



### *Easter Homily 2017*

*An excerpt of the homily of the Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem during Mass on Easter Eve.*

May the Lord's peace be with you!

Here we are gathered on the day so long awaited. The Passover of the Lord and our Passover! Like Mary Magdalene and the Apostles John and Peter, today, we've also arrived at the Tomb of Christ to bow down before this mystery of His resurrection, to welcome this extraordinary gift that is His life in us. During the entire week we have celebrated the beautiful and ancient liturgies that also intended to retrace even physically the human experience of Jesus in the same Places, especially in this very Place where He was buried.

And now that all these wonderful liturgies are about to end, it yet remains for us to ask ourselves what we have understood and what have the many and meaningful gestures which accompanied us in these days left with us. For many of us here present, perhaps, they've become moments that we take for granted, being by now used to the years of very familiar liturgical repetitions. For many pilgrims, instead,

they are exciting new experiences, precious memories to take home and share with one's families and keep in heart. The joyous and exhausting confusion of these days, where all the Christian communities celebrate the Paschal Mystery at the same time in this very Place according to their respective traditions, create a festive and exceptional atmosphere. In short, everything tells us of something different and special, joyous and unique. Surely, the Paschal Mystery in Jerusalem is also this.

But also in Jerusalem, as in any other part of the world, today the mystery par excellence: the Resurrection, the core of our faith, is placed before our minds. The apostle Paul reminds us of it: "And if Christ has not been raised, then empty is our preaching; empty, too, your faith." (1Cor 15:14). Today, Jesus also addresses us with the same question He put to Martha and which we heard a few days ago: "I am the resurrection and the life... do you believe this?" (Jn 11:25-26).

Christ is Risen! He is truly Risen, Alleluia.

*For the entire homily, please check the below link:*

<http://www.lpj.org/homily-of-archbishop-pizzaballa-for-the-easter-sunday-2017/>

## *Mother and daughter*

Suha is a forty one year old married woman from Al Shaja'aiyya, Gaza who lives with her husband, five daughters and three sons who attend school. Suha is a housewife; her husband is the only breadwinner who is a daily paid worker with an average wage of \$10 per day. This very low income is not enough to cover the daily expenses, educational costs and any treatment costs. After the recent war on Gaza, the family lost their home; it was completely destroyed and they had to move to a small rented house.



Suha started to attend the psychosocial support sessions for the mothers and during one-on-one sessions, CJ's psychosocial specialist identified that Suha suffered from stress, self-blame, lack of sleep and emotional disturbance that affected the relationship with her children. She also had suicidal tendencies and that she considered harming herself or even thought of committing suicide.

She used to attend the sessions and was very passive and interacting with others and she would always show negative response or no response at all. Those syndromes are common with people suffering from acute depression. Moreover, Suha's daughter who attends the psychosocial support

sessions for children also suffered from depression and she was always crying and sitting alone refusing to participate with others in the activities.

Caritas Jerusalem's psychosocial specialist has conducted individual sessions for both Suha and her daughter to help them rebuild their mother-daughter relationship and strengthen their bond.

Each session lasted two hours; the first one was introducing each other and gathering information about the family while in the second one; Suha started to share her fears and problems. The psychologist provided the necessary support and guidance to the mother and her kids on how to deal with problems and Suha started using some of the techniques for stress relief and new methods to deal with her kids.

The symptoms of depression gradually began to decrease and by the seventh session Suha was reacting positively. *"After a long time of isolation and living under stress and fear, I thank God for the sessions that actually helped me to build a better relation with my kids. So now I feel that we have a new fresh start and all of this couldn't be possible without your help and support."* Said Suha

This project is targeting the vulnerable families in Gaza Strip with primary health care and psychosocial support. It is funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation in partnership with Caritas Belgium and implemented by CJ.

## *Sew it with love*



*“Having mental disorders will not stop us from being active in the society”*

Said Claudie, one of the students

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the female participation rate in the labor force was 19.3% of the total female population at work age in 2016, compared to 10.3% in 2001. There are many women with great ideas but need support to help their businesses succeed. Through women empowerment projects, Caritas Jerusalem has been supporting Palestinian women to achieve their social and economic rights by educating them and encouraging them to build their own future. In 2014, we started an income generating initiative to improve the living standards of the citizens especially women.

More than 60 women were trained during the past three years in sewing and dressmaking at Caritas Jerusalem

Training Center in Jabal Al Nijmah near Ramallah. This training has offered them new skills which will allow them to enter the labor market.

In this article some of the trainees answer some questions in the hope of inspiring and supporting women who want to be self-dependent and economically independent.

### **1. How do you find yourself in this training course? What did you learn and what are you learning?**

At first, it was really hard because I had no clue how to run a sewing machine or sketching or even use the cutting tools but I tried to learn as much as I could from my trainer and colleagues. It gets easier with time especially when you start seeing the results of all your hard work or receive positive feedback and inspiration from other people. I learnt the kinds of fabric, kinds of needles, types of sewing machines and sewing techniques.

