

Saint Michael's Catholic Parish



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www.nelsonbaycatholicchurch.com
Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord Year A 29 March 2026

We acknowledge the Worimi people – the traditional custodians of this land.
My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

WEEKEND MASS TIMES

Reconciliation:
Saturday
4.00pm - 4.45 pm
Saturday Vigil: 5:00 pm
Sunday Mass: 8.30 am
Exposition and Adoration
One Hour before Mass

WEEKDAY MASS

Tuesday Chrim Mass
Wednesday 9.15am
Thursday 6.00pm
Good Friday 3.00pm

NURSING HOME MASSES

Every Second Wednesday
10.30 am Uniting.
Muller Street
Salamander Bay

Every Third Thursday
10.00am Regis Aged Care
Corlette.

Every Fourth Thursday
10.00am Harbourside
Shoal Bay.

PARISH CONTACTS

PARISH PRIEST:

Fr. Anthony Nguyen
Phone: 0420 401 025

PARISH DEACON:

Dcn Gerard McCarthy

PARISH SECRETARY:

Mrs Dianne Maricic
Parish Office Hours
9.30 am to 3.00 pm
Wednesday to Friday
Phone: 0401 233 650

ST MICHAEL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:

Ms Helen Bourne
Office: 4981 1111

COMMUNITY SAFETY AT OUR MASSES

Please be assured that we are doing all we can to ensure our gatherings are as safe as possible:

- **Please do not enter the church or other parish buildings if you are unwell. This includes meetings/gatherings.**
- No density limits apply in Places of Worship but please allow space between people where possible.
- Please continue to hand sanitise.
- **HOLY WATER is now available and is changed regularly.**

HOLY COMMUNION

The Communion host can be received in the hand, and on the tongue with care. Since the latter is deemed high risk, please proceed to the Priest or Deacon only and at the end of the line.

CHRISM MASS 31ST MARCH 2026

This year's Chrism Mass will be celebrated in the evening of Tuesday, 31st March at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West commencing at 7.00 pm. Join Bishop Michael Kennedy, the Clergy, and all the faithful of the Church of Maitland-Newcastle to gather for the annual Chrism Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

CANCELED CHRISM MASS BUS

Due to the low number of parishioners interested in used the bus to Chrism Mass and the high cost of fuel surcharge, we have CANCELED the bus to the Sacred Cathedral this Tuesday 31 March. Sorry for your inconvenience.

DAYLIGHT SAVING NEXT SUNDAY 5TH APRIL

This year, daylight saving commences at 3.00am on Easter Sunday, 5th April. Clocks go backward one hour.

GLUTEN FREE HOSTS ARE AVAILABLE

Please see Fr. Anthony or Deacon Gerard before Mass if you need to receive a gluten free host.

ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PRAYER

Saint Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our protection against
the wickedness and
snares of the devil;
May God rebuke him,
we humbly pray;
And do thou,
O Prince of the
Heavenly Host,
by the power of God,
cast into hell Satan
and all evil spirits
who roam the world
seeking the ruin of souls.
Amen.

**ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - NELSON BAY
PROMOTES SAFEGUARDING, WHICH INVOLVES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
PROACTIVE, COMMON SENSE AND PRACTICAL IDEAS THAT ENSURE THE SAFETY OF
CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITY.
SAFEGUARDING PROMOTION: FOR ALL SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS WITHIN THE
PARISH, PLEASE CONTACT: FR. ANTHONY, DEACON GERARD AND
DIANNE MARICIC.**



Palm Sunday
28–29 March 2026



As Project Compassion 2026 comes to a close, we thank you for your generous support throughout Lent. This year, we shared the stories of four inspiring people whose lives are being uplifted through your compassion. Your support is helping them overcome challenges and build stronger futures. There is still time to donate! Together, we can continue nurturing hope and empowering communities facing poverty and injustice.

Please donate today.

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code.

Or online at: www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate

Or by calling: 1800 024 413

Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent.*

PASCAL TRIDUUM / EASTER MASSES TIMETABLE

† Tuesday, 31 st March	Chrism Mass	7.00 pm – (Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle)
† Wednesday, 1 st April	Holy Week	9.15 am
† Thursday, 2 nd April	Mass of the Last Supper	6.00 pm Adoration followed until 8.00 pm
† Good Friday, 3 rd April	Stations of the Cross	10.00 am
	The Lord's Passion	3.00 pm
† Saturday, 4 th April	Holy Saturday Vigil	5.30 pm
† Sunday, 5 th April	Easter Sunday	7.00 am and 8.30 am

GOOD FRIDAY HOLY LAND COLLECTION - On Good Friday 03 April we will be having the Good Friday Holy Land Collection.

As we are all aware, the Church and people of the Holy Land have over recent years, been passing through very difficult times. Christians in particular, due to their minority status, are particularly vulnerable. The current wars have brought death, destruction and fear to the West Bank, Israel, Lebanon, Syria as well as to Gaza. The suffering caused by the conflict has been compounded by the prolonged absence of pilgrims. Many Christian families who one relied on the Holy Places and pilgrimage-related activities for their living, are now experienced great difficulty. On Good Friday PLEASE not forget the Holy Land, and that as well as remembering those there in prayer, that we take up this collection as a way of supporting the ministry of the Church and ensuring that our Christian brothers and sisters can continue to survive living in their own land.

BLESSING EASTER BASKET

The blessing of the Easter Basket containing the food for the first meal of Easter has been a beloved Catholic ritual for families of Eastern European origin for centuries. This tradition has since been adopted by people of all ethnic backgrounds, who enjoy its symbolism. The blessing will occur after Easter Sunday masses.



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NEXT SUNDAY

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

First Reading
Isaiah 58:7-10

Responsorial Psalm
A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

Second Reading
1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Gospel
Matthew 5:13-16

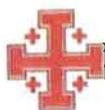
PRAYERS PLEASE

In your mercy, please pray for those who have died recently: **Maureen Noonan, and those whose anniversaries occur around this time: Maureen Dempsey, Patricia Went, Maria Iglic, Alice Smith, Luzviminda Vicedo, Maria Gacutan and for the sick in our parish: Damien Brinley, Robyn Harris, Lorraine McCourt, Justin Fox, Joe Garreffa, Brenda and Brian Tucker, Sarlic Trumbli, Clemente Quinajon, David Berkeley, Anna Tan, Johny and Alexander Vella and David Campbell.**

Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

Names on the Sick List will be removed after 4 weeks unless otherwise advised.

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HOLY LAND COMMISSARIAT

Franciscan Provincial Office
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To the people of the Church in Australia, for the Holy Land Collection 2026

As many of you are aware, for 800 years the Franciscan Friars have shared the difficult lives of Christians in the countries that make up the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land: Israel and Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Rhodes and Cyprus. The people of these countries face their own difficulties, but particularly Christians due to their minority status. Among them, the friars have never ceased offering their pastoral care and practical support.

