



Chaldean Archdiocese of Erbil Radio Mariam's First Anniversary



The idea of having a Christian media platform to carry the message of the Good News in Northern Iraq emerged out of a hopeless humanitarian crisis. Due to the displacement and ethnic discrimination against Iraqi Christians for decades, thousands fled to the town of Ankawa hoping for peace, stability, and the comfort only God can bring.



The initial tug to create Catholic media coincided with two landmark events in the Middle East. First, His Holiness Pope Francis announced the importance of spreading Catholic media in countries where Christians suffer persecution. In addition, the Radio Maria Family, a worldwide Catholic broadcasting company with over 400 repeaters, visited the Archdiocese of Erbil and in their meeting with His Excellency Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda, the spark of an idea fanned into flame. Soon thereafter, communication and planning started with Radio Maria in order to establish a branch of Radio Maria in Erbil, Iraq.

Overwhelmingly, the people of Ankawa responded positively to the prospect and Stivan Shany was chosen as director to obtain the necessary licenses and approvals for opening on air. A location was chosen, equipment bought, and a new station under the title “The Voice of Christian Family” was born.



On Divine Mercy Sunday, April 8, 2018, still while preparing for the May 31, grand opening, the station launched its first trial broadcast. Keeping in mind the work of the first Christians in Iraq— St. Thomas the Apostle and the disciples Mar Addai and Mar Mari—the founding station set its foundation on the Holy Bible and the rich traditions of Chaldean Catholicism. During its first year on air, listeners could hear hymns, the Rosary, and Daily Mass. Gradually, the administrative team formed catechetical and spiritual programs in response to the local people’s common knowledge and needs.

Later, “The Voice of Christian Family” rebranded as “Radio Mariam” and today continues its mission to spread the Gospel in Northern Iraq. Listeners in Erbil can dial into 104.9 FM 24/7.



Stivan Shany

Director

Radio Mariam Erbil

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