

Beirut explosion: letter to the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem



A man carries a child past a damaged building after the explosion in Beirut on Tuesday evening (Image courtesy of *Church Times*)

7 August 2020

The Most Reverend Suheil S. Dawani
Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem

Dear Archbishop Suheil

The Anglican Diocese of Brisbane (Queensland, Australia) was devastated to hear news of the terrible explosion that struck Beirut on Tuesday evening killing scores of people and injuring thousands of others, with hundreds of thousands left homeless.

As fellow members of the Anglican Communion we extend our heartfelt condolences to those in your Diocesan community in Beirut who are affected directly or indirectly by the explosion.

We thank God for news (according to the All Saints' Church Facebook page) that while the All Saints' Church sustained structural damage, the church's international and Arab congregation members are safe and uninjured.

We stand in prayerful solidarity with first responders and hospital medical and administrative staff who are simultaneously dealing with the complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We understand that the blast also has the potential to impact the supply of food and other essential items, with already at-risk groups, such as refugees, finding themselves increasingly vulnerable.

As such, we will be encouraging members of our Diocesan community to donate to aid agencies who are on the ground courageously responding to humanitarian needs.

We continue to hold all people in Lebanon and The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in our prayers at this incredibly traumatic time.

Yours in Christ

The Right Reverend Cameron Venables
Archbishop's Commissary

Editor's note: The Anglican Board of Mission has launched a Beirut Emergency Appeal. All donations are tax deductible. If you are able to give to this appeal to help the people of Lebanon during this traumatic time, please visit the Anglican Board of Mission [appeal webpage](#).

Sunday Devotions • Monday 10 August 2020 • By Sian Carlyon

Sunday Devotion: 16 August 2020, Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

The path to peace



“Then Jesus answered her, ‘Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.’ And her daughter was healed instantly.” ([Matthew 15.28](#))

Main readings: [Genesis 45.1-15](#); [Psalm 133](#); [Romans 11.13-32 \(33-36\)](#); [Matthew 15.\(10-20\) 21-28](#); [[Isaiah 56.1, 6-8](#); [Psalm 67](#)]

Supplementary readings: [Psalm 81](#); [Matthew 15.29-39](#); [Genesis 48.8-20](#); [Psalm 67](#); [Romans 11.17-28](#)

As a young Brownie-guide, I learned origami and folded many paper cranes, which were strung together and sent to Japan with thousands of others from Queensland, in a heartfelt wish for world peace. This was done to honour Sadako Sasaki, who was a toddler when she survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in August 1945. Sadako folded the 1000 origami cranes of Japanese legend in order to be granted her wish for healing. Although she died aged only 12, her story of perseverance and faith has inspired generations of children to fold paper cranes for world peace, reconciliation and healing.

In today's Gospel, Jesus' compassion towards the non-Jewish woman, and his respect for her perseverance and faith, gives us hope that our prayers for mercy and healing reconciliation with God and each other will be heard. Jesus came to save us all, that we might have eternal life in God. By understanding the words, ministry and amazing sacrifice of Jesus, we receive God's transformational love that heals our inner-selves and shows us the way to reconciliation with others.

This weekend marks 75 years since the armistice with Japan, which was the 'fallout' of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings, ended WWII hostilities – prompting me to think again of folding paper cranes.

Reconciliation, mercy and forgiveness for each other begin in God's transformation of our own hearts, manifesting in our words and actions to promote healing and unity with all peoples. May our faith be great and our world be healed.