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The Pope's condolences for the death of Cardinal Sfeir, Patriarch emeritus of Antioch of the Maronites

The Holy Father has sent a telegram of condolences to Cardinal Béchara Boutros Raï, O.M.M., Patriarch of Antioch of the Maronites, Lebanon, for the death of Cardinal Nasrallah Pierre Sfeir, who was Patriarch of the same See from 1986 to 2011 and died on 12 May, three days before his 99th birthday. The following is the full text of the telegram:

Telegram of the Holy Father

His Beatitude Cardinal Béchara Boutros Raï
Patriarch of Antioch of the Maronites, Bkerké

Having learned with sadness of the death, in his ninety-ninth year, of His Beatitude Cardinal Nasrallah Pierre Sfeir, Patriarch emeritus of Antioch of the Maronites, I address my deepest condolences to you and to his family, and to all the faithful of the Patriarchal Church of Antioch of the Maronites, which he led for many years with as much gentleness as determination. Free and courageous, Cardinal Sfeir exercised his mission in a troubled context, and was a determined architect of encounter, peace and reconciliation. An ardent defender of the sovereignty and independence of his country, he will remain a great figure in the history of Lebanon. I ask the all merciful Father to welcome to His home of peace and light this wise and committed pastor, who showed the love of God to the people who had been entrusted to Him. As a pledge of consolation, I address my Apostolic Blessing to you, Beatitude, as well as to the family of the deceased Cardinal and his loved ones, to all those who accompanied in his later years and to those who will take part in the funeral celebrations.

Franciscus PP.

