



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Strong support for Lebanon appeal

Australians have generously provided more than \$250,000 to an appeal to support the people of Lebanon, following the Israeli–Hezbollah conflict.

The Lebanon Appeal was launched in November 2024 in response to a heartfelt plea for assistance by Maronite Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay OLM and Melkite Bishop Robert Rabbat.

The appeal was a joint project of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference with Catholic Religious Australia, Caritas Australia and Caritas Lebanon.

Bishops Tarabay and Rabbat reported on the result of the appeal to the May plenary of the ACBC in Sydney.

During the crisis, there were 886,000 internally displaced people and 3700 people killed, with an estimated \$US8.5 billion damage across the country, the bishops reported.

An estimated 1360 individuals benefited from cash assistance as well as food and essentials, healthcare services, mental health support and safe shelter.

“I no longer had to skip meals to buy my pills. This support was life-saving,” said a 74-year-old man who received support.

An elderly couple said: “The food aid helped us stand on our own two feet again. It made us feel seen and respected.”

“Your compassionate response to the sufferings of churches and people in Lebanon and the Middle East helped to restore hope and dignity to those most in need,” Bishop Tarabay said.

Bishop Rabbat added: “Thanks be to God. We are very grateful and touched by the appeal, because through the help and generosity of the Australian donors we have hope. Believe me, this gesture is much appreciated and will not be forgotten by those Christians who trace their roots back to the first days of Christianity.”