Over recent years, with the Covid Pandemic, wars in Syria and Gaza, and now the war with Iran, the people of the Holy Land have endured great turmoil. Until now, the hope for a lasting peace in Gaza remains uncertain and the task of rebuilding lives and infrastructure seems overwhelming.

Just recently last November, I had the privilege of attending the international meeting of Holy Land Commissaries in Jerusalem. There, our group heard from the local people and of what the Franciscan Friars are doing (and have never stopped doing) in support of them. We heard stories of courage and resilience and encountered Christians yearning for a future for their children. From them and Church leaders came the plea for peace and hope. They also pleaded for pilgrims to return, but now the hope for this has been set back by the fear created by the war with Iran. Pilgrims are vital as they generate income that allows the Friars and local Church to fulfil their mission of caring for the Holy Places, running parishes and schools, and caring for orphans, refugees, the homeless, and other social projects. Pilgrims also give much needed employment to local people, allowing Christian families to remain present in the land where Christianity was born.

This year, Fr Francesco Ielpo OFM, the Franciscan leader of the Holy Land Custody reminds us of the urgent need to continue supporting the Holy Land, especially in the light of recent happenings:

The last few years have been particularly difficult for the Christian communities of the Middle East. The war has brought death, destruction, and fear, not only to Gaza, but also to the West Bank, Israel, Lebanon, and Syria. The suffering caused by the conflict has been compounded by the prolonged absence of pilgrims, which has exacerbated an already profound economic and employment crisis. Many Christian families, who once relied on the Holy Places and pilgrimage-related activities, are now experiencing great difficulty.

We have just concluded the Jubilee Year of Hope, and hope itself appears to be damaged: in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Northern Israel, as well as in the Christian communities of Lebanon and Syria. The lack of security and employment makes it increasingly difficult to support families and, even more so, to imagine a future for young people and the new generations.

Brothers and sisters, the Good Friday Holy Land Collection remains extremely important and a mission in which we can all participate. The hope is that our Australian parishioners, Parish Priests and Bishops will again be as generous as they have always been. Our donation is a direct way to make a difference in the lives of people who are keeping alive the Christian presence in the land of Jesus in the face of great difficulty. On their behalf, I humbly and wholeheartedly thank you all.

Mario DeBattista ofm

Friar Mario DeBattista OFM
Commissary of the Holy Land (Australia)





DICASTERIUM
PRO ECCLESIIIS ORIENTALIBUS

00193 Roma
Via della Conciliazione, 34
Indirizzo postale: 00120 Città del Vaticano

February, 2026

Prot. N. 1/2026

Dear Brother,

How we had hoped that peace would finally restore life and hope to the Holy Land! Dialogues and agreements multiplied, yet the weapons did not fall silent. Peace was declared, but even as the media speak of it far less today, arms continue to fire, people continue to die, lands remain contested, and Christians continue to emigrate in order to survive. Even schools often go without teachers, because they are not permitted to cross borders.

I know well that addressing you and the Christian community entrusted to your care is becoming ever more difficult, and that the words I write year after year risk sounding repetitive. I know, too, how exhausting it is to continue bandaging and disinfecting -- however patiently -- the wounds of a world so brutally torn apart. Yet we Christians cannot cease to hope, because God is our hope, and God does not betray us. The crucifix that hangs in our rooms and in our sacred spaces proclaims a life stronger than death -- a life that passed through death itself. Much must change in us: our mentality, our sensitivity, our daily priorities. This world is progressively dehumanizing us, often without our even realizing it.

Let us never cease to pray, for God is our hope. But allow me now to propose a small gesture -- small in appearance, yet decisive in its meaning -- that points precisely toward this conversion: to give something of our own resources to help our brothers and sisters who live in extreme danger, so that they may endure one more day, rediscover hope, and begin again. This gesture is vital for them and essential for the Custody of the Holy Land, which has long safeguarded the places that witnessed the life of the Lord Jesus. It is also vital for us, because without sacrifice, without a real change in our way of living, we risk remaining inert before a world in flames -- and thus complicit in its destruction.

This gesture will take place almost everywhere in the world on Good Friday -- though some communities observe it on another date -- the day on which we commemorate the One who did not give alms, but gave His own life, His final breath, the Holy Spirit, so that the world might be healed and learn again to hope and to trust in the unexpected. The Popes have desired this gesture and continue to promote it, convinced that only through fatherhood, sharing, and supportive friendship can a reality be rebuilt that recovers its human face and reflects the plan God intended for humanity at creation.

To live, our brothers and sisters also need your contribution. Many Christians in the Holy Land have lost everything, including the work that depended on the presence of pilgrims -- who now, almost without exception, are afraid to return. The faithful who remain in the Holy Places know that through your support -- and sometimes only through it -- even if security cannot yet be guaranteed, schools can reopen, new homes can be built, and care can be provided where destruction has been total. Bombardments, followed by natural disasters, have scarred the land and rendered many areas uninhabitable, while deaths continue to mount, without a single day free from fear.

I ask you, therefore, to use words attuned to the sensibilities of your people to communicate our shared responsibility for the Holy Land, as well as for so many other devastated regions. Show images, raise awareness, and make use of the many available means that reveal the daily struggles of the small Christian communities who manage to remain on their land. Begin with the appeals of the Popes and the guidance of local pastors. Let us ensure that our people approach the Collection fully aware that giving is a powerful act of faith: a Holy Land without believers is a lost land, because it loses its living memory -- the continuity with the source of salvation that has regenerated us in Christ.

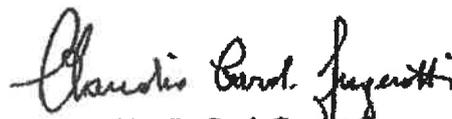
Exhort, persuade, awaken consciences. Call people back to the solidarity of the one Body of Christ, the Church spread across all nations. Sacrilege is not only an offense against the Eucharist; it is also an offense against the Body of Christ, which is the Church. Saint Augustine insists on this truth: when you receive the Body of Christ at the altar, know that you receive what you are. *"You become what you see, and you receive what you are"* (Sermon 272).

I am convinced that our people -- your people -- will not remain indifferent to this appeal. The deepest fibers of the heart, those shaped by Baptism and made part of the universal longing for good that prepares us for the encounter with God, await only to be strengthened, or even simply awakened. Pope Leo XIV continually reminds us of this call to unity, so that peace may emerge -- not a temporary truce, not entrenched hatred, not endless investment in weapons, but a genuine contribution to our common rebirth:

"I would like to thank God for the Christians who, especially in the Middle East, persevere and resist in their lands, stronger than the temptation to abandon them. Christians must be given the opportunity, not only in words, to remain in their lands with all the rights necessary for a secure existence. I beg you, let us commit ourselves to this!" (Audience with participants in the Jubilee of the Eastern Churches, 14 May 2025).

