

Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem
General Administration
Summary of Main Projects 2018-2019

The main projects of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem during 2018-2019 centered around three main themes, being expanding the humanitarian support to needy Christian families; enhancing the educational support, mainly through the schools and parishes; and focusing on the pastoral activities, mainly through the parishes and the work of the pastoral committee. Below is a summary of the main projects under each of these main headings.

Expanding the Humanitarian Support to Needy Christian Families

The Latin Patriarchate continued with the existing humanitarian assistance programs that have been offered for many years and expanded the programs to areas where there are emerging needs resulting from the deteriorating economic and political reality of the Holy Land (Palestine, Jordan, and Israel). Such support can be summarized as follows:

- Social Assistance – to support families who are categorized as the poorest of the poor in the areas where we serve. Such families had serious economic problems and the support sometimes ranged from food coupons to payment of utility bills and back rental.
- Educational Support – to assist needy Christian families secure the education of their children either at schools or universities.
- Medical Assistance – to support poor Christians who are in need of urgent medical procedures and do not have medical insurance.
- Medicines – to cover the monthly medicines of poor elderly members who have chronic diseases and require medications on a monthly basis, and do not have insurance.
- Iraqi Refugee Support – to support the families of Christian Iraqi refugees in Jordan through subsidies to their rent costs, medical expenses and transportation.
- Syrian and Iraqi Refugees education – providing a quality education to Syrian and Iraqi refugees through opening 12 LPJ schools in Jordan in the afternoon as second shift to educate the children denied a formal education.
- Gaza Job Creation – providing employment and training opportunities to youth and needy members of the Christian community thus encouraging them to stay in this small yet vibrant community.
- East Jerusalem assistance – to provide Christian families caught in the politics of the city support to sustain their presence in the city as they face legal and eviction proceedings.
- Livelihood refugee support in Jordan – through the implementation of a number of training and employment programs, hundreds were involved in gaining skills in cheese making, pizza production, tailoring skills, and wine making among others. Such refugees became self-sufficient through gaining these skills.

Through the above assistance programs, thousands of needy Christians were assisted as they faced poverty, legal notices, medical emergencies, and general marginalization. In total, over \$2 million dollars were allocated to these various programs.

Educational Support

The Latin Patriarchate operates a network of 45 schools and 34 kindergartens spread over the three countries of Israel, Palestine and Jordan. Many of these schools are old, with some buildings being over 170 years old while others more recently constructed. In total the schools educate 19,000 students and employ around 1,550 people, mostly Christians. The project support is divided into two components, the first being new institutions, while the other being the focus on enhancing the buildings through infrastructure, furniture, and equipment upgrades. As for the first category, here is a summary of the main projects:

- Jaffa of Nazareth – Israel – Construction of a new Kindergarten there to meet the growing needs of the Christian community and to expand the school. This project also included a complete renovation of the adjacent school.
- Hashimi – Jordan – The construction of a new Kindergarten in Hashimi which was mandated by the Jordanian Ministry of Education, as the old building did not meet the governmental standards.
- Gaza – Palestine – The construction of a new Kindergarten at the Holy Family School in Gaza to meet the growing needs there. This project also included adding a new floor to expand the school as well as installing a solar energy system.
- Salt – Jordan – The relocation of the school from the crowded center of Salt to the outskirts where the school was relocated in the building formerly used as a kindergarten and house for the Rosary Sisters. This provided an enhanced learning environment after completely renovating the building.

The cost of the above projects was in excess of \$2 million dollars.

In addition to these main construction and renovation projects, a number of additional smaller projects were completed including:

- Improving the infrastructure, furniture and equipment at the various schools to ensure a healthy and safe environment. Below is a highlight of the various main projects:
 - Installing solar energy systems at over ten schools in Palestine and Jordan. Not only did this reduce the cost of electricity, in many places down to zero, but contributed to an environmentally friendly eco-system.
 - Installing smart boards at no less than ten schools to enhance the use of technology in the educational process.
 - Hundreds of student desks were either rehabilitated or replaced to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for the students
 - Renovation at eight schools of the toilettes improving the hygiene for the students.
 - Renovation works at a number of schools including school halls, classrooms, and laboratories.
 - Installing an elevator at the Seminary in Beit Jala
 - Enhancing the Computer labs at three schools
 - Installation of CCTV security systems at a number of schools to enhance safety.
 - Upgrade of the electric grid at two schools.

