



T: +41 71 227 6040
F: +41 71 227 6041
ccee@ccee.eu
www.ccee.eu
Gallusstrasse 24
CH-9000 ST. GALLEN (SCHWEIZ)

Appeal to Europe for Lebanon

We address Europe by giving voice to the Bishops of the Continent. As the Presidency of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, we join our brothers and sisters of faith and humanity in Lebanon.

Let us make our own the requests of the Assembly of Patriarchs and Catholic Bishops of that noble but distressed country. Theirs are the words not only of the Christian community, but of an entire people suffering hard through fear and uncertainty for the future: a situation in which no one - peoples or individuals - should be living in the world. In his heartfelt messages, the Holy Father Francis also expressed his paternal closeness and called on the attention from the powerful of the earth and to support Lebanon, so that it can continue its vocation of being a land of encounter, coexistence and pluralism.

The history of Lebanon is one that is well known, and that none can forget: one of dignity and culture, of welcome and solidarity, even today, towards so many suffering people coming from Syria and Palestine. It is a story of freedom, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence under the banner of fundamental rights.

Why so much pain? Why the risk of disintegration and an implosion that would be detrimental to the area and a shame to humanity? Will history have to add another dark page? No one should want that. Certainly, the Lebanese people do not want that! Nothing is lost if we are willing, and act with timely honesty. Nothing is impossible. Everything is in the hands of men with the help of the merciful and just God. He sees the works of men and understands the intentions of hearts.

For these reasons, we appeal to the conscience of nations and their leaders, so that the world does not forget the tragedy and does not turn a deaf ear to the cries of the poor and suffering. Therefore, to re-establish justice, recognise individual, collective and national identity, respect the religious and civil values of their Tradition, support the recovery of the economy and the reconstruction of a social fabric made up through dialogue and the collaborative coexistence of religions, cultures and social diversities. All of this without external constraints.

In this perspective of reconstruction, the Church is present with the Gospel message and with its educational, health and social institutions. They are known to all and available for the common good. The support, therefore, also of these operational presences represents the concrete interest in reinforcing the social fabric and glimpsing a better future. It is well known that the future of a country is a good not only for itself but for humanity. This is especially true for Lebanon and its contribution to a plural, tolerant and diverse Middle East.

We join in the Holy Father's heartfelt appeal and pray to the Lord of peace, that the little ones may be comforted and helped, and that those in charge may be enlightened to be wise and honest before God, this suffering and history.

Saint Gallen, 31 May 2021

H.Em. Card. Angelo Bagnasco
Archbishop Emeritus of Genoa
CCEE President

H.Em. Card. Vincent Nichols
Archbishop of Westminster
President of the Bishop's Conference of
England and Wales
CCEE Vice-President

H.E. Msgr Stanisław Gądecki
Archbishop of Poznań
President of the Polish Bishop's Conference
CCEE Vice-President