How many times have I personally visited those Christian minorities who awaken each day fearing that they may no longer have a place to exist! Help us to offer them concrete hope, not merely words of consolation -- for we who visit them will leave, while they remain with their fears, even with the terror that, precisely because they are Christians, they may be eliminated. The Collection for the Holy Land, sustained daily by the invaluable work of the Franciscans and those who serve in local communities, may seem like a drop in the ocean. Yet the ocean, deprived of its drops, becomes a desert.

May the Lord abundantly bless all those who, even on this Good Friday, recognize their debt for the life they have received and choose to become co-workers in a creation that brings the earthly Jerusalem closer to the heavenly one. Thank you, dear Brother, for listening. May the Father sustain your efforts for peace and your commitment to bringing life to the innocent victims of war. Cain and Abel still walk the earth. Yet the Son of God has shown us that, when a choice must be made, we do not take the life of another -- we give our life for another.



Claudio Card. Guggerotti
Prefect



Michel Jalab, oam
Archbishop Secretary

DICASTERY FOR THE EASTERN CHURCHES

2025 A.D.

Introduction

The Collection *Pro Terra Sancta* was established in response to the desire of the Popes to foster a strong bond between the faithful throughout the world and the Holy Places. It is the principal source of material support for Christian life in the Holy Land and a privileged means through which the universal Church expresses solidarity with the ecclesial communities of the Middle East. With the Apostolic Exhortation *Nobis in Animo* (25 March 1974), Pope Saint Paul VI gave renewed impetus to supporting the Holy Land, which he had visited during his historic pilgrimage in 1964.

Through the funds traditionally collected on Good Friday, the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land is able to fulfill its mission: preserving the Sacred Places - the stones of memory - and sustaining the Christian presence - the living stones - through numerous pastoral, educational, charitable, health-care, and social works. Ordinarily, the Custody receives 65% of the Collection, while the remaining 35% is entrusted to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches for distribution. What follows is a report on the use and beneficiaries of the Collection.

Ordinary and Extraordinary Subsidies

The territories associated with salvation history and benefiting in various ways from the Collection include Jerusalem, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Greece, Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. These countries face serious challenges of different kinds, and the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches intervenes to sustain local communities, with particular attention to the life and activities of the Churches. An ordinary annual subsidy is provided to all Eastern and Latin eparchies in these regions, except in Ethiopia, where the Latin Church falls under the Dicastery for Evangelization.

This support enables ecclesial communities to remain alive through assistance to priests, religious, institutions, families, and pastoral initiatives. The Collection thus offers concrete aid for preserving the Christian presence in the Holy Land and throughout the Middle East, in societies marked by social, economic, and political hardship.

Subsidies for Educational Activities

The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Franciscan Custody, the Eastern Catholic Churches of the Holy Land, and Religious Institutes are deeply committed to the education of young people. Together with the Secretariat of Solidarity, they receive assistance from the proceeds of the Collection.

Ongoing conflict in Gaza, high unemployment, and reduced tourism have further strained the economic stability of schools in Palestine. The Dicastery pays close attention to such emergencies, ensuring that education continues without interruption and remains accessible to all.

A significant center of higher learning supported through the Collection is Bethlehem University, where nearly 3,300 Muslim and Christian students receive academic and human formation, preparing them to contribute to a society founded on mutual respect and human dignity. The dedicated service of the De La Salle Brothers in leading the University is especially worthy of praise.

Academic, Spiritual, and Human Formation

Thanks to the Collection, the Dicastery provides assistance to seminaries, religious formation houses, and cultural institutions within its jurisdiction, including support - through scholarships, university fees, and other forms of aid - for seminarians, priests, religious men and women, and, when possible, lay students, even for studies undertaken in Rome.

Conclusion

Through prayer and the generosity of people of goodwill, it is possible to offer tangible support to those in need: helping families in difficulty, accompanying children toward a hopeful future, providing aid to refugees and displaced persons, supporting the formation of priests and religious, and contributing to the preservation of the Holy Places.

May this year's Collection *Pro Terra Sancta* be for all an occasion of renewed solidarity, so that hope may shine especially in the hearts of those who need it most.

CUSTODY OF HOLY LAND



SUMMARY REPORT

HOLY PLACES

2024/2025

Custody of Holy Land - Completed works - 2024-2025

**CUSTODY OF HOLY LAND
Order Minor Friars**

Summary Report 2024/2025

The Custody of the Holy Land has, for centuries, been committed to the preservation and revitalization of the Holy Places of Christianity in the Land of Jesus and throughout the Middle East. Among the principal objectives of the Franciscan mission are the support and development of the local Christian minority, the preservation and enhancement of archaeological sites and sanctuaries, intervention in emergency situations, the care of liturgical life in places of worship, apostolic works, and assistance to pilgrims.

Also in the biennium 2024/2025, the Franciscan presence in the Holy Land has taken concrete form through the planning, coordination, and implementation of the following projects and initiatives:

- I. Works dedicated to pilgrims
- II. Works dedicated to the local community
- III. Rhodes
- IV. Jordan
- V. Syria
- VI. Lebanon
- VII. Egypt
- VIII. Italy
- IX. Ordinary salaries of the Custody of the Holy Land

The above-mentioned works were made possible through various forms of financial support: first and foremost the Good Friday Collection, followed by fundraising activities carried out by the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land (FFHL) and the Pro Terra Sancta Association (PTS), as well as contributions from other private and institutional donors.

Two years after the outbreak of the war that has once again afflicted this land, financial resources originating from the region itself—parishes, sanctuaries, pilgrims, and related activities—have been drastically reduced. As a result, many projects have been scaled back, delayed, or suspended, with priority given to those that directly impact people in greatest need. We now face new challenges and are called to reflect on how to move forward, in the awareness that we are not alone if we allow ourselves to be guided by Divine Providence.

I. WORKS FOR PILGRIMS

ACRE – FORMER NURSERY SCHOOL BUILDING

- Structural safety works on the former nursery school building are in the initial phase, in preparation for more extensive interventions aimed at restoring full usability of the premises previously occupied by the sisters who managed the facility.

ACRE -- CONVENT OF ST FRANCIS

- Extraordinary maintenance works on the bell tower have been completed.

AIN KAREM – SHRINE OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

- Safety works on the electrical system of the entire complex — including the convent, church and seminary — have been completed, with the electrical capacity upgraded to meet current needs. Renovation works of the convent kitchen have been completed. Roof and choir window refurbishment works, together with the first archaeological excavations inside the church, are in the initial phase.

AIN KAREM -- CASA NOVA

- Safety works on the electrical system serving pilgrim accommodation have been completed, with electrical capacity upgraded to current requirements.
- Maintenance works and upgrading of services in several rooms have been completed.

AIN KAREM – SHRINE OF ST JOHN IN THE DESERT

- Initial repair works on the main water supply system have been completed. Safety railings have been installed on the windows of the sisters' convent. Detailed studies are underway for the renewal of the main water system.