The cost estimate for the above projects is about \$1 million dollars.

Pastoral Activities

There was renewed commitment to support the pastoral work of the diocese and this can be divided in two categories, the first being to support the pastoral activities while the second component consisted of much needed infrastructure development to support the activities. Below is a summary for the two sub-categories starting with the activities:

- Summer camps focusing on bible education and visits to holy sites were held during the summer at all 55 LPJ parishes.
- Sunday school activities were supported at many LPJ parishes.
- Production of educational materials and games to enhance the pastoral work included educational games production “In the Footsteps of Jesus”
- Support to Catholic scout troupes scattered throughout the parishes.
- Provide transportation costs to various parishes in Palestine to participate in the Palm Sunday procession in Jerusalem as well as Our Lady of Palestine feast in Rafat.
- Expanding the work with the migrant community in Jordan.
- Supporting the work of the prison ministry in Jordan.
- Translating spiritual literature to the Hebrew language to support the Hebrew speaking community.
- Recording Arabic spiritual and religious songs for use by mass media, marketed through YouTube to attract the younger generations.
- Major support to the activities of the Youth Chaplaincy in both Palestine and Jordan.
- Supporting the spiritual retreats of the Lectors and Acolytes.
- Supporting the spiritual retreats of Deacons, and new priests.
- Developing the Emmaus Center for family support.
- Purchasing a bus to support the pastoral activities of the Gaza parish.
- Purchasing a mini-van to support the work of the Youth Chaplaincy in Palestine.
- Supporting all costs of the Catechetical Office and its work throughout the Diocese.

The estimated cost for the above activities is around \$500,000.

As for the infrastructure works completed to enhance the pastoral activities, they can be summarized as follows:

- The continuation of the construction of the new Church in Jubeiha, Jordan, which will have a capacity of about 900 seats as well as the parish hall. Expected completion date is March 2020.
- The renovation of the Rosary Sisters residences in Amman, Rameh, Zababdeh, and Beit Jala.
- The rehabilitation or expansion of the parish halls in Kerak, Fheis, Beit Jala, Ramallah, Taybeh, Bir Zeit, Aboud, and Jenin.
- Construction of two rooms in Gaza to serve as a training center serving the youth.
- Complete renovation of the priests’ house in Anjara.
- Rehabilitation works at the Churches in Hashimi, Ader, and Smakieh.
- Renovations and expansions of the Christ the King Bookstore in Beit Sahour being the main source of Christian books and references in the area.

- Renovation of the main conference room at the Latin Patriarchate.

The estimated cost of implementation of the above projects is approximately \$1.2 million.

Other Miscellaneous Projects

In addition to the main projects stated above, there are a number of additional projects in various LPJ entities including:

- *Our Lady of Peace Center in Jordan* – six projects were completed to enhance the services of the center which caters to people with special needs as well as host many pastoral activities. This included the restoration of the hydrotherapy pool; renovation of the games area; establishment of a sensory room; rehabilitation of the speech therapy room; completion of two retired priests' apartments; and renovation of the bathrooms.
- *Ecclesiastical Courts* – complete renovation of the courts headquarters in Jerusalem including a safer environment especially for the court documents.
- *Beit Afram Elderly Home in Taybeh* – a number of projects were completed to improve the infrastructure. This included installing a new fire safety system; safety repairs to emergency exits; re-asphalting the parking lot; water-proofing works to fix leaky roofs; and introducing an air-conditioning and ventilation system in the kitchen.

The estimated cost of the above projects is approximately \$350,000.

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