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Vigil 4 Peace remembers 27 young lives lost in Egypt

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The Coptic Orthodox Church is hosting a Vigil 4 Peace on November 4 in Federation Square to commemorate the young lives lost on October 9 in Egypt. Under the guidance and direction of His Grace Bishop Suriel, Head of the Diocese of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions, the Vigil 4 Peace will flood Federation Square in a sea of white symbolising hope for the future of Christians around the globe.

With parallel memorials in Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Canberra, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, the vigils will incorporate hymns, prayers and symbolic gestures to help Christians in the region show their solidarity for brethren abroad.

On October 9, at least 27 young people were killed during a peaceful protest against the persecution and the burning of the Coptic Churches. “The passive protestors, many of whom were carrying crosses, were attacked by the military and police forces - those who are meant to be the law enforcers,” said Bishop Suriel. “Stones and glass were thrown from surrounding bridges and buildings; tanks were driven through the crowds and ran down Coptic Orthodox protestors. This carnage that occurred in Egypt on October 9 is only one example of the persecution Christians are facing around the world, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa.”

This united event will pray for peace and justice alongside federal and state government MPs, heads of churches and World Vision.

What: Prayer vigil against persecution of Egyptian Christians

Where: Federation Square, Melbourne

When 5.30 to 7.30pm, November 4 2011

To symbolise the peace and purity of the vigil, the congregation will be dressed in white. Flower buds will be handed out and used in the service to represent the youth who were killed before they had the chance to bloom. Supporters will show their solidarity for the event by tweeting with the hashtag #4peace.

About Coptic Orthodox Church

One of the oldest churches in the world, the Coptic Orthodox Church began in 55AD when Saint Mark the apostle arrived in Egypt. Today there are 12 million Copts worldwide, with the word ‘Copt’ basically meaning ‘Egyptian’, as derived from the Greek word ‘Aigyptos’. In the past 40 years, the Coptic Orthodox Church has spread all over the world. His Holiness Pope Shenouda III has established more than 200 churches abroad since his enthronement in 1971. These churches are in Africa, Europe, USA, Latin America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific and Asia.

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