Thank You Lord for the many graces and blessings you have placed in our life. We offer You our heart-felt gratitude for Your countless gifts to us each day.

In turn, dear Lord, help us to be aware of the needs of our least sisters and brothers, and to respond to those who are poor and less fortunate with generous expressions of charity, kindness and caring.

On that day Lord, when we finally stand before You to give an account of our life, we pray we will hear You say, “Come O good and faithful servant to share your Father’s joy, for when you saw me hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, ill and imprisoned, you offered your gifts in charity and you lovingly did it for me”.

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Message from the Acting General Director of Caritas Jerusalem

Dear Friends and Partners,

It is a pleasure to share with you Caritas Jerusalem’s Annual Report for 2017 which highlights the achievements of Caritas Jerusalem and its partners in improving the well-being of the people in The Holy Land, especially the most vulnerable.

In 2017, we continued our work in health, economic development, youth empowerment, education, taking care of the senior citizens and the drug addicts across the country.

This year, we also worked on our CI MS in order to assess where we stand and how we can improve our work internally and externally in order to improve our services and give our best to those who need us and rely on the services that we provide in The Holy Land.

This year, our biggest interventions were in the Gaza Strip, in the health sector, where we reached out to ten different locations where the residents do not have any access to health care and treated thousands of patients with our dedicated doctors, nurses and professionals with medicines, nutrition and awareness activities of their right to health.

As you read the report, I hope you will gain insight into the breadth and depth of our activities. The accomplishments over the past year and the work ahead depend on the support and contributions of our partners and dedicated staff.

I would like to thank all our partners including, donors, local communities, community & faith-based organizations, as well as our CJ staff, for the amazing support.

We look forward to your continued support in 2018 to transform more lives to the better.

Thank you and we look forward to another amazing year at Caritas Jerusalem.

George Handal
Acting General Director
Caritas Jerusalem

Our core values

Dignity:
We seek to make the poor not objects of pity but subjects of their own development and agents of change, best placed to develop their own solutions in global partnership.

Equality:
Any economic, social, political and cultural structure which opposes or oppresses change toward justice is wrong and we challenge it. Caritas listens to the voice of the silent poor and enables them to speak for themselves.

Solidarity:
Caritas works to enhance solidarity with the poor, seeing the world through their eyes, and recognising the independence of humanity.

Stewardship:
Caritas commits itself to being in solidarity with the whole of creation and therefore seeks to act in an environmentally sustainable way at all times.

Compassion:
The fundamental response of Caritas is compassion rooted in love. Caritas refuses to accept the suffering of brothers and sisters and takes action to alleviate such suffering.

Our Vision:

Caritas is a global movement working in solidarity for a fairer world, inspired by the example of Christian faith and Catholic Social Teaching.

Caritas challenges cultural, local, national and international governance structures that undermine the ability of communities to live sustainable and just lives. It is unacceptable that millions of people are suffering through dehumanizing poverty and social injustice—and we want change.

The 167 Caritas national members worldwide believe they can do more to combat the causes of poverty and injustice by combining their resources. National members come under the umbrella of Caritas Internationalis, which has its headquarters in the Vatican City and representatives at the United Nations in New York and Geneva.
CARITAS JERUSALEM IN THE HOLY LAND

Caritas Jerusalem was founded in 1967 in the aftermath of the Six Day War to respond to the emergency needs of the displaced Palestinian people. It represents the socio-pastoral services of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land and faithfully serves the social-familial, economic, health and emergency needs of an ever-growing Palestinian population.

The mission of Caritas Jerusalem is to empower the inhabitants of the Holy Land to realize their full potential and to act as a voice for the voiceless. This is accomplished through:

- Enhancing the quality and accessibility of social and medical services for the poor and marginalized.
- Providing food aid.
- Creating economic opportunities through soft loan schemes and job creation.
- Providing emergency humanitarian aid in times of crisis.
- Empowering youth as community leaders.
- Advocating for the Palestinian cause on the international stage.

Our active presence throughout the Palestinian Territories has enabled us to respond to the needs of the communities in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip through multi-sectoral programs for the poor and marginalized.

SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The social services department is the heart of Caritas Jerusalem in which it provides immediate and continuous assistance to the increasingly number of underprivileged families in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Caritas has a large local network of parishes, schools and healthcare institutions. By being in the network, we are able to act quickly and give help to those in need. In 2017, we were able to assist 1,281 families through different interventions.

Family support: 312 families received emergency assistance to cover their basic needs, such as rent, utility and food costs.

