

Offering hope in times of trial

“The explosion felt like an atomic bomb with red smoke everywhere and huge damage”

ACN project partner Father Raymond Abdo.

Lebanon’s capital Beirut is still reeling from the explosion that killed 200 and injured 6,000 when 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate ignited in a warehouse.

Aid to the Church in Need responded quickly to the blast – promising Church partners in the country more than £225,000 for emergency aid.

This included food packages for 5,000 families in Beirut’s Christian-majority district of Achrafieh, which Father Samer Nassif told us was “completely devastated”.

Father Samer said: “In one second, more damage to the Christian quarter of Beirut was done than throughout the long years of the civil war. We have to build it again from the ground up.”

ACN’s help in the wake of the explosion is the latest in a line of aid packages offering hope to a country facing overwhelming challenges.

Support from the charity for Lebanon has included ongoing projects for Christian refugees from Syria, aid for families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and assistance for destitute girls being helped by the Good Shepherd Sisters.

Speaking about the blast, Sister Hanan of the Good Shepherd Sisters said: “I survived 15 years of civil war and yet I could not imagine such a horrible thing happening to our people.

“More than ever, the people are in need of help. We are so grateful for the prayers and support of our dear friends at ACN.” ☕



Sister Hanan Yousef



Father Samer Nassif

Responding to the Apocalypse



St Saviour's Church after the blast



Damage to buildings in Beirut

Thousands of young Christians have been delivering emergency help to those suffering in Beirut following the explosion.

Monsignor Toufic Bou-Hadir of the Maronite Church – an Eastern Catholic Church in full communion with Rome – spoke about the young people's "amazing" response to "an apocalypse". He told ACN how teams of young volunteers had been delivering emergency aid including food,

medicine and blankets.

Thanks to your love, ACN has been able to provide food baskets to 5,000 families in the area worst hit by the blast that left 300,000 people homeless and destroyed at least 10 churches.

With the country's economic crisis and the coronavirus, Lebanon has been dependent on international aid – please help us continue to support our Church partners ministering to those still suffering. 🙏



The Church distributes food

Helping the heralds of the Gospel rebuild



Image: Télé Lumière - Noursat

ACN has pledged to help Christian broadcaster Télé Lumière after its studios were devastated by last month's explosion. Our support for Télé Lumière – which broadcasts the Good News throughout the Middle East – is part of our commitment to provide aid following the blast. 🙏



Télé Lumière's studios after the blast

Helping Lebanon for the long term

Aid to the Church in Need's support in response to the devastating explosion in the capital was only the latest help from the charity, supporting a country that faces many challenges including caring for more than 1 million refugees who fled the war in neighbouring Syria. ACN help for Lebanon has included:

- Emergency aid for families affected by the COVID-19 crisis
 - Assistance for young girls being cared for by the Good Shepherd Sisters
 - Formation of seminarians
 - Church-run Summer Camps for refugee children
 - Ongoing support for Christian refugees in the Beqaa Valley
- The ACN-backed Saint John the Merciful Table – a restaurant feeding refugees



Distributing meals to refugees and poor families under pandemic conditions at the St John the Merciful Table

and the poor in the Beqaa Valley – had to close because of coronavirus restrictions. But as Melkite Archbishop John Darwish told us: "Saint John the Merciful Table has never stopped providing free hot meals to the needy people. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we directly put in place a plan that allows the people to get their meals without risking their safety." The Church introduced a socially distanced take-away service. Archbishop Darwish added the number being fed is "increasing daily and [we are] now providing more than 1,400 meals every day." 🙏



Archbishop Darwish