AIN KAREM – SHRINE OF THE VISITATION

- Maintenance works aimed at the conservation of the shrine have been completed.

BEIT SAHOUR -- SHEPHERDS' FIELD SHRINE

- Works have been completed for the construction of three of the five internal chapels for pilgrim celebrations (Croatian, Spanish and Arab chapels).
- The first external chapel (Chapel of Our Lady of Guadalupe) has been completed.
- Essential works to arrange the surrounding area of the new chapels have been completed.
- Maintenance works on the waterproofing of the services building roof have been completed.
- Works for the construction of two additional internal chapels are in the initial phase.
- The implementation of subsequent phases of the overall master plan -- including four additional external chapels, renovation of the sacristy, completion of external arrangements, restoration of the grotto, and enhancement of the archaeological area in collaboration with the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archaeology (PIAC) and the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum (SBF) ---- is currently under evaluation.

BETHANY – SHRINE OF THE HOUSE OF MARTHA, MARY AND LAZARUS

- The restoration and enhancement of the Byzantine and medieval remains of the Bethany convent have been completed through the recovery of degraded areas. Studies for the renewal of the church's internal lighting system have been completed. Some maintenance works on the church roof are in the initial phase.

Custody of Holy Land – Completed works – 2024-2025

BETHLEHEM – CONVENT OF ST CATHERINE

- Works to replace the convent lift, bringing it into compliance with safety regulations, have been completed.
- Installation of photovoltaic panels for electricity generation has been completed.
Maintenance works on the friars' refectory have been completed.

BETHLEHEM -- CASA NOVA

- Works to replace the electricity generator have been completed, ensuring the functionality of the facility during frequent power outages in the area.

CAPERNAUM – SHRINE OF THE EUCHARISTIC PROMISE

- Works to upgrade the security camera system have been completed.
- Interventions to prevent illegal excavations and intrusions by extremist groups into the Roman-period mausoleum located on the property have been completed.
- Drainage interventions for rainwater management aimed at protecting the archaeological areas are currently under evaluation.

CANA – CONVENT OF THE FIRST MIRACLE

- Construction works of the new building intended for the school — including a parish centre and covered parking, for a total area of 5,000 m² --- have been completed. Final phases for permanent connection to the electricity grid and system testing are underway and remain subject to the resolution of a complex administrative and legal dispute with the construction company.

EMMAUS OUBEIBEH; SHRINE OF SAINTS SIMEON AND CLEOPAS

- Maintenance work on the convent roof has been completed.
- Maintenance work on the convent's sewer system and the property's boundary walls is currently being evaluated.

JERICO: SITE OF JESUS' BAPTISM ON THE JORDAN RIVER

- Maintenance work on the property continues, following the demining of the area, to ensure the annual celebration commemorating Jesus' baptism can take place.
- Planning for the final enhancement and development of the site is underway.

JERICO: CONVENT OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

- Maintenance work on the parish cemetery is currently being evaluated.

JERUSALEM: BASILICA OF GETHSEMANE

- Structural work has been completed to build a tunnel connecting the basilica area and the Kidron Valley via a pedestrian path for pilgrim groups. Systems and finishing touches still need to be completed, but the work is hindered by the resolution of a complex administrative/legal dispute with the construction company.
- Structural work has been completed on the pilgrim service center in the Kidron Valley. Systems and finishing touches still need to be completed, but the work is hindered by the resolution of a complex administrative/legal dispute with the construction company.
- Renovation of the grotto's internal lighting, upgrading of the furnishings, replacement of the skylight, and upgrade of the air conditioning system have been completed.
- Work to secure the perimeter of the property in the Kidron Valley has been completed.
- Work is beginning to upgrade the video surveillance, telephone, and network systems for the entire sanctuary.

Custody of Holy Land -- Completed works -- 2024-2025

JERUSALEM: BASILICA OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

- The delicate restoration of the Basilica's floor is still underway, in agreement with the Greeks and Armenians and in collaboration with La Sapienza University (Rome) and the Venaria Restoration Center.

JERUSALEM: CONVENT OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

- Renovation of the second floor of the convent to provide bathrooms has been completed.
- Construction work on the third floor to increase the number of rooms has been completed.
- Renovation work on a portion of the first floor of the convent serving the sacristy has been completed.
- Restoration work on the parlor is underway.
- Renovation work on the oldest rooms on the first floor of the convent is underway.

JERUSALEM: CHRISTIAN INFORMATION CENTER

- Roof maintenance work is starting.

JERUSALEM: CHRISTIAN MEDIA CENTER

- Hardware and software updates are underway.

JERUSALEM: CONVENT OF THE TERRA SANTA COLLEGE

- Structural feasibility studies have been completed for the construction of new accommodations on the second floor of the building's west wing.
- Urgent structural repairs to the third floor of the building's west wing are currently being planned.

JERUSALEM: CONVENT OF SAN SALVATORE

CUSTODIAL OFFICES

- Maintenance work on the new FFHL office has been completed.
- The reorganization of the custodial offices is underway: Bursar's Office, Legal Office, Technical Office, and IT Office.

CONVENT

- Renovation/maintenance work on some friars' rooms has been completed.
- Maintenance work on some guesthouse rooms has been completed.
- Planning is underway for the renovation of the roof of the Church, the Madreperla Hall, and the nuns' convent.
- Planning is underway for the renovation of the convent's heating and hot water systems.

LAUNDRY

- Renovation of the main laundry equipment has been completed.
- Installation of an automatic soap dispenser has been completed, improving wash quality while optimizing consumption.
- Installation of an internal video surveillance system has been completed.

JERUSALEM: MARIA BAMBINA, PILGRIMS' GUEST HOUSE

- A master plan has been developed to improve the reception of pilgrims.
- Essential maintenance work continues while awaiting the start of the renovations envisaged in the master plan.

JERUSALEM: DOMINUS FLEVIT SANCTUARY

- The first implementation works of the master plan to improve the reception of pilgrims and visitors are currently being planned.
- Maintenance work on the church windows is underway.

Custody of Holy Land – Completed works – 2024-2025

JERUSALEM: HOLY LAND MUSEUM

- A modern museum center is underway to showcase the Franciscan artistic, archaeological, historical, and cultural heritage. The approximately 2,500 m2 area includes:
- Archaeological Museum: Biblical Places in Palestine at the Convent of the Flagellation (active museum).
- Historical Museum: The Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land at the Convent of St. Savior (a museum to be opened soon).
- Maintenance work on the archaeological museum is underway as usual.
- The new rooms of the archaeological museum are nearing completion.
- Structural consolidation work on the spaces intended for the future historical museum has been completed.
- The design of the systems, finishes, and installations for the future historical museum is in the final stages.

JERUSALEM: CONVENT OF THE FLAGELLATION

- Lightweighting and waterproofing work on the roof of the building's east wing has been completed.

