



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Australian Bishops express solidarity with Coptic Christians following violence in Egypt Media Release 24 November, 2011

The Australian Catholic Bishops today at their Plenary meeting expressed solidarity with the Coptic Christian community in Egypt.

In recent months, sectarian violence has plagued the country.

40 days ago 24 Coptic Christians were killed in clashes between the military and protesters.

Of Egypt's 80 million people, around ten per cent are Christian, and extremist minority groups hostile to the Christians are gaining influence in the country.

The Egyptian people are moving towards a crucial election after the downfall of the Mubarak government in February. However, Coptic Christians have been largely left out of the political process and are wary of how they might be treated under a new government.

Extreme violence and persecution have been a daily reality for the Christian minority in Egypt for decades and this has escalated over the past year.

The Bishops of Australia stand in solidarity with all people of good will in Egypt.

They particularly remember those who continue to suffer violence and discrimination, and those who have lost family members.

The Bishops assure the Egyptian people of their continuing prayers as the election approaches.

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