Currently, I am learning sewing tips on how to cut and pin fabric using a simple pattern and the correct measurements. I am also learning how to cut and sew different types of pockets and how to apply zippers to dresses and trousers.

**2. How do you improve your sewing skills?**

I think the best way to learn and improve my skills is to keep on practicing. I sew every day and really enjoy the challenge of a new technique. If I run into something I can't figure out, I ask my classmates who are very supportive and truly lovely.



**3. Do you get much time to sew? If so what do you like to make?**

I do not have a sewing machine at home yet in order to sew whenever I want; I only have the chance to sew with my colleagues at this sewing workshop. I love the challenge of designing my own outfits by making lovely things for me and my family such as skirts, dresses, coats, blouses, trousers.

**4. What are the difficulties that face you while learning sewing?**

I faced so many problems trying to figure out how to use the right needles with the right patterns and fabrics.

Because I am considered to be a slow learner, it takes me more time than others to learn the basics of new skills. Sewing is considered to be a big challenge for me; it needs full concentration, daily practices and creativity.



**5. What are your future goals or plans?**

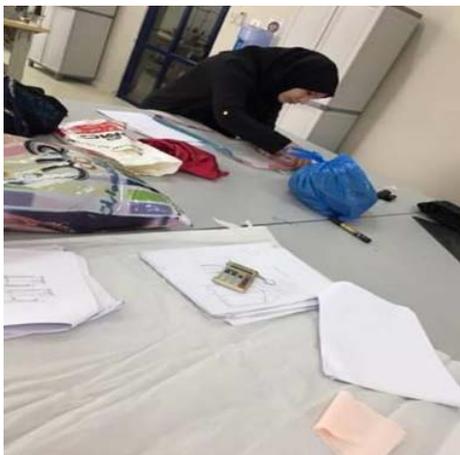
After I finish this course and its internship; I am planning to buy a small sewing machine and start my own income generating project at home; I will prepare a room and start fixing clothes for my neighbors, friends and family for a low cost. I want to be financially independent and to secure my future.

## **6. How did your family support you?**

I have been lucky to have an amazing family that continues to encourage and support me. They believe that I am able to learn new skills. It is about trusting each other and providing mutual respect. When we believe in others and their abilities and talents, we have the ability to create a much stronger and connected community. They also encourage me to be self-dependent.

## **7. Why are you learning sewing skills?**

Sewing has so many levels. Sewing by hand, home decor sewing, sewing for kids, fashion sewing and a lot of other sewing areas. It is a useful skill that is worth learning. The best reason for learning to sew is the sense of achievement that comes from creating a handmade piece out of a raw fabric.



## **8. What do you advice others?**

I would like to tell every girl out there to get out of the house and learn a skill in which she finds herself in. Be patient and you will succeed even if there are restrictions. I believe these cultural, social or economic restrictions can be overcome.

## **9. Why should women get out of the house and learn new skills?**

I think it is important for everyone. It serves as a connection between ourselves and the world around us. I believe we were not born to stay in one place; we should experience life and be a productive member in our community.



This training center 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.

Caritas Jerusalem would like to thank all our partners who support us in operating this essential program.

## *Never too old to enjoy life*



Caritas Jerusalem celebrates March as Women's month by encouraging them to participate in local activities in their communities. Caritas Jerusalem believes that by empowering women, we empower humanity. Women are honored in this month by their families, children and communities. Every year, we celebrate the International Women's day and the Mother's day with our Elderly Day Care Center in Ramallah.



Different activities were held recently with our senior citizens in Ramallah to show appreciation and respect for all they do. On 22 March 2017, 37 students from Ramallah Secondary Girls' School visited our Elderly house to celebrate the Mother's day and spend quality time with them. Together, they sang and danced on old traditional songs; they exchanged stories, laughs and jokes. Special handmade gifts were distributed to all the senior citizens.

On the same occasion; Caritas Jerusalem's Elderly Day Care Center organized a trip for the senior citizens to celebrate the International Women's day and the Mother's day in Jericho; a Palestinian town, located near Jordan River in the West Bank.



44 of the senior citizens that we serve traveled to Jericho, Deir Hijleh Monastery who enjoyed the view of the garden that is filled with palm trees; they sat under the cool shade of the trees enjoying the bird's twitters and remembered the good old days.

They visited the church where they lit candles wishing for peace, tranquility and love. They also had a tour in the old city of Jericho and enjoyed a hot meal.



“I believe that lighting a candle in an old church makes dreams come true”  
said one of the elderly



### 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

CJ would like to thank the local community and the EDCC staff for their efforts in organizing such activities for the lonely senior citizens.

