



ASIA/IRAQ - Chaldean Patriarch Sako's Easter Message, with a thought to the elections

Baghdad (Agenzia Fides) - "I hope that the Easter celebrations, Easter of Resurrection and new life, put an end to the suffering of our people". This is the hope expressed in the Easter message issued by the Patriarch of Babylon of the Chaldeans, Louis Raphael Sako. "Despite the worrying situation in Iraq", says the Chaldean Patriarch in the message sent to Fides Agency, the celebrations of Holy Week "keep alive our Christian memory and give us a living hope. Jesus is the heart of these events, his body destroyed and then resurrected is the force that drives us to new life. Even in the darkest hours, his resurrection rises like the sun on us and on mankind".

His Beatitude Sako invites everyone to "meet in our churches and homes to celebrate, pray, give thanks, rejoice together and help one another" and to be for everyone, in every situation, "a living example in community life through our behavior, loyalty, our renunciation and our love". With this spirit - said the Patriarch - "no one is in a position to feel threatened".

The Easter message also offers the Head of the Chaldean Church an opportunity to highlight the importance of the forthcoming elections in a country still torn by sectarian violence: "We need to participate in the upcoming vote in large numbers, with a spirit of responsibility", writes Patriarch Sako, suggesting to choose "qualified and loyal people, who are committed to the good of the country and for its progress, focusing on the true values of freedom, dignity and social justice". The national elections, scheduled for April 30, will have to select the 325 members of parliament (with 5 seats reserved for Christians), called in turn to elect the President and the Prime Minister of Iraq, in compliance with the system which reserves the presidential office to a Kurd and that of Prime Minister to a Shiite. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 16/04/2014)