



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Dear brothers and sisters of many different faiths,

Mindful of the events of history, in this time painfully marked by so many situations of violence, terrorism and wars, we cannot fail to ask each and every one of you and every community of faith to join in prayer for **Lebanon**. As on the 27th of every month, each of you are asked to invite your respective communities to do this in the ways and at the times most appropriate to your own faith tradition.

The land of cedars, the cradle of an ancient and hard-working civilization, is now marred by violence and the threat of a conflict that could take on broader proportions. The real risk is of a full-blown escalation of the war that will inflame the Middle East even more.

We believe that the fate of peoples is not in the hands of warlords, but in those of the God of mercy who only has plans for peace. That is why women and men of faith have no choice but to be diligent workers at the worksite of justice and peace. Those who use violence in all its forms betray God's will and put themselves at the service of evil.

Therefore, I call on everyone to invoke God on behalf of the Lebanese people so that they do not fall victim to violence, but see that peace prevails. This is the lesson we have drawn from the "Spirit of Assisi", when on October 27, 1986, the leaders of religions gathered in the city of St. Francis, abandoned age-old contentions and oppositions, and through prayer placed themselves at the service of building peace.

**May the Lord give you peace**

Assisi, September 2024

+ Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop