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ASIA/SYRIA - Archbishop Nassar: signs of hope in our Lent spent in war

Damascus (Agenzia Fides) - A new Lent spent in war "will mean pain and violence", but "from this abyss of suffering" one can also see "miraculous signs of light and hope". This is described by the Maronite Archbishop of Damascus, Samir Nassar, in a letter sent to Fides Agency. "New streams of refugees" says Archbishop Nassar" come to our parishes exceeding our resources. Our social and pastoral action is primarily focused on support of the affected families". The number of refugees and displaced people – says the Maronite Archbishop - has reached the staggering figure of 12 million people, of whom 3 million in neighboring Countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey). Millions of students without school. While the embargo "chokes everyone, especially the children, the poor, the hospitals and medical sector".
The Bishops and priests – confides Archbishop Nassar - sometimes do not know how to comfort Christians who "share the same suffering of their fellow citizens" and represent now "a little flock inhabited by fear". Yet, in this situation – says the Maronite Archbishop - there are signs of faith and hope: "The mutual assistance and solidarity expressed spontaneously by poor families who open their doors to impoverished refugees.
There are new initiatives for dialogue and reconciliation between enemies.
A resurgence of faith strengthens our communities. The Gospel is our reference and inspiration. The faithful come to Mass, even under the threat of bombs, and devote much time to the prayer and Eucharistic Adoration" All - concluded Mgr. Nassar - of these are softened "by the gaze of Mary, Our Lady of Peace". (GV) (Agenzia Fides 14/03/2104)

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