

Beirut, 26 March 2026

Brothers and sisters, hello. My name is Simon Constantin; I am a member of the Prado in Lebanon and a parish priest in Beirut. In this video, I will describe the current situation in Lebanon, particularly from a human and pastoral perspective.

1 – In terms of daily life

Families are living through dark, tense times marked by insecurity, as the future remains uncertain: we do not know what will happen. Some families are afraid to send their children to school. That is why lessons are being held both online and in person. However, when there are two or three children in the same family who have to follow lessons online, connection problems often arise.

There is also the issue of childcare for children left alone at home when their parents go to work. Personally, to encourage the families in the parish, I sent them messages via WhatsApp saying: in these circumstances, it is possible to make your homes safe places; watch the news less, encourage joy and laughter, suggest activities to your children such as drawing or playing with modelling clay, tell them stories of brave people, and play them soothing music.

In another message, I told them: “You are protecting your children and making sacrifices for them. We are proud of you, we stand by you and we pray for you.”

In practical terms, people have been suffering for years from falling wages, with no solution in sight. Many say: ‘Every time we feel the country is starting to recover, we are thrown back.’

2 – On a broader level

The current situation has led to the displacement of many families from southern Lebanon and the suburbs of Beirut to the capital, Mount Lebanon and, to a lesser extent, to the north of the country. There are around one million displaced people, representing nearly a quarter of the Lebanese population.

At the patriarchal residence, located 13 km north-east of Beirut, we have taken in 44 families from the south, notably from the city of Tyre and neighbouring villages. Daily Mass, Lenten prayers and food aid are provided there.

In the same context, a new problem has arisen: the situation of the Christian villages on Lebanon’s southern border with Israel. These villages, home to a few thousand inhabitants, had until now been relatively spared. Their inhabitants had remained despite the shelling in neighbouring areas. Recently, they too have suffered human losses.

In particular, they lost their parish priest, Father Pierre El Rai, who was killed in the heart of his village by a second shell whilst he was coming to the aid of the inhabitants of a house hit by an initial strike. It is worth noting that Pope Leo referred to his witness during his speech on the day of his funeral.

In another Christian village, three young civilians also lost their lives whilst repairing internet cables. A young first-aider, a father of three, was also killed whilst carrying out his duties.

Amidst these tragedies, signs of hope remain. The Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Paolo Borgia, has visited these villages twice, accompanied by the association SOS Chrétiens, a French volunteer movement that has been working with Christians in Lebanon for over ten years. Similarly, the Bishop of Tyre has left his bishopric to settle in the border village of Rmeich, where many Christians from the region live.

In Beirut, a group of priests called ‘Church for Lebanon’, including two members of the Prado, launched an appeal for solidarity through a video shown in parishes. They collected a large quantity of food supplies, which were transported on 26 March in a convoy that took over five hours to reach the southern villages.

3 – Pastoral Activities

Pastoral activities, such as spiritual retreats and recollections for young people, adults and children, were suspended in March 2026 for security reasons. Large gatherings are not recommended. This year, the Palm Sunday procession at the Greek Catholic Archdiocese of Beirut was also cancelled.

As for Prado, the southern team, which usually met in Maghdouché near Sidon, is currently scattered. One of its members is in Tyre and cannot travel. Another priest had to leave his bombed village with his parishioners to settle in the Beirut area.

The Prado family in Lebanon — at least those who are able to travel — will gather on 9 and 10 April near Beirut. They will share their experiences and reflect on how to be a sign of hope in the midst of the current situation.

May the Lord protect not only the south, but all of Lebanon. We pray, for prayer is powerful: it can change the world, especially when it comes from the heart.

Thank you.

Father Simon CONSTANTIN

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Counsellor to the General Prado (Term 2025–2031)



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