JERUSALEM: CONVENT OF ST. FRANCIS AD COENACULUM

- Various internal and external maintenance work has been completed to preserve the building.

JERUSALEM: DAR AL CONSUL/MOUSSA AFENDI

- Maintenance work is underway at the Dar al Consul complex in the Old City (approximately 1,200 m2), with spaces always open to pilgrims and local cultural activities.
- The collaboration project between the Magnificat Music Institute and the Andrea Bocelli Foundation (ABF) for the establishment of a new choir in Jerusalem continues.

JERUSALEM: SHRINE OF BETHPHAGE

- Work is being planned to address the dampness issues in the church's frescoed rock.

JERUSALEM: CONVENT OF ST. JAMES BEIT HANINA

- Improvements to the parish center's courtyard and playground have been completed.
- Renovation of the turf on the sports center's soccer field has been completed.

JAFFA: CONVENT OF ST. PETER THE APOSTLE

- Restoration work on the building's facades and bell tower, damaged by the aggressive sea environment, is currently under study.

JAFFA: CONVENT OF SAINT ANTHONY

- General maintenance work on the church and convent has been completed.

MAGDALA: SANCTUARY

- Altars have been installed for pilgrims' services.
- The construction of a bus parking lot is being studied in agreement with the Municipality.

MOUNT TABOR: BASILICA OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

- Renovation and furnishing of the convent for the nuns has been completed.
- Maintenance work on the roof of the passageway between the church and the sacristy has been completed.
- Planning is underway for the construction of a new water supply system. The current pumping station dates back to the 1960s and, in the event of a failure, would leave the Mount Tabor complex without a drinking water supply.

Custody of Holy Land - Completed works - 2024-2025

MUJEIDEL: CONVENT OF ST. GABRIEL THE ARCHANGEL

- Work has been completed to restore the property's secondary entrance.
- A study is underway for the recovery of some disused structures.

NAIN: SHRINE OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE WIDOW'S SON

- Work has been completed to complete the property's perimeter fence.
- Construction of restrooms for pilgrim groups is underway.

NAZARETH: BASILICA OF THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

- Consolidation and restoration work on reinforced concrete elements damaged by humidity in the upper and lower courtyards of the basilica has been completed.
- The design of a safety railing for the upper courtyard of the basilica has been completed.
- The feasibility study for the renovation of the convent's ground floor has been completed.

NAZARETH: CASANOVA

- The feasibility study for the adaptation of the "former Catholic Action" building as an extension of Casa Nova has been completed.

NAZARETH: HOME FOR THE ELDERLY

- Reconstruction of a portion of the property's perimeter wall has been completed.
- The most urgent maintenance work required to ensure the center's proper functioning is underway.

NAZARETH: MARIA DI NAZARETH CENTER

- Negotiations are underway for the division and rationalization of the co-owned spaces with the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition.

TABGHA: CONVENT OF THE PRIMACY OF ST. PETER

- The first phase of repair/completion of the property's fence has been completed.
- The complete renovation and furnishing of the convent has been completed.
- The second phase of repair work on the property's fence is underway.

NB: While the construction of the works involved a complication due to the permits required, priority was given to using labor from the West Bank to provide jobs for Christians in an area that benefits from neither welfare nor social safety nets and who in recent years, between the conflict and the various lockdowns, would have been completely deprived of economic resources. Further complications arose during the recent conflict, which led to checkpoints being completely closed for almost two months after the conflict began, and then intermittently. Where possible, workers were employed at shrines and convents in the West Bank.

II. WORKS FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

BETHLEHEM – CASA DEL FANCIULLO

A day-care and residential home for children from socially vulnerable families.

- Garden landscaping works have been completed.
- Photovoltaic panels for electricity generation have been installed.
- A preliminary proposal for the redevelopment of the former convent of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary has been completed.

BETHLEHEM – CATHOLIC ACTION CENTRE

- Planning continues for the rehabilitation and enhancement of the Catholic Action Center in Bethlehem, a 9,000 m² area open to the local community, featuring indoor and outdoor children's play areas, a recreation room for seniors, a party room, a cinema, a sports center with a gym and indoor basketball court, an outdoor swimming pool, and more.
- Paving of the courtyard and related infrastructure has been completed.
- Maintenance of the sanitary water system and tank rehabilitation have been completed.
- Maintenance for the reopening of the swimming pool has been completed.
- Work on the basketball court roof has been completed to allow safe access and maintenance.
- Renovation of the ground floor spaces has been completed to accommodate children's recreation areas, refreshments, and services to ensure the facility remains fully operational even during the winter.
- The basketball court roof is being renovated in preparation for the imminent installation of photovoltaic panels for electricity generation.
- Work is underway to expand the outdoor play area.
- Studies are underway to consolidate or rebuild the retaining walls that define the downstream boundary of the property.

JERUSALEM: PARISH CENTER AND SCOUT CENTRE IN THE OLD CITY

- Renovation work on the youth center has been completed to meet current needs.

UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

Funding of four-year university scholarships, distributed across various universities (Bethlehem, Hebrew University, Bir Zeit, Amman).

- Scholarships funded by the Custodial Bursar's Office
- Scholarships funded through the Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land (FFHL)

TERRA SANTA SCHOOL

- ACRI – TERRA SANTA SCHOOL
- BETHLEHEM - SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL
- BETHLEHEM - TERRA SANTA SCHOOL
 - Internal maintenance work on classrooms and corridors has been completed.
 - Renovation work on the restrooms in the outdoor courtyard has been completed.
 - Waterproofing of the nursery school roof has been completed.
 - Installation of photovoltaic panels for electricity generation has been completed.
 - Preliminary studies for a new building for vocational courses have been completed.
- CANA - FIRST MIRACLE COMPLEX
- JERUSALEM - TERRA SANCTA SCHOOL (DAMASCUS GATE)
 - Auditorium renovations have been completed.

Custody of Holy Land - Completed works - 2024-2025

- Consolidation work is underway on the Jabsheh building, a future expansion of the school.

- GERUSALEMME - EX-SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL (GIAFFA GATE)
- GERUSALEMME - HELLEN KELLER SCHOOL (BEIT HANINA)
- GERICO - TERRA SANCTA SCHOOL
- GERICO - EX-SISTER'S SCHOOL
- HAIFA - ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- NAZARETH - TERRA SANCTA SCHOOL
- RAMLEH - TERRA SANCTA SCHOOL
- GIORDANIA - AMMAN - TERRA SANTA SCHOOL
- CIPRO - NICOSIA - TERRA SANTA SCHOOL

APARTMENTS FOR THE NEEDY AND YOUNG COUPLES

There are numerous homes owned by the Custody of the Holy Land, to which tenants pay nominal rent. These are generally overcrowded areas, where several families often live together in small apartments. Each year, the Custody intervenes to maintain and improve the housing conditions, while also seeking to create additional housing to support the local community.

