

Dear friends,

It is our pleasure to share with you some of the activities that were implemented during this period. We were able to hold our fifth conference on illegal drugs at the Bethlehem University and distribute 620 scholarships to cover part of the tuition fees in Bethlehem Schools and graduated 22 students with life skills.

In addition, we launched a project in which we empower people with disabilities and their families working with six centers in the Bethlehem Governorate.

We also hosted a Ramadan Iftar in Jerusalem with former drug addicts.

It was a privilege to take part in the MONA region conference in Amman where I met many colleagues from all over the world and together we celebrated the 50 year Jubilee of Caritas Jordan, Caritas Jerusalem and Caritas Egypt.

George Handal

Acting General Director
Caritas Jerusalem



A Value to Every Life



People with disabilities are a particular matter of concern to Caritas Jerusalem, for they often face discrimination and barriers that restrict them from participating in the society on an equal basis.

Due to the lack of services available to them and the many obstacles they face in their everyday lives, people with disabilities have generally poorer health, lower education achievements, fewer economic opportunities and higher rates of poverty than people without disabilities.

Caritas Jerusalem in partnership with Caritas Poland and co-funded by the Polish Development Cooperation Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland has launched 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.

Caritas Jerusalem values these special people who are regrettably denied access to jobs, vocational trainings and music. In many cases the primary caregivers find themselves overwhelmed by the challenges of raising them and are unaware of their rights and their hidden talents.

Our aim is to equip them with their full potential so they become active members of the society.



Caritas MONA Regional Conference 2017



On the 22nd of May 2017, Fifteen member Organisations of Caritas in the Middle East and North Africa in addition to local guests, international and regional partners gathered in Jordan – Amman for three days to discuss mutual interests and partnership between national Caritas and partners to better respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in the region.

The conference started by a welcoming speech from Mr. Gabriel Hatti, MONA President and Mr. Karam Abi Yazbak, MONA Regional Coordinator and Bishop William Al Shomali; they welcomed the participants from all areas and thanked the attendees especially those who came from far regions to participate in this conference.



The conference engaged in many subjects, discussions and workshops that aimed to address the humanitarian response in which Caritas Organizations are involved in. Our Caritas delegates Mr. George Handal, The Acting General Director and Sr. Bridget Tighe, Executive Director in Gaza participated in this conference by presenting a detailed report of programs, activities and projects implemented by CJ.



“It was an honor to participate in this important conference, to meet other partners and to discuss future cooperation” Said Mr. George Handal, the Acting General Director of CJ

The conference came to its conclusion by celebrating the Golden Jubilee of Caritas Jordan, Caritas Jerusalem and Caritas Egypt by holding a mass presided by the Apostolic Administrator of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem Most Rev. Pierbattista Pizzaballa at Our Lady of Peace Center in Amman.

For a video about the conference; please check the below links:

<http://bit.ly/2sdAD3t>

<http://bit.ly/2r9Wnty>

Caritas Jerusalem’s fifth Conference on Drug Abuse at Bethlehem University Old City Counselling Center (OCCC)



“It is a pleasure for Bethlehem University to host a conference on drug abuse for the fifth time, I admire you for making the effort to try to save Palestinian young people from this disease” Stated Br. Peter Bray, the Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University

On Wednesday, the 24th of May 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.



Mr. Ala` Kharoub, the technical manager of the Old City Counselling Center welcomed everyone, thanked Bethlehem University for hosting this conference and introduced the Diploma in “**Drug Prevention and Technical Intervention for Drug Using and Addiction**” that started last month. *“This diploma which is certified by the Ministry of Higher Education is highly in demand and every year we graduate more than 20 students”* said Mr. Kharoub



“We as Jerusalemites face difficult times in Jerusalem and our role as leaders is to help the young people and protect them from this fatal disease” Said Eng. Adnan Al-Husseini, the governor of Jerusalem. He also conveyed his gratitude for the efforts Caritas Jerusalem and Bethlehem University put in raising the awareness through this conference.



This year, we were honoured to have Dr. Waleed Hadad, an international expert in fighting against crime and drugs from Shafa Amr in the north of Israel to discuss the challenges and effects of the technology in raising and protecting children.

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.



