



*Office of the Chairman*

Statement of the Chairman of the Assembly of Bishops  
On the Tragic Explosions in Beirut, Lebanon

August 6, 2020

To the Faithful Orthodox Christians of the United States of America and all people of good will:

We express our deep sorrow at the devastation created by the explosions in Beirut. We mourn for the people of Lebanon, who now face an additional challenge in this time of great crisis.

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), the official humanitarian Agency of the Assembly of Bishops, is helping alleviate the heartbreaking impact of this tragedy. After conducting rapid needs assessments, IOCC released \$150,000 in emergency funding. In addition, funds for current Lebanon programs are being adjusted, in conversation with donors, to help address the new crisis. Assistance will include hygiene parcels, the expansion of community kitchens, and assessments for building rehabilitation. Given the continuing danger posed by the COVID-19 pandemic all activities will include measures to help prevent the further spread of the virus.

In seeking to live Christ's Gospel by loving and caring for our fellow human beings in great need, we are called to respond to the needs of those who now face great loss. We mourn with those who mourn and walk together with those suffering and in need.

During the fast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, we call out to the Theotokos for guidance and ask for intercession on behalf of all those whom this tragedy has touched.

May God bless, comfort, and strengthen you all.

† Archbishop ELPIDOPHOROS of America