



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND

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Aid to the Church in Need announces emergency campaign to help the Church face crisis in Lebanon

Christians have been directly affected by the attacks in many regions of Lebanon, and the Church is struggling to help all those who have had to flee their homes for safer regions.

The pontifical charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) has announced an international emergency campaign to raise at least 1 million Euro (1.6 million AUD) to assist the Catholic Church in Lebanon, as it strives to cope with the tremendous challenges caused by Israeli airstrikes and ground assault.

The attacks, which are aimed at eliminating the threat of Hezbollah strikes on northern Israel, have caused a wave of more than one million internally displaced people in various parts of the country, with the regions of Beirut, Mount Lebanon and northern Lebanon suffering the brunt of the difficulties caused by the influx of people fleeing the south.

In all these locations the Church has sprung into action, opening its facilities, including parish halls and retreat houses, to all those fleeing the most dangerous areas. These facilities are available to all, regardless of religious or ethnic affiliation, as the Church fulfills its Biblical mandate to help those in need.

ACN has already reached out to the seven dioceses and five religious congregations that are most directly involved in relief efforts, and is now trying to raise the money required to address their needs, which in most cases include food, sanitary products, mattresses and covers, medication, and other essentials.

Many of the Christians in southern Lebanon are farmers, but the instability has prevented them from harvesting their olive and tobacco crops, leaving them with no income. Catholic schools, most of which have opened for online classes, are likely to also require assistance as parents in the regions most affected by the war will find themselves unable to work and will struggle to pay tuition.

Although the crisis is affecting the whole country, the worst areas are in the border regions between Israel and Lebanon. Christians form a significant part of the population in this area, and are being directly affected, despite the fact that they have played no role in terrorist strikes against Israel. Thousands of Christians have been forced to flee their homes, which in most cases leads to family separation, as the mother and children seek shelter in Church facilities or houses of relatives in safer areas, and the father remains in the family house to prevent property theft, despite enormous risks.

“Lebanon has been going from crisis to crisis over the past decades, suffering from political instability, an influx of refugees from regional wars, an economic meltdown, the Beirut Port explosion which levelled large parts of the city, and now these attacks from Israel,” said Regina Lynch, the executive president of ACN International.

“Despite all this, the Church has continued to serve the people, providing material and spiritual support at every turn. ACN has stood by our project partners in Lebanon, and we will not abandon them now, as they face another hour of need. We are confident that our friends and benefactors will understand the urgency of supporting the Church in Lebanon to carry out God’s work,” she added.

This emergency appeal comes after ACN Australia launched an urgent plea for donations to meet a surge in aid requests. The pontifical foundation, which provides critical support to persecuted, poor and suffering Christians, has received a record 7,689 applications for pastoral support over the past year.

Bernard Toutounji, National Director of ACN Australia and New Zealand, has urged the community to contribute whatever they can to support fellow Christians where the faith is critically at stake.

“For 77 years, we have relied on God’s providence, which has been manifested through the kindness of our donors. It is essential that we keep our promises to the suffering Church. God’s people are crying out to us. We can only present that cry to you.”

To donate to Christians in Lebanon, visit www.aidtochurch.org/lebanon or call 1800 101 201.

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ABOUT

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is the only international Catholic charity dedicated to the service of suffering Christians wherever they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need. Founded in 1947, ACN is a pontifical foundation and provides vital aid for pastoral projects, religious education, and emergency relief in areas affected by conflict and poverty. ACN operates solely on benefactor donations, with no funding from Church or State.

www.aidtochurch.org