AN URGENT APPEAL TO THE STS. JAMES BROTHERHOOD: PRESERVE THE COWS' GARDEN AND ACT TRANSPARENTLY

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Category: Opinions

From: "Ara N. Araz" <ara@edrcorp.net>
Date: September 23, 2025 at 4:04:14PM PDT
Subject: An Urgent Appeal to the Sts. James Brotherhood: Preserve the Cows' Garden and Act Transparently
Reply-To: "Ara N. Araz" <ara@edrcorp.net>

Dear Friends,

Jerusalem's Armenian Quarter is at a critical turning point. The Cows' Garden is not merely land—it is a sacred trust and cornerstone of our identity. The 2021 lease to Xana Gardens was a grave mistake that violated the Brotherhood's constitution and betrayed the community's trust.

Now, leaked elements of a proposed settlement and addendum risk compounding that error—further undermining legality and threatening our 1,700-year presence in the Old City. A "7,200 instead of 11,500" policy will not save the Cows' Garden; it will deepen the danger.

We need your voice—today. The Sts. James Brotherhood is scheduled to convene tomorrow morning in Jerusalem.

Please **contact members of the Sts. James Brotherhood** and urge them to:

1. **Act with full transparency and accountability** in their deliberations;
2. **Include the community's legal team** (local and via Zoom) and representatives so members are fully informed of the legal arguments and a viable alternative path;
3. **Uphold their sacred duty** by ensuring the **complete preservation of the Cows' Garden**, consistent with the Brotherhood's bylaws and the land's legal status.

Why this matters: Decisions made now will determine whether the Armenian presence in Jerusalem endures intact. The Brotherhood can safeguard our centuries-old institution by choosing openness, courage, and responsible stewardship.

How you can help (right now):

- **Email** or call the Brotherhood's members and clergy you know personally. **For a list of members and contact information, click here.**
- **Be respectful, brief, and clear** about the three requests above.
- **Share this appeal** with friends and family; amplify across church, community groups, and social channels.

Together we can protect what generations entrusted to us.

Thank you for your time and attention.

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