caught in the crossfire of political hatred. With faith and hope, he challenges us to overcome our sins of indifference and insensitivity to the plight of the

Palestinians and calls us to work for new relationships among Jews, Muslims, and Christians.”

— Donald E. Messer, Henry White Warren Professor of Practical Theology and President Emeritus, Iliff School of Theology, Denver, Colorado

“A powerful, first-person account...that brings the story alive, the fear as well as the hope....Within the glimpses of life during these heart-stopping days, we see the seeds of hope for reconciliation that lie in faith, and in simple, helpful gestures that cross the lines of division. *Bethlehem Besieged* is a reminder that peace is always possible.”

— Rev. Kent Winters-Hazelton, President, The Witherspoon Society, Presbyterian Church (USA)

“*Bethlehem Besieged* allows the readers to be a part of the community under siege in this most famous town....It also tells powerful stories of healing and of rebuilding a sense of community in a place of deep brokenness. It is a story we can all learn from.”

— Bernice Powell Jackson, Executive Minister, Justice and Witness Ministries, United Church of Christ

“Once again, Rev. Mitri Raheb renders wise, poignant, and complex reflections about the plight of the Palestinians. This book is the living testimony of an Arab Palestinian Christian leader who has been helping to nurture...real promise of hope for a just peace in the Holy Land. *Bethlehem Besieged* is a book you must read....”

— Rateb Y. Rabie, President, Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF)

“*Bethlehem Besieged* is first a document of horror and hope about the plight and possibilities that confront the Palestinian people. But it is also more. As a Jew I see this story as a warning to the Jewish people that we are becoming almost everything we loathed about our oppressors. For me, Mitri Raheb’s gentle anger is a prophetic call to Jews in Israel and beyond to stop and reverse course before it is too late....A gripping real-life story....”

— Marc H. Ellis, Professor of American and Jewish Studies, Baylor University

“Mitri Raheb’s book *Bethlehem Besieged* gives the readers a deep, although short, look into the lives of the Palestinian people. It shows the human

dimensions of the Palestinian people, who are often dehumanized by the media....This book is a message of peace.”

— Mohammad Darawshe, Director of Public Relations, Givat Haviva Jewish Arab Center of Peace and Co-Founder of OneVoice MidEast Peace Initiative

“This is not a resource to be picked up and read. Instead, it is an experience to be lived and shared with others! These are stories of health and hope, of Good Fridays and Easters, of worries, wars, and woes, with a few ‘wows’ thrown in. Mitri Raheb is a ‘divine irritant’ who must be heard and experienced....”

— Rich Bimler, President, Wheat Ridge Ministries, Itasca, Illinois

“Mitri Raheb’s personal and moving chronicle of Bethlehem’s siege reveals a little-known and rarely acknowledged human narrative of the Palestinian people’s quest for dignity and freedom, even in the midst of devastation and pain. The struggle to endure and rebuild despite the Israeli occupation’s persistent brutal assaults is a tribute to the unvanquished spirit of the ‘ordinary’ Palestinian. It is part of Raheb’s passionate message to hold on to the spirit of resurrection and his insistence on seeing a beacon of hope where it is easy to see only darkness and despair.”

— Hanan Ashrawi Palestinian Rights Activist, Founder, Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizen’s Rights Sydney Peace Prize recipient