



Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate  
Of Elmenia & Abo-Korkas



## Clarification About the Problem of St. George Church in Mansheiat El-Zaafarana

We kept silence since the transgressions that happened today, Friday the eleventh of January 2019, at noon. But after news were spread all over the social media, we decided to publish the truth here: The village of El-Zaafarana lies five kilometers to the south east of the city of El-Fekreya in the governorate of Elmenia. In this village, the patriarchate owns a small place where prayers are held since a certain period, and in this village reside about one thousand Coptic people. On the seventh of January 2019, and few hours after the Liturgy of the Nativity feast was celebrated, a group of extremists entered the place and the police officers took them out of it while two of the priests and few people from the congregation remained inside the place. Today, more than one thousand extremists held a demonstration against the church repeating slogans that humiliate the church and incite people against her in the presence of the security guards who asked them to calm down promising them to fulfil their desire of kicking those who are inside the church out of it and closing the place. Indeed, the two priests went out with those who were with them while the extremists were shouting with humiliating shouts, cheers of victory and gloating and women's ululating.

Therefore, worship was stopped in this place which was closed. Although this is not the first place of worship to be closed, yet the common repeated thing each time is yielding to the extremists' desire who impose their will whenever they want as if they have the upper hand. Thus, the satisfaction usually comes on the expense of the Copts (the easiest way).

This happens few days after the positive declarations made by the High Emam Elsheikh Ahmed Eltayeb about the churches and the attitude of Islam towards them, also after President Elssissi affirmed in every occasion the right of every citizen to practice his own worship, and after the great efforts made by His Holiness Pope Tawadros to keep national unity.

Till now, since the transgressions happened today at 1.30 pm, the security guards took no action with the transgressors and instigators although this happened in their presence, a reluctant reaction which in turn encourages others to repeat the same behavior as long as there is no punishment.

We also would like to mention that St. Rewis church in Elmansoura district in Bandar Elmenia was also closed on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December and we kept silence at that time.

May the Lord protect Egypt from every evil.

Patriarchate of Elmenia and Abo-Korkas  
Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019, 10.00 pm