



# Current Issues in Prayer

December 2025

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray for **Christians in areas of conflict. Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be like seeds of peace, reconciliation and hope.**



## Getting started:

I find a quiet place and remain in the presence of the Lord. I pray for those living in areas of war or conflict and who are amid pain and darkness, that they may experience God's presence and his loving embrace.



## Short story:

As Christian numbers continue to plummet in their ancestral Middle Eastern homelands due to conflict and dire economic circumstances, a community of monks and religious in Syria are developing a new way to be the 'disciples of Jesus' to the Muslims in their midst, while offering Christian spirituality.

Syria's revitalized ancient Mar Mousa Monastery, near the city of Nebek, has become a modern beacon of hope and resilience in a country marred by conflict. Its eight monks and nuns mainly of the Syriac Catholic rite, but also including some Orthodox and Protestants, are developing Italian Jesuit Fr. Paolo Dall'Oglio's founding vision for reconciliation.

Syriac Catholic monk, Fr. Jihad Youssef, who now heads the monastery, sees in the brokenness of the Syrian experience "a chance for changing the mentality," of the country's dwindling Christian population. "We have the chance to be real disciples of Jesus and a church amongst Islam, collaborating with Muslims, loving them, and willing to be with them." He also said that Bishop Jaques Mourad and the Mar Musa community have supported people suffering from the consequences of war with rebuilding projects and by providing psychological support and emergency humanitarian aid. Bishop Mourad, former member of the monastery, was kidnapped by ISIS in May 2015, but later escaped with the help of a Muslim friend.

The monastery's daily mission encourages a vibrant spiritual life and manual work — including fighting desertification near Nebek — all the while embracing Abrahamic hospitality with the local community of Muslims and Syriac Catholic, Orthodox and evangelical Christians in the town.



## Time to reflect:

When I face conflict, do I try to find areas where we may come closer, or do I dig in my heels and retaliate with arguments and anger? How can I start a spiritual process that brings reconciliation in my heart and mind?



## Let us pray:

Dear Lord, you are the God of peace. I pray that you will arouse in all those who are experiencing conflict, an authentic desire for dialogue and reconciliation so that they will overcome violence with peace.



## Inspiration:

The work of community, love, reconciliation, restoration is the work we cannot leave up to politicians. This is the work we are all called to do.

*Shane Claiborne*



## Hands on:

I pray for peace in the Middle East. I support those organisations, such as Aid to the Church in Need, that provide medical care and food supplies in areas of conflict and poverty.