Medical support: Caritas covered the medical fees for 123 individuals.

Education: Through the continued solidarity of Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000 Chile, we reached 620 students in 21 schools in the Bethlehem Governorate by covering part of their school tuition fees and granted full scholarships for three students. Also 145 school students were partly assisted with their tuition fees through funding by many of our partners.

Health Insurance: Caritas covered the health insurance for 81 families.

The Granting of Cardoch Zedan Scholarship in Bethlehem

Caritas Europe’s visit to Caritas Jerusalem with the President of Caritas Internationalis Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle
The Elderly Day Care Center (EDCC) is an ongoing program operated by Caritas Jerusalem under the Social Services Department. It serves 80 needy senior citizens of Ramallah. We provide physical, psychosocial and medical support through our social workers, the nurse and other professional groups who visit the EDCC on a voluntary basis.

Three times a week 50 elderly meet together to share a hot meal, socialize and check on their medicines and get physical check-ups when needed. Over and above, professional doctors, guest speakers, school students visit the center regularly to spend quality time, listen, learn and connect with this lonely segment of our society.

Our team makes sure that special occasions such as Birthdays, Christmas, Easter and other important dates are celebrated with our senior citizens.

In 2017, the EDCC provided the following activities and services:
- 4,112 hot meals were served to the elderly.
- 263 home visits were conducted by the social workers and the nurse to 30 homebound senior citizens.
- 10 senior citizens who suffer from chronic illnesses were provided with the monthly medications that they cannot afford.
- 10 senior citizens who are homebound and need constant physical check-ups and medical care were provided with the annual Palestinian health insurance.
- 40 group sessions were conducted by the social works to discuss different subjects such as loneliness, negative self-image and frustration which most of the senior citizens suffer from.
- 110 individual sessions were held to allow them to express their feelings and concerns.
- 28 Yoga sessions were held at the center.

The goal of this project is to work with six institutions around Bethlehem to further empower persons with disabilities by providing various kinds of services like employment opportunities, vocational training, musical therapy, psychosocial and physiotherapy interventions.

This project was co-financed by the Polish Development Cooperation Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in partnership with Caritas Poland.

Social Services Department’s project in 2017:

Under the Social Services Department, Caritas Jerusalem has implemented the project supporting the social inclusion of people with disabilities in the Bethlehem Governorate that would answer some of the needs of these marginalized strata of the Palestinian community.

The goal of this project is to work with six institutions around Bethlehem to further empower persons with disabilities by providing various kinds of services like employment opportunities, vocational training, musical therapy, psychosocial and physiotherapy interventions.

This project was co-financed by the Polish Development Cooperation Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in partnership with Caritas Poland.
As part of awareness raising campaign, three local school students visited the EDCC and took part in different activities together. These encounters are very healthy for both the elderly and the youth.

15 groups from Al-Ahliyyeh, St. Joseph and the Friends school organized activities to interact with the elderly.

The Old City Counseling Center (OCCC) Fighting Drug Addiction

The Old City Counseling Center was established in 1999 to foster the psychological development and emotional well-being of drug addicts and ex-drug addicts through counselling, preventive and educational programming, as well as contributions to the mental health and social work professions.

In collaboration with schools, colleges, and other organizations, the OCCC strives to promote a drug-free community in Jerusalem through innovative and effective services, programs.

Every year the OCCC organises workshops and awareness programs in schools and universities. It carries out group and individual sessions and holds summer camps for children who come from drug afflicted families.

The OCCC in 2017:

- 38 sessions for youth leadership groups program.
- 96 sessions were given to parents about drug prevention.
- 08 schools received an information session on drug use and abuse.
- 20 sessions were given to children to understand the causes of drug abuse and prevent its onset.
- 32 sessions were given to mothers about information on intersection of drug use disorders and child problems.
- 06 sessions were given to social workers about important themes in drug addiction.
- 04 volunteer groups were trained on the basis of 32 sessions.
- 246 therapy sessions with 63 former drug users.
- 74 home visits to families in need.
- 38 sessions in training and capacity building for Palestinian Police Officers.
- 21 sessions were given to counsellors from the Palestinian Ministry of Education.
- 15 students received a Diploma in Drug Prevention and Technical Intervention for Drug Using and Addiction.

Muhebeh is a 70-year-old unmarried woman from Ramallah, who lives alone in the old, dilapidated family house.

Muhebeh’s passion of knitting wool has never vanished; she was always eager to create new sweaters, scarfs, socks and other lovely items. She used to gain little from this skill but after undergoing open heart surgery, she couldn’t possibly continue knitting.