- JERUSALEM – OLD CITY
426 apartments in the Old City, with an average size of less than 60 m2.
- JERUSALEM - BEIT HANINA - ST. JAMES HOUSING PROJECT
42 apartments spread across 3 floors of 6 buildings.
- JERUSALEM – BEIT FAGE – ST. FRANCIS VILLAGE
90 apartments spread across 4 floors of 10 buildings.
- BETHLEHEM – JESUS THE CHILD HOUSING PROJECT
24 apartments spread across the six floors of two buildings.
- BETHLEHEM – ST. CATHERINE HOUSING PROJECT
24 apartments spread across the six floors of two buildings.
- BETHLEHEM – ST. FRANCIS HOUSING PROJECT
20 apartments spread across the ten floors of the building.
- RAM - ST. ANTONY HOUSING PROJECT
12 apartments spread across the six floors of the building.
- RAM – ST. PAUL HOUSING PROJECT
10 apartments spread across the five floors of the building.

CULTURAL WORKS

- STUDIUM BIBLICUM FRANCISCANUM (SBF) - JERUSALEM
 - Each year, the Custody of the Holy Land financially supports the Faculty of Biblical Sciences and Archaeology at the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem.
 - Training of students in biblical sciences at the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum from various parts of the world and from poor religious provinces and dioceses, for whom the Custody provides room, board, and scholarships.
- CHRISTIAN MEDIA CENTER (CMC) - JERUSALEM/NAZARETH
 - Services offered include:
 - Website and newsletter.
 - Terra Santa News, a weekly news bulletin, broadcast by numerous stations around the world.
 - Documentaries on social and religious issues.
 - Live coverage of liturgical celebrations and events.

Custody of Holy Land – Completed works – 2024-2025

- **MAGNIFICAT MUSIC INSTITUTE – JERUSALEM**
 - The Magnificat Institute, affiliated with the Conservatory of Vicenza, promotes research and cultural events at the local and international level, welcoming Christian, Muslim, and Jewish students, led by professors who are also Jewish, Christian, and Muslim.
- **HOSPITATING YOUNG SEMINARIANS -- JERUSALEM**
 - Hospitality at the International Franciscan Seminary of St. Savior in Jerusalem.
 - Hospitality at the Ain Karem Seminary.
- **FORMATION OF YOUNG SEMINARIANS – JERUSALEM**
 - Theological formation at the Studium Theologicum Jerosolymitanum (STJ) for young people from the various Provinces of the Order of Friars Minor.
 - Formation of young people from aspirants to specialized studies.
- **SUPPORT FOR THE LATIN PARISH OF JERUSALEM**

Support for poor families experiencing socioeconomic hardship by covering rent, medical expenses and medicine, education expenses, and other miscellaneous costs, especially for families caring for elderly and disabled people who are not self-sufficient.
- **SUPPORT FOR THE LATIN PARISH OF BETHLEHEM**

Support for poor families experiencing socioeconomic hardship by covering rent, medical expenses and medicine, and other miscellaneous costs, especially for families caring for elderly and disabled people who are not self-sufficient.

Additionally, the Arab Catholic Scout Group is supporting the purchase of new uniforms.

Beneficiaries reached: approximately 80 people, through coverage of education, medical care, and rent.
- **TERRA SANCTA MUSEUM: HERITAGE EDUCATION HUB FOR PALESTINIAN YOUTH - JERUSALEM**

The second three-year phase of this project began in September 2024, with the aim of continuing and expanding educational and cultural activities related to the TSM's archaeological collection and aimed at students from East Jerusalem schools, families, and the entire local Palestinian community. The project includes activities held not only in the archaeological section of the Terra Sancta Museum, but also in the Dar El-Consul and Musa Efendi facilities.
- **PORTFOLIO FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS - JERUSALEM**

In collaboration with the Spafford Children's Center, the need was identified for an integrated program of protection, trauma treatment, psychosocial support, and anger and stress management for children, youth, and parents. Trauma treatment, anger management, and stress management sessions were conducted within the center and in several schools in East Jerusalem. Summer camps were also organized.
- **SUPPORT FOR THE MAGNIFICAT INSTITUTE OF MUSIC IN JERUSALEM**

Support for the activities of the Magnificat Institute, offering courses and lessons to even the most vulnerable and disadvantaged segments of the Jerusalem population by funding scholarships.
- **SUPPORT FOR THE CONVENT OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL IN JERUSALEM**

In 2019, some abandoned rooms within the Convent were restored and the Dar Mamilla Guesthouse opened. Its goal is not only to host visitors from around the world but also to support

Custody of Holy Land - Completed works - 2024-2025

the work of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul. Also for 2025, a portion of the Dar Mamilla Guesthouse's revenue will be donated to support their activities.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE GREEK CATHOLIC ANNUNCIATION SOCIETY OF JERUSALEM**

Support for the center through a summer program for children to strengthen and enhance their skills and abilities, in a healthy and safe environment that fosters learning, personal growth, and a sense of community responsibility. Educational activities for children aim to develop their practical skills, strengthen their creativity and imagination, and promote communication, collaboration, and teamwork through specific workshops.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR SAINT JOSEPH HOSPITAL - JERUSALEM**

Financial support for St. Joseph Hospital for the purchase of wheelchairs for hospital patients. Saint Joseph Hospital is the only Catholic hospital in East Jerusalem; it serves approximately 50,000 people annually, from the population of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, with the most serious cases also coming from Gaza.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE SAINT LOUIS FRENCH HOSPITAL IN JERUSALEM**

Contribution to the construction of a new elevator within the hospital. This makes it easier to move stretchers and patients in wheelchairs. The hospital specializes in providing palliative care to terminally ill patients, with a total capacity of 57 beds, divided between geriatrics, complicated geriatrics, and oncology. The hospital also offers treatment for HIV patients.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE JERUSALEM AFRICAN COMMUNITY CENTER (JACC)**

Support for the activities of JACC, a center that assists approximately 3,000 asylum seekers from Eritrea, Sudan, and Ethiopia, including many families with children, who are in Jerusalem. The center provides legal and psychological support, as well as training courses and the distribution of basic necessities for the neediest families.

▪ **PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH EDUCATION AND INCLUSIVITY – JERICHO, SEBASTIA, BETHLEHEM**

The project is being implemented in partnership with the Mosaic Centre and the Tamer Institute for Community Education (based in Ramallah) in the cities of Bethlehem, Jericho, and the village of Sebastia. It aims to contribute to the sustainable development of communities in the Palestinian territories by raising awareness among Palestinian civil society on environmental sustainability and inclusivity. Specifically, two environmental and cultural education programs are being implemented for young people and children in Jericho and Sebastia, as well as several training courses for the staff of the Mosaic Centre in Bethlehem, which includes two deaf-mute mosaic artists. Among them, a training course for trainers was conducted to enable them to independently manage art therapy activities for people with disabilities. A drawing course to improve their artistic skills and a LIS course to improve communication among Mosaic Centre staff. Other activities include installing photovoltaic panels on ProTS guesthouses and the Mosaic Centre premises to improve economic efficiency, environmental impact, and accessibility for people with disabilities.

