

OVERVIEW

Egypt has been on a violent roller coaster since 2010: the Arab Spring; the toppling of Hosni Mubarak; the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood; a military coup and the return of authoritarian stability, however tenuous. Civil unrest — including high-profile attacks on Christians — and economic and social deterioration have stoked unease and fear.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The violence and unrest have kept visitors at bay, decimating the once-thriving tourism industry. The plummeting value of the Egyptian pound, along with inflation, has exacerbated the pain for the people. After years of delay, the government has begun to implement some economic reforms, recently securing a \$12 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund.

IMPACT ON CHRISTIANS

Egypt's Christians make up about 10 percent of the country's 94 million people. They form the largest Christian community in the Middle East.

Attacks against Christians have surged since the Arab Spring demonstrations. The Palm Sunday 2017 attacks in northern Egypt, which killed more than 45 worshipers and injured more than a hundred, as well as the May 2017 attacks at a monastery near Minya, killing at least 28, underscore the uncertainty and violence Christians in Egypt live with every day. It is believed tens of thousands of Coptic Christians have left Egypt since 2011.

CNEWA'S PRESENCE

CNEWA's primary partner in Egypt, the Coptic Catholic Church, is a small community numbering fewer than 175,000 souls. Yet its outreach in ministering to the needs of Egypt's Christians and Muslims is significant. Parishes and eparchies sponsor clinics and dispensaries, child care initiatives, schools and programs for those with special needs, especially the blind. We support pastoral centers of seven Coptic Catholic eparchies, as well as those operated by the Coptic Orthodox Church. CNEWA also helps with the formation of seminarians, novices and lay people — and, significantly, supports a number of initiatives aimed at building bridges among Christians in Egypt.



For decades, CNEWA has worked with Egypt's Catholic and Coptic Orthodox churches to bridge the gap between the nation's Christian and dominant Muslim communities. Support includes:

- **Activities focusing on the marginalized, including support for those with special needs, such as the Santa Lucia School for the Blind in Abou Kir; displaced families, including Eritrean and Sudanese refugees; and families who, uprooted from their villages and lacking education, settle illegally in Cairo's suburbs and survive by collecting garbage**
- **The formation of priests at St. Leo's Patriarchal Seminary and of religious men and women, including the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Proper formation is imperative so those charged with serving in difficult and dangerous environments take on these challenges with prayer and love**
- **Help for communities, such as the Coptic Orthodox Eparchy of Port Said, to care for children from broken families**
- **Restoration of churches, schools and institutions and reanimation of programs devastated by acts of violence**