

# Art therapy for traumatised children

ACN is helping children with disabilities devastated by the war in Lebanon through an arts and crafts trauma counselling centre run by Sisters.

At the height of the conflict a few months ago, the UN reported that more than 400,000 children had been displaced within just three weeks.

The Basilian Choueirite Sisters responded by asking ACN to support their initiative to establish a programme for

arts and crafts for use as a therapeutic tool for traumatised children with problems such as hearing impairment or learning difficulties.

Sister Patrice Moussallem, the Sisters' superior and director of their initiative reaching out to children with disabilities, told the charity: "Your support will help us transform the lives of children in Lebanon, providing them with a sanctuary where they can heal, create and thrive.



Christian children drawing in Lebanon.

**"By investing in the emotional and creative development of Lebanese traumatised displaced children and especially those with special needs, we can provide them with the tools to overcome their traumatic experiences and build a brighter future."** ☩

# Support for suffering elderly people



Thank-you Mass for ACN at the Saint Vincent de Paul home for the elderly in Aleppo.

Elderly people in Syria suffering extreme poverty and isolation are receiving life-saving medicine thanks to you, the friends of ACN.

Many older citizens are often too frail to join their families in making new lives for themselves in distant countries, and instead stay behind in their hometowns and villages.

**Many are simply too poor to pay for their medication and so ACN has teamed up with the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary to provide for their health needs.**

The Sisters are providing ACN-funded medicines to elderly people in 13 towns and villages outside the coastal city of Tartus.

Stressing how sky-rocketing inflation and increasing poverty are forcing people to go without basic necessities, Sr Marie Rose Al-Barkil told ACN: "After reviewing the situation of many elderly people in our Christian parishes, we decided to increase the number of elderly beneficiaries so that we can provide them with medicine."

