



GRAND MAGISTERIUM – VATICAN  
EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF  
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM

*At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land*

A solidarity fund: 600 families helped in one year



**Solidarity with the most needy is one of the areas that the Order of the Holy Sepulchre has most at heart and it is expressed through various projects supported in the Holy Land. “Through this program we are not only offering economic assistance, but we bring hope to many and allow them to live a dignified life,” notes Sami El- Yousef, CEO of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.**

In 2018, the contributions sent by the members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre allowed, among other things, 600 people to be helped through scholarships, family aid, healthcare support and support for the purchase of medicines, without counting the beneficiaries of a specific project in East Jerusalem for legal assistance and the program for Iraqi Christian refugees in Jordan.

Reading the parameters to be included among those entitled to help, goes some way to helping us understand the gravity of the situation. Those who receive help are part of a family whose income does not allow them to respond to the primary needs of family members or a family where the primary breadwinner is sick or recently deceased. There are also families who cannot afford treatment for a sick member, who do not have health insurance or who are elderly without a pension.

Even the smallest contribution given to one of these families hides a story of daily challenges and difficulties. For example, S.A. is a 35-year-old woman, married and with four children who works as a cleaner. She lives on the Mount of Olives in a rented house and is the primary provider for her family, but her salary does not cover basic needs such as rent, food, utilities and school fees. Through the solidarity fund, the Latin Patriarchate succeeded in helping S.A. to pay part of her daughters’ school fees and, together with the Custody of the Holy Land, to cover part of the debt contracted with the company that supplies the electricity in the family apartment.

W. A. is also 35 and lives in Gaza with his family of five. He worked as a police officer but was forced into early retirement on a very low salary, the only income in the family, and which does not allow them to survive from month to month. W. A. asked for help when, due to debts with the landlord, he had run the risk of being evicted from the rented apartment in which the family lives. The Latin Patriarchate, thanks to the contributions sent by the Knights and the Dames present in the various continents, managed to pay a part of the debt thus allowing the family of W.A. to continue living in their home.

The medical aid program helped 124 patients in 2018. Among them, a 15-year-old boy from Zababdeh (Jenin governorate, in Palestine) who suffered a traffic accident and had to face various neurological operations, only partially covered by the public health system, and K., 72, of Aboud (Ramallah governorate, in Palestine), who for 5 years has been fighting a bowel cancer that involves numerous operations and chemotherapy sessions. These cases, besides the difficulties and suffering they involve from a medical and human point of view, also represent a great challenge for the sick and for their families who cannot cover the cost they partly incur for the operations, treatment or medicines.

Our thoughts turn to the 600 needy families who have received help that allows them to move onwards – by continuing their studies, by living in their own homes or by receiving the necessary medical care – and we thank the Latin Patriarchate and the social workers who work on this project and who ensure that the people most at risk are not left alone and that the contributions of the Knights and Dames go to those who need them most.

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