

**An excerpt from the midnight  
Christmas Homily of Archbishop  
Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Apostolic  
Administrator of the Latin  
Patriarchate of Jerusalem for  
Christmas 2017**

We have come here once again to Bethlehem, where the Virgin Mary – spouse of Joseph, fulfilled the days of her childbirth, giving birth to her firstborn Son, wrapping Him in swaddling clothes and laying Him in the manger (cf. Lk. 2:7)

The Church of God, spread throughout the world, like the shepherds of that night, is called by the voice of the Angels and is illuminated by the shining star of Bethlehem. And thus, she recognizes and contemplates in such littleness, in such apparent ordinary insignificance, the merciful act of God who places this Child – this little Sign – in our world and in our history. Merciful act of God, whose beginning is apparently insignificant but whose kingdom to come will be surely victorious....

<https://www.lpi.org/homily-pizzaballa-midnight-christmas-mass-2017/>



**Christmas Gifts for 100 Orphans in  
Gaza**



On the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, the local health committee members in cooperation with Caritas Jerusalem planned a fun day for the children living at Al Amal Orphanage in Gaza.

The local health committee members, dressed as clowns, visited the center and spent the whole day with the children engaging them in many fun activities like puppet show and face painting.

Caritas coordinators noticed that the hall where the children gathered was extremely cold, therefore we granted them an air conditioning unit to warm up the place and to keep it cool during summer.

The Local Health Committees project is funded by Caritas Spain and aims to empower the local communities in five different localities in the West Bank.

They promote awareness on issues such as health, well-being, commitment towards a cleaner environment, social justice and encourage a better educational system through various activities.



The day came to its conclusion by a visit from Santa who danced and sang with the children and distributed presents to them.

### *Spending Christmas with our lovely Senior Citizens*



December in Palestine is the most joyful time where people gather to honor the birth of Jesus Christ; where families gather to exchange greetings and gifts. Spending Christmas with our beloved ones is very important; it brings love, joy and good spirit. Caritas Jerusalem usually celebrates Christmas with those who are lonely, sick and marginalized by spending

quality time with them, sharing a good meal and giving gifts.

On the 21st of December 2017, the Elderly Day Care Center (EDCC) celebrated Christmas with 50 senior citizens in the presence of Fr. Jamal Khader, the parish priest in Ramallah, representatives from the women's committee, Sbitany company and other participants. It was organized by the social workers and the team of EDCC.

The event started with a Christmas Mass celebrated by Fr. Jamal Khader focusing on the birth of Jesus which signifies the birth of a new hope in our hearts and souls for a new beginning.



*“Today you have not only warmed our body but also warmed our heart by being with us on this special event”.* Said one of the elderly.

The elderly were invited to have a traditional Palestinian lunch and to celebrate this event by singing, dancing and sharing laughs. Special Christmas gifts and chocolates were distributed among them.

*“You are the joy and the smile in our hearts”* said another senior citizen who has been coming to the center for 15 years.



Caritas Jerusalem and the staff of the EDCC were able to draw a smile on these senior citizens' faces and make them feel loved and needed. This event would not have been possible without the generous donation from our local friends.

### **Spirit of Christmas** *Food coupons*

Christmas can be very depressing for those families who do not have the luxury of preparing a festive dinner for Christmas; therefore, Caritas Jerusalem's Social Services Department strives to make these needy families have a great Christmas every year.

In cooperation with St. Vincent de Paul, The Latin Patriarchate and Abbaye de Latroun, we have launched a Christmas campaign from 21<sup>st</sup> till 23<sup>rd</sup> of December to collect money in order to provide food vouchers for the needy residents of Jerusalem.

Through this campaign, we were able to help 110 families with food vouchers. We were able to make them feel the joy of Christmas and bring hope in their hearts.

Caritas Jerusalem would like to thank our local donors for their generosity and their endless support to the Christian families.

### ***A small gift with a deep meaning***



On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December, Caritas Jerusalem's Social Services Department was able to buy Christmas gifts for children in Ramallah and Jerusalem. These gifts were distributed among 21 families with 69 children. The gifts were a mix of training suits, T-shirts and winter jackets in different sizes, colors and designs.

Our social workers visited several houses in Ramallah and Jerusalem with Santa to meet, sing, laugh and give the gifts for the children. "It is the first and only gift that we received this year. You made our Christmas!" one of the parents said.



These children come from poor and vulnerable Palestinian families with a very low income. Our social department is well familiar with their socioeconomic conditions and we do our best in providing their basic needs.



We thank the private donor who made these families and the children to believe in Christmas again.



### **How can you help?**

Support our activities  
Your support is essential to provide long-term assistance to our beneficiaries.  
Please see below our bank details to make a donation:  
Bank Name: Arab Bank  
Swift Code: ARABPS 22110  
Account number: 457793/0/510 USD  
Credit Account: Caritas Jerusalem  
Branch No: 9110  
At Arab Bank in Al-Ram  
P.O. Box: 2445-Al-Ram