She gets little financial help from her married sisters where they provide her with the basic needs and pay the utilities, but she needs lifetime medicines.

Caritas Jerusalem’s EDCC takes care of her financially and socially. We cover her monthly medications and our social workers, and our nurse visit her regularly.

A visit from the Friends School children to the elderly

EDCC social worker giving medicine to one of our senior citizens
Caritas Jerusalem’s fifth Conference on Drug Abuse at Bethlehem University Old City Counselling Center (OCCC)

In 2017, Caritas Jerusalem’s OCCC in cooperation with Bethlehem University held its fifth conference titled “Professional and behavior practices towards dealing with drug problem in Palestine” which took place at Bethlehem University. Many recognized personalities attended the conference from Palestinian police officers, social workers and specialists in the field of drug abuse among others. After many speeches, discussions and queries the conference was concluded by giving recommendations on how to work together in order to reduce the negative effects of drug abuse.

Other Activities:
- The OCCC organized iftar for the former addicts and their families
- The OCCC launched a campaign titled “Recovery is a right and duty.” In order to fight social stigma and to pressure lobbying on decision makers and to open the treatment and rehabilitation center in Bethlehem.

Caritas Jerusalem believes that the civil society and especially the youth, who comprise more than 63% of the Palestinian society, needs to play an active role in the destiny of the land.

The aim of the department is to encourage the youth to actively participate in the development of their communities through volunteer activities and capacity building trainings.

In 2017, the youth department volunteers implemented tens of activities all over Palestine.

Culture exchange and global awareness is one of the main focuses that Caritas Jerusalem promotes with young Palestinians. In 2017, a group of young people from Caritas Spain stayed with their Caritas Jerusalem counterparts.

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Community Volunteering
- Organize trainings in development of the social commitment of Christian Youth in Palestine in partnership with Caritas Spain.
- Implementing activities with the Elderly Day Care Center in Ramallah.
- Arranging Christmas activities with underprivileged children and distributing 1250 gifts to 16 centers.
- Conducting home visits to the sick, the elderly and the lonely.
Caritas Jerusalem is managing three health centers: two in the West Bank villages of Taybeh and Aboud and one in Gaza

In the West Bank, Caritas health centers reach out to the rural population, cut off from public health facilities by military roadblocks since the early 2000.

In 2017, we continued our services by visiting the schools and carrying out health campaigns, and home visits. Our main focus was on schoolchildren, women and people with chronic diseases. In Gaza, in addition to providing primary health care, Caritas health centre is the administrative hub and base for mobile medical teams that serve some of the poorest and most marginalised communities in the Gaza Strip.

Aboud Health Center (West Bank)

Aboud is a small village with 2,000 inhabitants, located about 56 kilometers northwest of Jerusalem. It is a rural area isolated from other villages by the Separation Wall and surrounding Israeli settlements.

Caritas is running a primary health care center in Aboud since 1990, reaching out to a population of 23,000 including Aboud and 13 surrounding villages. Since 2009, the center offers primary health care, preventive and curative care, women’s health, dentistry and specialists in orthopaedics, dermatology and ENT. In addition, the center has a laboratory for medical tests, and a pharmacy. The staff of the center is regularly conducting disease prevention sessions with the local community on women’s health, nutrition, smoking, road safety and home accidents.

Aboud medical services in 2017:

- 3073 patients
- 384 women’s health consultations
Taybeh Health Center (West Bank)

Taybeh is a village of 1,300 inhabitants 35 kilometers north of Jerusalem. It is surrounded by several Israeli settlements. The center provides health services to a population of 18,000.

Caritas is running a primary health care center in Taybeh since 1997, reaching out to a population of 10,000 including Taybeh and 4 surrounding villages. The center offers primary health care, preventive and curative care, women’s health, dentistry and specialists in orthopaedics, dermatology and ENT. In addition, the center has a laboratory for medical tests, and a pharmacy. The staff of the center is regularly conducting disease prevention sessions with the local community on women’s health, nutrition, smoking, road safety and home accidents.

Taybeh medical services in 2017:

- 3482 patients
- 527 women’s health consultations

Gaza Health Center and Outreach Clinics

The center is located in the Beach Camp area, which is one of the most populous areas in the Gaza Strip (80,000 inhabitants) and it is situated close to the Jabalia Refugee Camp. The health center offers primary healthcare that includes gynaecology, dental and general medical services with path lab and pharmacy. Our doctors see about 1265 general patients a year and nearly 4800 female patients. During 2017 a project for underweight and stunted babies and toddlers was implemented in the clinic. Some very sick children were diagnosed with rare or complicated illnesses and treated by our experienced paediatrician. Dental caries in children is a big problem in Gaza and a dental project for children was also implemented in the clinic.