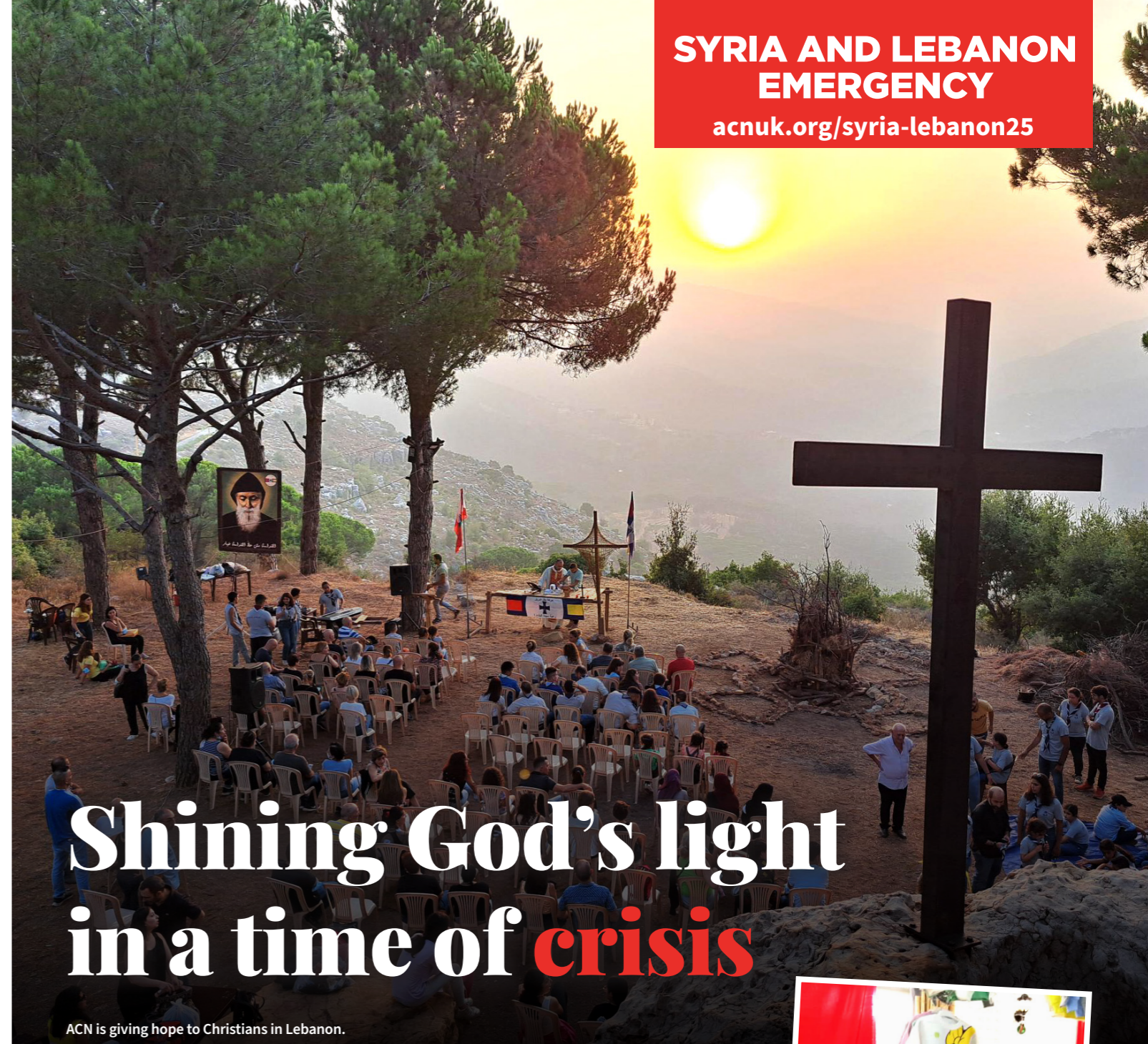


Elderly people at a Saint Vincent de Paul home in Aleppo.

She added: "Out of our desire to continue alleviating and healing pain, we renew our request so that we take care of our elderly and preserve their dignity in the last stages of their lives." ☩

# SYRIA AND LEBANON EMERGENCY

[acnuk.org/syria-lebanon25](http://acnuk.org/syria-lebanon25)



# Shining God's light in a time of crisis

ACN is giving hope to Christians in Lebanon.

**Christians in Syria are turning to Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), desperate for help, amid widespread fear and huge uncertainty following a sudden regime change.**

**The Church in Lebanon is also in dire need of emergency aid as the region is yet again devastated by war, which has caused a harrowing displacement crisis.**

Saint Ephrem, Syria's most famous saint, said Christ "knows that we have no other help but him alone".

Your love can bring Christ's help and consolation to his followers in desperate need and crippling despair in Syria and Lebanon.

ACN's ongoing assistance in Syria and Lebanon includes:

- Emergency aid such as food, medicine, clothing and other basic necessities for displaced Christians
- Support for Christian schools and universities
- Trauma counselling, summer camps and other pastoral activities for children distressed by the horrors of war
- Formation support for seminarians and religious novices
- Solar panels for Church buildings to reduce soaring energy costs

ACN's intrepid Syria project partner Sister Annie Demerjian said: "Our people



Sister Annie with a child helped by ACN in Syria.

**are so tired. They have suffered so much for so long. I want to thank each and every one at ACN for all you are doing."** ☩

 Aid to the Church in Need  
ACN UNITED KINGDOM

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Orthodox clergy with displaced Christians helped by ACN in Lebanon.



Displaced children receiving help in Lebanon.



ACN is helping to brighten the future of Lebanese children.

## Emergency aid for displaced people

**One in four people in Lebanon were displaced from their homes in the two months after airstrikes began targeting Hezbollah strongholds last September.**

ACN rushed to the help of the many Christian families who were either forced to flee their homes themselves or chose to open their doors to welcome those displaced from other parts of the country.

ACN has also supported dioceses and religious congregations providing shelter and other assistance to those in great need.

**Maronite Catholic Bishop Maroun Ammar of Sidon expressed his heartfelt gratitude for “all the efforts you are making to support the Lebanese, especially in these very difficult and exceptional times.**

“We pray to God to protect his people and to open the hearts of benefactors.”

ACN is in close contact with project partners to monitor the unfolding crisis and evaluate what further help is needed. ✚



A refugee child praying to Saint Rafqa in Lebanon.

## Fostering the future of the Church through education

**Dozens of Church-run schools and universities, and thousands of Christian pupils and students have benefited from ACN’s support in Syria and Lebanon.**

The families of many of these young people would not be able to afford to pay for their education – including school fees, books and stationery – and are therefore reliant on ACN’s help.

Catechists and other teachers at Christian schools have also received

support to help meet their most basic needs.

**Bishop Moses Alkhasi of Larissa, Syria expressed his gratitude to ACN, highlighting that “educating our children is the way to secure the future” of Christianity in the region amid a “stifling economic crisis”.**

Assistance is especially needed due to the uncertainty following the sudden regime change in Syria and other ongoing crises in the region. ✚

## Gifts for destitute Christian children

**“As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace...” (1 Peter 4:10)**

For children whose parents struggle even to put food on the table, receiving any gift at all is a truly special occasion.

ACN has helped Sister Annie Demerjian and other Sisters in Syria brighten dark times and put smiles on the faces of many thousands of deprived children.

ACN-funded items distributed by the Sisters have included warm winter clothes as Christmas gifts, which the children’s parents couldn’t afford.

Sister Annie said: “Many families here can only dream of new clothes.

“To buy a pair of trousers, a shirt and shoes these days in Syria you need two months of minimum wage.”

Sister Raymonda Saada, who has distributed gifts in Lebanon, said: “In my prayers I never forget ACN’s benefactors.

**“We are absolutely sure that Jesus Christ is blessing you, wherever you are; and with every present, with every smile of a child, you are receiving a special grace.**

“We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.” ✚



Sister Annie is bringing joy to children’s lives with assistance from ACN.



Pupils full of hope at a Christian school in Aleppo.

