

Letter of the Rector
to the university community
of the Saint Joseph University
at the threshold of the 2nd semester of 2006-2007

At the threshold of this year's 1st semester, I allowed myself to send a letter to all the university community of USJ. We were just emerging from this sad "33-day war" and we were launching the "7th Day Operation" that marked our University's concern to extend a hand to all those who had been hurt physically, materially and psychologically.

In fact, this initiative took shape very fast; USJ, together with the Hôtel-Dieu Hospital, is present in many places in South Lebanon, especially in Cana, as well as in Baalbeck. We cannot but rejoice over these commitments, even if modest, and hope that they grow bigger.

Nevertheless, there is another side of this operation that should become more important, in view of the period of turbulence we are living: it concerns dialogue and mediation. It is one thing to be involved to show our solidarity with those who were affected by the events; it is another to be involved to strengthen, day after day, a real fraternity with all the citizens of this country. And this is crucial.

It implies that daily relationships with those who surround us and those we live and work with should not be based on suspicion, repulsion and hatred, but on respect, frankness and truth. It implies that different commitments be recognized and accepted. It implies finally that any violence and offence against the other be permanently excluded from our campuses.

This is the only way we can all together reshape the image of Lebanon, this is the only way we can rebuild the country in all its dimensions.

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