The centre is also the base of four mobile medical teams which provide service to Gaza’s most marginalized communities. We were able to enhance our services due to the generous support from our partners Caritas Belgium with a grant from The Belgian Development Cooperation – Belgian Government where we reached to around 13,000 beneficiaries from all over the Strip. The Belgian-funded project also provided the Caritas Health Centre with up to date medical and path lab equipment, portable medical equipment, vehicles and IT equipment that has greatly enhanced our capacity to implement other projects in the poorest and most marginalised parts of the Gaza Strip. This development and capacity building laid a solid foundation on which other development was built and will ensure a degree of sustainability and affordable services for the poor in Gaza for years to come. In addition to medical care, our team in Gaza provides much-needed psychological help to the victims of the surrounding violence. They pay a particular attention to the children who suffer the most from the conflict and the harsh living conditions.

A project funded by USAID and managed by IMC provided screening for high blood pressure and diabetes type 2 for people over the age of 40. Those found to be suffering from, or likely to develop these conditions were given nutritional and psychological support to lessen their dependence on medication. Full path lab analysis and medication was provided for those in need of treatment. In addition, IMC provided excellent staff capacity building and training that enhanced the performance of our staff in Gaza as well as developing warehouse management systems and upgrading our storage space.
Small loans can change the life of individuals, families and communities. The loan department was established in the 1970s with a first objective to develop existing small businesses and to improve the income of families.

Caritas Jerusalem’s microcredit department grants four types of loans, namely for education, house renovation, income generating development and emergency cases.

In 2017, the department gave out 35 small loans where it financed 18 business projects, among them 3 managed by women. 14 families were able to renovate their houses, 2 individuals received emergency support and one beneficiary was able to complete his master’s degree.

**From Father to Son**

D.S is a 24 year old man from Bethlehem; he graduated from culinary school where he studied arts of food and services for two years in order to fulfill his dream by opening his own restaurant. In 2003, his parents started a small bakery based at their house; they requested a small loan from Caritas Jerusalem to purchase equipment and utensils in order to start doing pastries and sweets. This business has grown, and the demand increased. Therefore, between 2009 and 2012, they improved their cooking skills and requested another loan to expand their own bakery and purchase more equipment.

D.S wanted to link his parent’s bakery with a small restaurant that will serve homemade pastries and sweets besides Palestinian food. In 2017, he has applied for a small loan from Caritas Jerusalem in order to purchase the needed items. He opened his restaurant and is living his dream.

**Ahmad Overcomes His Fears**

Psychosocial support is a necessary element to create a comfortable and safe environment within children and their parents. In Gaza, our psychosocial specialists with the help of local facilitators held 1584 psychosocial sessions for both children and women through the “Integrated Healthcare & Protection services for the vulnerable groups in Gaza strip. These sessions dealt with ways of facing problems, planning for future, life skills and ways to cope with fear.

Caritas Jerusalem aims to build and improve the self-worth of the most vulnerable especially the children by decreasing the stress through different activities and entertainment games. Through the past months, we have helped 4143 children and Ahmad is one of them.

Ahmad is an eleven-year-old boy from Al-Shuja’iyya who lives with his parents and three siblings. Ahmad was withdrawn, afraid of others, couldn’t defend himself and he had a constant feeling of inferiority due to the bad economic and social situation of his family.

Ahmad suffers from epilepsy, anemia and physical problems which affect his temper. He started to attend the psychosocial sessions but was very passive and he did not participate in any kind of activities with others. The psychosocial specialist planned individual sessions for him with expressive arts and relaxation activities. As a result, Ahmad managed to overcome his bad temper and started to mingle with other children and gradually became more and more sociable and was able to express his feelings freely with his family and peers.

One of the major reasons also for Ahmad’s improvement is the cooperation of his parents with the psychosocial specialist and implementation of the guidelines on how to deal with this child.
** FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS DEPARTMENT **

According to The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), in 2014 the food insecurity rate in West Bank was 28.6%, translating into 1.6 million people being food insecure in 2014.

Providing solid long-term benefits to the community coupled with having unemployed workers to earn a living in dignity is the focus of the Food Security and Livelihoods department.

