

The birth of a famous proverb on the Lebanese in Mexico

LERC Staff

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Dr. Guita Hourani, Director of the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) of Notre Dame University (NDU) arrived in Mexico City on the 25th of July to promote the “Lebanon Land of Dialogue among Civilizations and Cultures” as the Campaign Coordinator. She was received by H. E. Georges Saad Abi Younis, Maronite Bishop of Mexico, Mr. Antonio Trabulse Kaim, LERC Liaison Officer for Mexico and Mr. George Chikhani, a member of the Lebanese community.

On Saturday the 26th of July, Dr. Hourani held her first meeting with Mr. Antonio Trabulse Kaim, LERC Liaison Officer, to discuss her schedule in Mexico and to meet his family.



Dr. Hourani at the center with the Trabulse family, (July 2014)

During the conversation, Mr. Trabulse mentioned a sentence that became a proverb in Mexico which concerns the Lebanese people. The story goes that on November 21st, 1962, the Centro Libanès in Mexico City was inaugurated with the presence of the President of Mexico H. E. Adolfo López Mateos, who came to unveil the commemorative plaque with great enthusiasm. The President wrote in the Golden Book the famous sentence “**Anyone who does not have a Lebanese friend, must look for one.**”

It seems that the sentence was inspired by the relationship with many Lebanese, especially with Mr. Tufic Sayeg Atta, who was born in Zahle and is the brother in law of Mr. Trabulse through marrying his sister Vilma Trabulse Kaim. Mr. Tufic came to Mexico as a child and developed a great affection and friendship with López Mateos. Although the Golden Book was lost in the fire that ravaged the Lebanese Center, the words are engraved in peoples' minds and on a plaque in the Centro Libanèse.