For a video about the conference; please check the below link:

<http://bit.ly/2rRmZTf>

Education is the key to success



Palestinians place great importance on education. Not only as a tool to increase employability and standards of living but also to revive the Palestinian identity and culture. With a rate of 94, 8 %, literacy, Palestine is considered to be the highest in the Middle East.

On the 8th of June 2017, Caritas Jerusalem in cooperation with Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000 distributed 620 scholarships to the neediest Christian students in 21 schools in the Bethlehem governorate.



The ceremony started with a prayer by Fr. Iyad Twal, the General Director of the Latin Patriarchate Schools in Palestine and Jordan, “*Starting with a prayer is a great way of reminding ourselves that God is with us, He is the center of everything we do and His blessings are with us*”.

The event took place at the Latin Patriarchate School in Beit Jala in the presence of Mr. Francesco Bernales, the Ambassador of Chile in Palestine, Mrs. Vivian Ghoobar, the representative of Fundación Palestina Belén 2000, Mr. George Handal, the Acting General Director of Caritas Jerusalem and the 21 schools’ directors.



“*Today, we gather to celebrate the conclusion of the project “Partial School Fees for Students from the Bethlehem Province” funded by Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000 which supports educating the Palestinian youth in Bethlehem, Biet Jala and Biet Sahour. This program is also designed to empower families and the Palestinian Society*” Said Mr. Handal. He also thanked Fr. Raed Abusahlia for his dedicated service as the General Director of Caritas Jerusalem for the past four years, Mr. Francesco Bernales for his attendance and support and Mr. Alexis Sfeir, the director of Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000 for

their generous contribution and financial aid.

Mr. Francesco Bernales, the Ambassador of Chile in Palestine was very pleased to participate in the event: *“It is a very generous expression from Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000 to recognize the wonderful efforts of all the principals for leading the schools and it is my pleasure to be with you for the fourth consecutive year”*



The ceremony came to its conclusion by cultural performances presented by the schools' students and the delivering of the scholarships to the schools' directors.

CJ would like to thank the Fundacion Palestina Belen 2000 from Chile for helping 620 students going to school every day and giving them better chances for the future.

Sharing Iftar with former drug addicts



On Tuesday the 13th of June 2017 Caritas Jerusalem's Old City Counselling Center (OCCC) organized an Iftar (Ramadan break-fast) with a number of former drug addicts, social workers, counsellors and representatives from the Ministry of Education at the Petra Restaurant in East Jerusalem.



Mr. George Handal, the Acting General Director of CJ welcomed the guests and expressed his appreciation to all who are involved in assisting those who find themselves entrapped in the vicious cycle of addiction.

This annual Iftar which Caritas arranges is very essential for the continuing of the wellbeing of the former addicts. This small gesture encourages them and conveys the message that the society accepts them and respects their individuality.



Alae Kharoub, the technical manager of the OCCC also thanked the guests and the stakeholders for their constant cooperation with Caritas Jerusalem.

Caritas Jerusalem would like to express its gratitude to Faisal Al-Husseini Foundation for funding the Iftar



Caritas' Old City Counseling Center (OCCC) opened in 1999, with the objective of helping the increasingly poor population of East Jerusalem and focusing especially on drug abuse issues. It is currently the only organisation in East Jerusalem that gives counseling and support services to drug addicts and their families.

Education is the Key to Future Development



On Thursday, June 15, 2017, Caritas Jerusalem was honored to welcome Mr. Martin Náprstek, representing the Czech Development Agency, Ms. Sylva Pavlaskova from the Representative Office of the Czech Republic in Ramallah and Ms. Iva Peterkova, Program Manager of Caritas Czech Republic to discuss the progress of the “Support to socially disadvantage and graduates in OPT” project which has been ongoing since 2015.



On the same day, Caritas Jerusalem in cooperation with Bethlehem University celebrated the graduation of 22 students who participated in the training course entitled “Employability Skills”. This course was offered to senior students and it covered several life skills topics, such as CV writing, interviewing skills, time management, communications skills, presentation skills, etc.



Caritas Jerusalem would like to take this opportunity to thank Caritas Czech Republic and Czech Development Agency for funding this project which focuses on supporting the socially disadvantaged and paying a particular attention to educating women in order to participate in the economic sector.



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:

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Account number: 457793/0/510 USD

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Branch No: 9110

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P.O.Box: 2445-Al-Ram