Caritas JERUSALEM

Newsletter
April–June 2023

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“If you want to be perfect, then go and sell your possessions and give the money to the poor. If you do this, you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me.”
(Matthew 19:21-24)

Having placed significant emphasis on our profound concerns regarding the conflicts in the Holy Land, we have encountered escalating tensions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Our visits to Gaza and Jenin have exposed us to immense humanitarian suffering.

During a field visit to Gaza, I was deeply moved by a family living in inhumane conditions within a garage. This family, which includes a severely disabled thirteen-year-old boy, has been deeply affected. The boy lay on a mattress on the floor, and the whole family lacks necessities such as proper food, a hygienic kitchen, and a suitable toilet. Caritas Jerusalem stepped in to provide temporary monthly assistance to this family, and the Missionary Sisters in Gaza extended their support to the disabled child. As I returned to Jerusalem, praying the rosary for solace, I could not help but ponder how these families, including the one I visited, were enduring such harsh conditions in Gaza.

Several months have passed since the Caritas Internationalis General Assembly, where I had the privilege of meeting the confederation for the first time. The experience was heart-warming, as I connected with many remarkable individuals. The sharing of experiences and the ensuing discussions significantly enriched my perspective. The retreat led by H.E. Cardinal Tagle was profoundly inspiring and motivating.

Over the recent period, Caritas Jerusalem has extended its support to numerous families in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the northern West Bank, and Gaza. Our ability to reach vulnerable families and children was made possible by our dedicated supporters. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to our supporters and the visiting delegations, particularly Development & Peace, Church in Need, Embrace the Middle East, Caritas Poland, and countless others who have contributed to our efforts.

Anton Asfar
Secretary General
**Development intervention**

**Protection of the Rights of Marginalized Groups in Jenin**

We are delighted to share with you one of the successful stories from Caritas Jerusalem's project, "Social Cohesion and Greater Resilience of Rural Communities in Jenin Governorate," funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation and co-funded by Caritas France in collaboration with Caritas International Belgium. This initiative aims to bring about positive changes in several ways, including social cohesion and the protection of the rights of marginalized groups in Jenin Governorate. Together, we empower communities and foster resilience, creating a more inclusive and prosperous future for all in Jenin Governorate.

**Success story**

Meet Isra'a Alarda - A Rising Star from Arraba (a town in Jenin)

Isra'a, a determined 22-year-old and resident of Arraba, faced challenges in finding a job after earning her bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in 2022. One day, Isra'a stumbled upon an announcement for employability skills training for Caritas Jerusalem's Social Coherence Project on Arraba Municipality's official Facebook page. She didn't hesitate to grab this rare opportunity and promptly applied for the program. Completing the training with commitment, Isra'a's hard work paid off when she was offered a paid internship.

![Isra'a Alarda](image)

**Empowering Opportunities with Caritas Jerusalem**

Through our project, Caritas Jerusalem team facilitated an internship opportunity for Isra'a at an engineering company in Jenin City. Thrilled to work in her field of study, Isra'a approached the internship enthusiastically, leaving a lasting impression on the company's director. Impressed by her determination and learning capacity, the director expressed the company's desire to recommend her for immediate employment if suitable positions become available.

Isra'a's internship experience through Caritas Jerusalem project proved invaluable. It provided her with relevant and practical skills, and she was able to secure the job and become a productive member of the society.
Health and Emergency intervention

Improving Health for Seniors and Young Children in Gaza Strip

Caritas Jerusalem is making a difference in the lives of the elderly and children under five in impoverished North and Central Gaza areas through our project, "Improving Health for Seniors and Young Children in Gaza." funded by Misean Cara and Caritas Korea.

Caritas Jerusalem is committed to make a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the residents in Gaza, despite the fact that the crises are ongoing and the situation is deteriorating on a daily basis.

Additionally, we are actively raising awareness about health and nutrition among caregivers to empower them with essential knowledge for better caregiving.

Success story

R.E - A Journey of Transformation

Meet R.E., a 16-month-old baby girl, brought to Caritas Jerusalem Health Center in Gaza by her concerned parents due to delayed walking. Our thorough examination revealed that R.E. had experienced a challenging start to life, with nutritional deficiencies contributing to developmental delays. Her weight and height were far below average, and she also suffered from anaemia and a potential renal problem.

With dedication and compassion, Caritas Jerusalem team in Gaza immediately provided her with the much needed and urgent medications and therapy. Moreover, she was referred to a skilled Caritas nutritionist, who recommended a nutrient-rich diet to aid in her recovery.

In just two weeks of following the recommended treatment plan, R.E.’s progress astonished everyone as she took her first steps alone. These initial steps marked the beginning of a remarkable transformation in her life.

As the days passed, R.E.’s improvement was evident. The combination of effective treatment and proper nutrition contributed to a boost in her weight and height.

While witnessing her child's steady progress, R.E.’s mother gained newfound confidence in caring for her little one. Each step of improvement brought hope and optimism to the family, fostering a belief in a brighter future for R.E.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your continued support. We look forward to sharing more success stories with you as we strive to build a healthier, more resilient community in Gaza.
Socio-Pastoral Intervention

Integral Support for Persons with Disabilities in Hebron Province and Occupational Activation of Women and Youth Entering the Labor Market in the Gaza Strip.

Caritas Jerusalem is honoured to announce a new initiative that aims to improve the lives of vulnerable groups in Palestine.

Caritas Jerusalem has launched a project to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities in three rehabilitation centers: Al-Arroub refugee camp and Al Dahrine in Hebron, in addition to AL-Carmel in Bethlehem Governorate.

The initiative is a collaboration with Caritas Poland and is co-funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, as part of the Polish development cooperation program. It has two main objectives: to help and empower people with disabilities in Hebron, and to create economic opportunities for women and youth in Gaza Strip.

The project involves renovating three rehabilitation centers and setting up eight therapy rooms with specialized equipment. The therapy rooms are designed to help children with various types of disabilities, such as mental delay, sensory and neurological problems, and learning difficulties. The goal is to enhance their mobility and self-confidence and reduce their frustration and other challenges.

A Guarantee for Life-changing Success Stories!

Caritas Jerusalem has also empowered the parents to continue the therapy at home using sensory boxes. Sensory boxes are amazing devices that mimic the therapy room ability to stimulate the senses and enhance the learning and coping abilities of children with disabilities. Caritas Jerusalem held two training workshops for the parents of 49 children in Hebron and Bethlehem, where experts taught them how to use the sensory boxes safely and effectively. Each family received one box to take home and use as a complementary treatment. This way, the children can enjoy the benefits of the therapy room environment at home, under the loving care of their parents. This is a wonderful example of how Caritas Jerusalem is supporting children with disabilities and their families to overcome their challenges and achieve their full potential.
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Jerusalem | 0593835155
Gaza | 0592630674

Safeguarding@caritasjr.org

Caritas Jerusalem
SAFEGUARDING

We Put Love Into Action
Notre Dame of Jerusalem center
P.O.BOX 31426,Jerusalem 913131
Tel: +972 2 6287574 | Fax: +972 2 6288421
Email: caritas@caritasjr.org