- Enhanced food security through rural development and agriculture in Taybeh, funded by Caritas Spain and Ayuntamiento.
- Supported the socially disadvantaged and graduates of Palestine in cooperation with Caritas Czech Republic and Czech Republic Development Cooperation.
- Renovated 20 cisterns in Beit Jala funded by the Polish development cooperation programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.
- Started the implementation of an agricultural project at Al Makhrour area in Beit Jala (area C) funded by the government of Aragon and Caritas Spain.

In 2017, we were able to generate income and fight poverty through our various projects and programs all around Palestine, particularly in the remote rural areas. This year we have focused on socio economic and territorial development by funding micro enterprises in agriculture, services and trade sectors with technical training and collective projects often in cooperation with local municipalities, village councils and the community at large.

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** 1.5 MILLION OLIVE WOOD ROSARIES MADE IN BETHLEHEM FOR WORLD YOUTH DAY. (WYD) **

Caritas Jerusalem is responsible for producing 1.5 million olive wood rosaries to be given by Pope Francis to the young people who will attend WYD in Panama in 2019. The Pope will encourage the youth to pray for world peace beginning in Jerusalem. Through this project we will develop the capacity of small workshops in the Bethlehem governatorate and give employment to more than 300 people. We are blessed and privileged to be entrusted with this project that will give employment to local people and make known to the youth in Panama and to the wider world that there are local Christians in Bethlehem from the time of Christ to the present day.

** RENOVATING DOMESTIC CISTERNs **

From October to December 2017, Caritas Jerusalem renovated 20 domestic cisterns in the Bethlehem Governorate through the Polish development cooperation programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

Hasan, a father of 8 is one of the beneficiaries. “I have eight children in school and am the only breadwinner of my family. I work in construction on a daily basis. In addition, I take care of my elderly parents who live with me and are bedridden for more than four years. Water cuts are very common in Beit Jala and I cannot afford to buy water with my meagre income. The cistern was destroyed during the second intifada in 2001 and I truly appreciate Caritas Jerusalem’s intervention. I hope that we will have plenty of rain this year so that my family and I have enough water during the summer season.”

The twenty renovated cisterns will serve more than 100 citizens and will save them a lot of money to use on other basic necessities of life.
CARITAS JERUSALEM TRAINING CENTER IN RAMALLAH

In September 2014, Caritas Jerusalem established a training center in Jabal Al Nijmah near Ramallah in order to train women in sewing, dressmaking and fashion design. The training lasts nine months where women learn types of sewing, types of sewing machines, kinds of fabric, kinds of needles and other sewing techniques.

In 2017, 30 women were trained. In addition, we have a partnership agreement with Star Mountain Rehabilitation Center to train five of their students who do not suffer from severe physical disabilities and are able to start a micro project after the training. At the end of the training course they will be ready to work independently and make a living with dignity.

The center also serves school girls from the surrounding schools for their extracurricular activities. It has started with the St. Joseph’s School in Ramallah, where the tenth-grade girls come to the center twice a week to learn sewing and designing.

SEW IT WITH LOVE

Claudie is a 25-year-old lady who joined the training centre to learn a new skill that can help her be self-dependent. She had no clue on how to use a sewing machine or sketching or even use the cutting tools but with a little help from her trainer and colleagues, she started to see results of her work. She learnt the kinds of fabric, needles, types of sewing machines and sewing techniques. She improved her sewing skills by daily practices.

Claudie is a slow learner but has the support of her family who encourage her to make her own outfits such as skirts, dresses, coats, blouses and trousers.

Her future goal is to buy a small sewing machine and start her own income generating project at home; she will prepare a room and start fixing clothes for her neighbours, friends and family for a low cost.

This training centre seeks to strengthen Palestinian women, enhancing the status of women in the country through empowering them socially and financially. It supports ongoing efforts to increase income and improve decent work conditions for women.
Thank You

“Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference.”
Kathy Calvin

Thank you!

Thank you for being a partner and a friend

- Abbayee De Latroun
- American Wheelchair Mission
- Association SeCoDev
- Bank of Palestine
- Fundacion Belen 2000
- CAFOD
- Caritas Aoteraroa – New Zealand
- Caritas Belgium
- Caritas Chile
- One Body One Spirit Movement
- Caritas Corea
- Caritas Czech Republic
- Caritas Diocesana De Cordoba
- Caritas Diocesana – Novara
- Caritas Diocesana De Zaragoza
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- Misean Cara
- Municipality of Tolosa
- Murex Cooperation
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- Polish Aid
- Private Donations
- St Francis and St Clare Trust
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- St. Jean- Marie Vianney Lausanne
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- Trocaire
- Unidos Contra El Hambra
- Unite Pastorale Saint – Joseph