

Communiqué April 2012

On April 4, 2012, their Excellencies the Maronite Bishops held their monthly meeting, in Bkerkeh , which was presided over by His Beatitude Bechara Peter Rai and with the participation of His Beatitude and Eminence Cardinal Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir and the presence of General Superiors of the Maronite orders. They studied church and national matters. At the end of the meeting, they issued the following communiqué:

1. The Fathers congratulated His Beatitude Bechara Peter Rai on the occasion of the one year anniversary of his occupation of the Patriarchal See. They wished His Beatitude long years full of giving in the consecration of “communion and love” on all church and national levels.

2. The Fathers expressed their deep sorrow for the death of the Anba Shnouda III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the Missionary Province of Saint Marc in this delicate period of Egypt history. He was a person known for his piety, broad culture, daring stands and wisdom in dealing with events. They ask God to grant the Coptic Orthodox Church comfort of the faith for his loss and a good successor who will continue the march.

3. The Fathers raised the prayer in the meeting for the soul of the late Bishop John Chedid and presented their condolences to his relatives and to the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, of Los Angeles, priests and faithful.

4. The Fathers valued the meeting of deliberation between the Lebanese heads of communities that was held at the patriarchal see in Bkerkeh. It aspired at spreading among the citizens’ ranks, the spirit of unity, understanding and friendship that reigned over it. They approved the proposal of a spiritual summit on the Arab World and Middle East levels to affirm the Islamo-Christian community of life.

5. The Fathers expressed their anxiety about the escalation of the language in the political speech which is derailing, once again, by assailing personal dignities. An agreement had already been reached on an honor pact that contributes in rising up that speech. They call upon all to be committed by objectivity in approaching issues and make the language of dialogue and the public good prevail over all goods and interests.

6. In spite of the pressure caused by atmospheres surrounding Lebanon, the influence of political changes in the region upon Lebanon’s interior and the increasing division in opinions about them, the Fathers expressed their relief for the several and various initiatives which work at averting their negative reflections upon the actual national situations and at affirming the final Lebanese option to hold Lebanon as a land of dialogue among civilizations and religions and an exemplary model of coexistence among its citizens.

7. The Fathers tarried upon the necessity to hurry in passing the law about recovering citizenship by the descendants from Lebanese origin, in order to secure their legitimate right, which international laws and the Lebanese Constitution guarantee, and their participation in making the future of this homeland.

8. The Fathers warn against the explosive economic and living situation and its bad consequences upon the Lebanese and the Lebanese State. They call the authorities to the necessity of making the public good overcome anything else, to follow a clear economic policy and adopt firm treatments inspired by the right of the citizens, the good of the country and its development. This is linked to a chain of irreplaceable steps, as filling in posts in public administration on the base of qualification, protection of the judiciary, inducement of productive sectors, regulation of ports and enforcement of control, non leniency with the violations of economic and nutritional policies and the financial settlement of the State dues to private health, educational and social institutions.

9. In this Holy Week, during which The Church meditates over Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection, the Fathers call upon the faithful to realize the value of their redemptive struggle on earth and wish them a glorious Easter that leads them to a new life.