Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Thank you for your support for the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles! The mission of the Eparchy is to serve you, the People of God, and to proclaim the Gospel message in today’s world. But the Eparchy can only do that if it has your prayers and financial support.

As the Eparchy wraps up its 25th Anniversary celebration, we look ahead to a bright future. What does that future look like? Here are three key elements:

• We need to open new parishes to serve Maronites in many areas where there is not yet a parish, and build and strengthen our existing parishes and missions.

• We need to expand the services we provide for young people, families, and people who are going through difficult times in their lives.

• We need to continue to be a source of help and hope for the faithful in Lebanon and the Middle East, especially during these difficult days.

The Capital Campaign that the Eparchy is conducting over the next three years – Vision for the Future, Mission for Today – will help build the financial base to address these needs in the future.

Today, I would like to ask for your help with our Annual Appeal – to address the Eparchy’s most important and immediate needs. These needs are described in this short brochure. Please read it carefully and prayerfully consider how you may help, and please be generous.

May God bless you and keep you!

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Bishop A. Elias Zaidan

Additional Ways to Help

Make a Bequest. A bequest is naming the Eparchy (or your parish) in your will. This can be for a specific amount of money, or a percentage of your estate. To do this, include this language in your will:

“I give and bequeath to the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles ___% of the residue of my estate [or: the sum of $____].”

Give from your IRA. Generally speaking, taxpayers who are age 70½ years old and older may give up to $100,000 each year from their IRA to the Eparchy without paying the mandatory tax on IRA distributions. This is a significant benefit because taxes on an IRA are normally very high. The practical effect of this is that you can give more, tax free, from your IRA – and this makes it a very effective way to support the Church. Contact your broker or the Eparchy for more information about this.

Make the Eparchy a Beneficiary of Your Retirement Plan. Another way to help the Church is to name the Eparchy as the beneficiary of your retirement plan. This avoids estate taxes (which are often very high on retirement plans) – and can be tremendously helpful to the Church.

Make a Gift of Life Insurance. Naming the Eparchy as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy is a way to help the Church in the future while not impacting your income or lifestyle today. Ask your insurance agent or contact the Eparchy for more information about this.

“God loves a cheerful giver!” (2 Corinthians 9:7)
1. Seminarians and Retired Priests
The Eparchy educates and prepares men (called “seminarians”) for the priesthood, so that there will be enough priests to serve in our parishes and missions in the future. The Eparchy currently has 9 seminarians and 7 married men in formation. The average cost of educating and supporting a seminarian is $45,000 per year (our seminarians cost $471,000 last year). When a priest retires, he receives a modest pension from the Eparchy, along with basic health insurance coverage. The Eparchy now has six retired priests who served for over 175 years in parishes. The total cost of supporting them is estimated to be $165,000 in 2020. 35% of this year’s Annual Appeal proceeds will support Seminarians and Retired Priests.

2. Missions and Small Parishes
The Eparchy has 42 missions and parishes scattered throughout the 34 states of the Eparchy. Missions (new parishes) have been opened in recent years in places like Milwaukee (WI), Riverside (CA) and Stockton (CA). Some missions and parishes are very small and need help paying basic expenses such as insurance and utilities. Strengthening our existing parishes and missions, along with opening new parishes, is the top priority of the Maronite Church in America, to better serve the Maronite faithful. 25% of this year’s Annual Appeal proceeds will support Missions and Small Parishes.

3. Ministries
The Eparchy maintains several ministries to serve Maronites, among them Religious Education, Youth Ministry, Young Adults Ministry and Family Life Ministry. The Eparchy needs to increase the number and scope of its ministries to help more people throughout the Eparchy, so that the Church can be there for Maronites when they need it most. 15% of this year’s Annual Appeal proceeds will assist the Eparchy’s Ministries.

4. National Maronite Shrine
Our Lady of Lebanon National Shrine, located in North Jackson, Ohio, was founded over 50 years ago to invoke Our Lady’s protection over all Maronites in the United States. It is a place of pilgrimage for the faithful 365 days a year. 10% of this year’s Annual Appeal proceeds will assist the National Shrine.

5. Charitable Outreach
As the Eparchy asks the faithful to be generous to it, the Eparchy is generous towards others. With your support, the Eparchy supports those in need in the United States, and abroad in Lebanon and the Middle East. Many suffering people are helped with this assistance. 15% of this year’s Annual Appeal proceeds will go to charity, especially to help the needy in Lebanon.