



MARONITE EPARCHY OF AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND AND OCEANIA

Media Release

Together in Prayer, Together for Peace

Sydney, 10 April 2026 - At this sacred time in our liturgical year, as the Church continues to proclaim the glory of the Resurrection, our hearts are deeply troubled by the suffering of the people of Lebanon. A nation already burdened by hardship now faces a new wave of devastation, enduring a war not of its own making.

On Wednesday night, more than 160 bombs fell on Lebanon within the space of ten minutes, unleashing destruction of a magnitude that no human conscience can ignore. At least 300 people were killed and more than one thousand wounded in that single assault.

While a tentative ceasefire has been announced in parts of the Middle East, Lebanon has been excluded. Instead of relief, the strikes have intensified. Innocent civilians continue to suffer the consequences of conflicts imposed upon their land by foreign powers. As a Church, we cannot remain silent in the face of such injustice.

The Gospel tells us that *“Jesus wept,”* and today, we weep with Him. We grieve for every life lost, every home destroyed, and every child who falls asleep in fear. Yet our sorrow must lead to action. Christian love is never passive. As Scripture reminds us, *“If these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”* We must raise our voices for peace, for justice, and for the protection of human dignity.

I call upon the Australian Government to use every diplomatic and humanitarian avenue available to advocate for an immediate cessation of violence, to condemn these ongoing attacks, to support the recent decision of the Lebanese Government affirming the exclusive authority of the Lebanese Armed Forces to hold weapons. I further urge the upholding of Lebanon’s sovereignty and stability. The Lebanese people deserve to live in safety, free from the shadow of foreign powers and the tragedies of war.

In this Season of the Resurrection, we proclaim that Christ has conquered death not by the sword, but by the Cross and the miracle of the empty tomb. His victory assures us

that no darkness is final, no suffering is beyond redemption, and no nation is forgotten by God.

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV has also lifted his voice in prayer for peace in Lebanon and the wider Middle East, calling for a vigil of prayer this Saturday, 11 April.

His Eminence and Beatitude Mar Bechara Boutros Cardinal Al-Rahi has echoed this call, inviting the Maronite faithful throughout the world to unite in prayer for peace.

In our Eparchy, as this year is dedicated to prayer for peace, I invite all the Maronite faithful to join in this call, praying for peace in their homes and in their churches. I also ask all parishes of the Eparchy to offer their Divine Liturgies for the intention of peace in Lebanon, the Middle East, and the world this coming weekend, from the **Vigil of Saturday 11 April to Sunday 12 April 2026**, “together in prayer, together for peace.”

May the Risen Lord, who stood among His disciples and said, “*Peace be with you,*” speak that same peace into Lebanon, the Middle East, and our world. And may Our Lady, Queen of Peace, intercede for all who suffer, that hearts may be turned away from violence and opened to reconciliation.

Christ is Risen. He is truly Risen.