▪ **HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP - BETHANY**

The project involves training and cultural heritage conservation, serving academic institutions and the Palestinian community. Funded by the Italian Cooperation (AICS), in partnership with the Mosaic Centre, Al Quds University, the University of Palermo, and the University of Turin, the project aims to contribute to the protection and preservation of Bethany's cultural heritage to foster inclusive social and economic development that promotes culture, sustainable tourism, and local products.

Custody of Holy Land - Completed works - 2024-2025

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE ANTONIANA CHARITABLE SOCIETY AND THE SISTERS OF THE HORTUS CONCLUSUS IN BETHLEHEM**

The collaboration consists of renovation and improvement work on the facilities, staff support through training, the provision of medicines and equipment, and assistance with current expenses. In this emergency situation, the Day Center has been reactivated, providing approximately 33 elderly people (not only those living at the Antoniana) with a hot meal and social activities. The Sisters of the Hortus Conclusus also run a nursery school in Artas, also in the Bethlehem Governorate, to which equipment and teaching materials have been donated. An educational farm has also been established in the convent.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE CHILDREN'S HOME IN BETHLEHEM**

An Italian language course has been activated at Dar al Majus for the children of the Children's Home. Spanish and psychosocial support activities to address the ongoing trauma they are subjected to. Psychological support activities are also aimed at social workers and the children's families.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE EFFETÀ INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF IN BETHLEHEM**

The school was supported by contributing to the payment of some tuition for some children from the poorest villages and by supporting the purchase of replacement hearing aids. Most students, in fact, are unable to cover the annual tuition costs, despite the very low cost. A new training project on trauma management for families and teachers was also launched.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR CATHOLIC ACTION IN BETHLEHEM**

Contribution to the rehabilitation of the roof of the basketball court and the internal meeting rooms of the Catholic Action. Furthermore, Catholic Action is supported through its career guidance program.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL WORKS - BETHLEHEM**

Distance support is ensuring the education of some children attending the Terra Santa Schools (Saint Joseph and Terra Sancta College), Rosary Sisters School, and SIRA School. Additionally, some families have been supported with the payment of school or university fees. Educational activities on cultural heritage have been conducted in three secondary schools in Bethlehem and three secondary schools in Hebron. In the village of Artas, an Educational Farm has been established within the Convent of the Sisters of the Hortus Conclusus.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE "CI MUOVIAMO SULLA VIA DELLA CARITÀ" ASSOCIATION IN BETHLEHEM**

Clothing, basic necessities, hygiene products (such as diapers, sanitary pads, and personal care products), and bags of rice and flour have been purchased and sent.

▪ **LISTENING AND CAREER ORIENTATION CENTER - BETHLEHEM**

A listening and career guidance center is active in Bethlehem. Career guidance to provide medical assistance (access to basic medical care, surgeries, hospitalization, and specific medical treatments) and social care to the most vulnerable population in the area, in collaboration with other organizations within its network. The counseling center employs a senior and a junior social worker, and requests for assistance are evaluated monthly by a designated committee that also includes a member external to the organization.

▪ **HOUSING AND WATER EMERGENCY - BETHLEHEM**

The counseling center also accepts requests for the rehabilitation of damaged and unsanitary homes, as well as the installation of water tanks and solar panels.

Custody of Holy Land - Completed works - 2024-2025

▪ **SOCIAL/ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACTIVITIES - BETHLEHEM**

Two guesthouses (Dar al Majus and Dar Essideh) are operated in Bethlehem's historic center. Additionally, a fair trade bazaar is open, with a network of over 30 suppliers, primarily organizations that provide employment to vulnerable women or people with disabilities.

Beneficiaries reached:

▪ **DAMJ CREATIVE LAB - BETHLEHEM**

A creative lab has been set up in the old offices to support small businesses in developing products, brand identities, and logos. It also supports institutions and organizations seeking to develop production to promote sustainability.

▪ **DAR AL MAJUS COMMUNITY CENTER - BETHLEHEM**

At Dar Al Majus and in collaboration with other local organizations, we organize various cultural activities for the Bethlehem community: literary festivals, writing workshops, concerts, cooking workshops, theatrical performances, etc.

▪ **ITALIAN AND LATIN TEACHING TO SEMINARIANS AND ASPIRING FRIARS - BETHLEHEM**

Volunteers have been made available to teach Italian and Latin to some seminarians from the Beit Jala Seminary and to some aspiring friars of the Custody.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE LATIN PARISH OF GAZA**

We support the Latin parish of Gaza City by offering support for parish activities and community needs.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE "ATFA-LUNA" ASSOCIATION IN GAZA**

In collaboration with the "Atfa-Luna" Association in Gaza, we are supporting PSS support activities for approximately 1,000 children and 300 adults, including children with disabilities, in two informal refugee camps in Gaza: Rafah and Dier Al-Balah. This involves awareness-raising sessions and the distribution of emergency kits to approximately 1,000 people, and social assistance to approximately 180 families of people with disabilities. Furthermore, we are assisting the association in setting up temporary learning points within the refugee camps with the aim of ensuring inclusive education for 100 children with and without disabilities.

▪ **COLLABORATION WITH CARITAS JERUSALEM IN GAZA**

With the "Gaza Emergency Appeal 2024," launched in early 2024, we contributed to the relief effort through:

- ✓ Distribution of food and basic necessities, through direct shipments to the corridors and direct purchases in Gaza.
- ✓ Distribution of Multiple Purchase Cash Assistance (MPCA).
- ✓ Distribution of essential medicines and awareness programs.

▪ **SUPPORT FOR TERRA SANTA COLLEGE IN NAZARETH**

The Israeli Ministry of Education has mandated that all schools must have a secure bunker to protect all students, teachers, and school staff. Unfortunately, the bunker at Terra Santa College in Nazareth did not meet safety standards, and students were unable to attend school and had to follow lessons remotely. It was decided to financially support Terra Santa College by covering the costs of securing the bunker.

III. GREECE

- **SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PEOPLE - RHODES**
We are helping to distribute basic necessities (food and medicine) to refugees from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

IV. JORDAN

- **EDUCATION AND PRIMARY CARE -- AMMAN, ANJARA**
We are implementing educational activities aimed at promoting access to quality education for children from vulnerable families in various geographical areas of the country, covering school fees, transportation costs, and the provision of stationery.
Finally, 50 vulnerable families were reached through cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development, implementing cash assistance activities.
- **SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL WORKS - AMMAN, ANJAR**
Educational activities were carried out through support for a network of institutions and schools in the country, in particular:
 - ✓ Franciscans: The Terra Santa College and the school of the Franciscan Sisters of Amman were recipients of support.
 - ✓ Melkite Greek-Catholic Vicariate in Amman: 9 schools, including those run by the Melkite Sisters;
 - ✓ Latin Patriarchate in Amman: 10 schools benefited from this opportunity;
 - ✓ Hopes Fund: 6 schools reached (Latin, Greek-Catholic, and Mar Yousef);
 - ✓ Latin School of Marka: a number of Iraqi children (refugees) benefited from this support.
 - ✓ Furthermore, ProTS supported the mission of the Sisters of Anjara of the "Mary Our Lady of the Mountain" Home, covering the costs of remedial classes in various subjects for the children housed there.
- **HERITAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM – AMMAN, MADABA, IRBID**
A project has been launched to promote the protection of Jordan's cultural heritage, with particular attention to monuments and archaeological sites belonging to Christian culture, through the involvement of local schools and institutions, such as Al Yarmouk University and the Jordan Museum in Amman. As part of the project, a Heritage Education Program has been developed for local schools and families.

V. LEBANON

- **ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER - BEIRUT**
The ProTS social/emergency center aims to help poor Lebanese families from the cities of Beirut and its suburbs, Harissa, Tyre, Tripoli, Deir Mimas, and Adonis, in coordination with the local Franciscan friars.
- **FRANCISCAN CARE CENTER - BEIRUT**
The art therapy center for psychological rehabilitation for children, called the Franciscan Care Center, also operates in Beirut, at the PTS Lebanon center in Gemmaizeh, which offers courses in art therapy, music therapy, individual PSS, and psychomotor support.
- **WIP – WORK IN PROGRESS – ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT - BEIRUT**
Selection, training, and support for young Lebanese with entrepreneurial and business ideas, with guidance and training from Italian and Lebanese coaches and tutors.

Custody of Holy Land – Completed works – 2024-2025

- **HEALTH CENTER AND MEDICAL DISPENSARY - TRIPOLI**
Within the Tripoli convent complex, several rooms have been renovated and converted into a medical dispensary, open three days a week with specialized doctors (including a pediatrician and gynecologist) and the distribution of medicines.
- **SAN FRANCESCO CULTURAL AND SPORTS CENTER - TRIPOLI**
At the Convent of San Francesco in Tripoli, there is a large sports center consisting of a soccer field, a basketball court, a playground, a room for judo and dance, and a room for ping-pong. The sports center is of great importance to the neighborhood and is currently attended by Christian and Muslim children and youth from Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian families. Support continues to be provided for the improvement of the center and the organization of sports tournaments and courses. Four new rooms in the convent's external complex were also renovated to create a music hall (music training courses and a youth band), an art room, and a dance hall.
- **SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS - TRIPOLI**
In collaboration with local schools (Tripoli, Adonis, Carmelitani, Gbaleh, Menjez), scholarships were established throughout the year to support students and families in greatest need. In collaboration with an art teacher, a series of art and drawing courses was offered.
- **AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN - TYRE**
Within the Tyre convent complex, activities were carried out, including food distributions, medicines, shelter, and education for children.
- **WAR EMERGENCY**
ProTS has been active since September 25, 2024, immediately after the outbreak of war in the country, to assist displaced persons hosted in several public schools used as shelters. Specifically, ProTS intervened in the Metn region (Beit Chabab public school), the Keserwan region (Adonis Franciscan school), and Jbeil (Jbeil public school), and collaborated closely with the Franciscan Convent of Tyre (south) – where 90 people were assisted in the first days of the war. The following essential goods distribution activities were carried out:
 - ✓ Hot meals for approximately 500 beneficiaries reached each day – Jbeil and Metn
 - ✓ Drinking water for approximately 250 people each day – Jbeil and Metn
 - ✓ Medicines (vitamins and medications for chronic diseases) for a total of 300 beneficiaries (250 in Metn and 50 in Jbeil)
 - ✓ Vaccines for children, for a total of 80 children (55 in Metn and 25 in Jbeil)
 - ✓ Milk and diapers for 120 children assisted each day – Jbeil, Metn, Adonis
 - ✓ Diesel fuel for the centers' heating system or, alternatively, blankets, in the Metn school
 - ✓ Approximately 300 people and children hosted in the centers were involved in psychosocial support activities, through the work of ProTS psychologists and educators.Finally, ProTS has supported the Franciscan friaries in Beirut (Gemmayze) and Harissa, where approximately 30 people are currently being hosted, by covering accommodation costs (blankets, mattresses, and clothing). Unfortunately, support for the friary in Tyre has been suspended due to the dangerous situation, which prevents the friars from continuing their hospitality activities.

VI. EGYPT

- **CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE MUSKY - CAIRO**
Support for the Franciscan Center for Christian Oriental Studies to renovate the facility and study/catalog the collections, and support for organizing events to engage the local community, particularly Cairo university students. The Center's primary purpose is the development of Oriental studies regarding the Christian communities of the Middle East and the documentation of the life and history of the Franciscans in the Holy Land.

Custody of Holy Land -- Completed works -- 2024-2025

▪ **HELP FOR THE POOR AND EDUCATION FOR YOUTH - CAIRO**

Distribution of food and medicine and support for the poor in the Musky Cairo neighborhood, home to the Franciscan convent of the Custody of the Holy Land. Additionally, in partnership with the Franciscan Sisters of the CIM at their centers in Port Said, Alexandria, El Dhahereya, Assiut, Minya, Towirat, Qena, Deir Dronka, Kafr el Dawar, and Haram, educational assistance has been provided, such as tuition for children in orphanages, medical expenses for families, and essential items. Assistance is also provided to young couples.

▪ **HELP FOR VULNERABLE FAMILIES OF PRISONERS -- ABU QURQAS**

Accompaniment service for prisoners from vulnerable families in Abu Qurqas. The supported activities include legal, psychological, and educational support (the latter for the children of prisoners, through the payment of summer camp fees and school fees).

VII. ITALY

▪ **SUPPORT FOR THE TRAINING OF NOVICES OF THE CUSTODY - LA VERNA**

Support for novices of the Custody of the Holy Land, through the payment of room and board, health insurance and medical expenses, and residence permits for non-EU citizens.

VIII. ORDINARY SALARIES OF THE CUSTODY OF THE HOLY LAND

The Custody of the Holy Land (CTS) has a total of approximately 1,500 employees, of whom approximately 1,000 work in the various works and schools located in Israel and the Palestinian Territories, while the remaining staff of approximately 500 employees are employed in CTS facilities and institutions located outside the Holy Land.

CTS's operations have faced, and continue to face, significant challenges due to the ongoing war, which has resulted in the loss of some employees through resignations and some through unavoidable layoffs. In Israel, the many employees holding Palestinian ID cards require special work permits that are increasingly difficult to obtain and renew.

Jerusalem, 19 January 2026