



PROGRAM SUMMARIES



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THE PROBLEM

Today there are approximately 160,000 Christians living in the Holy Land. Due to severe political and economic hardships, an estimated 300 Christian families leave the Holy Land each year. This steady emigration suggests that one day the Christian community and the Christian church may cease to exist in this part of the world. As the Christian population struggles to survive in a volatile political environment of ethnic distrust, FFHL uses every available resource to help the poor and unemployed to meet their needs. Church leaders predict that if the current exodus continues, Christianity could easily vanish in the Holy Land within the next 50 years. One measurable way to combat this dire prediction is to financially support Christian students in their pursuit of a higher education. Our University Scholarship Program is the cornerstone that will lead to a more stable economic community in the Holy Land.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

THE PROGRAM

The University Scholarship program had an original goal of awarding 75 full scholarship grants when it started in 1997. Today, FFHL has awarded over 530 full university scholarships to academically strong, but economically challenged students. FFHL's University Scholarship Program funds four years of college tuition and books for both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Through the generosity of Christians in the U.S., the dream of an education is within reach for many aspiring scholars among the Christian community in the Holy Land.



Over the last 11 years, FFHL has given over \$6 million in both university scholarships and special educational grants to marginalized Christian students. The current graduation rate for scholarship recipients is approximately 97 percent.

MOST POPULAR FIELDS OF STUDY:

Business Administration
Medicine
Pharmacy

Accounting
Engineering
Law



CHILD SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM



THE PROGRAM

Due to economic stressors, FFHL established a child sponsorship program to assist families who are no longer able to pay their children's tuitions to Franciscan schools. We have paired hundreds of children with sponsors for the remainder of their elementary school years, and some through their secondary education. The program encourages individuals to assist with the cost of tuition, books and uniforms. Yearly sponsorship of \$500 per child is an investment in the future of Christianity in the Holy Land. For those who would like to make this commitment, we ask that you consider a seven-year commitment per child whenever possible.



The Franciscans established the first schools in the Holy Land around 1518 AD. The friars, given charge of the Holy Sites, quickly understood that these shrines would have little importance without the Christians – the “living stones”. The schools continue to provide religious instruction and develop genuine piety in their students as well as working to combat religious fanaticism. For peace in the Holy Land to develop and flourish, the only choice is for Christians, Muslims, and Jews to live with mutual respect instilled in childhood education.





MAGNIFICAT MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

THE PROGRAM

The Magnificat Institute in the Holy City of Jerusalem promotes knowledge of music with particular attention to the cultural heritage of various local communities in the Holy Land. The goal at the heart of the Magnificat are to prepare teachers to inspire children's love for music in schools in the Holy Land; to create opportunities for students to sing and play in the shrines and parishes of the Holy Land and to promote peace and break down the cultural, religious and linguistic barriers among children of different backgrounds.



The school releases publications and recordings, travels on foreign tours and concerts, and organizes music competitions. The reputation of the Magnificat Institute is continually growing thanks to the outstanding teachers and the evolving possibilities that have opened up to the school. The Institute's diplomas are now recognized in the European Union following an agreement made with the "Arrigo Pedrollo" Music Conservatory of Vicenza (Higher Institute of Musical Studies).



VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL SCHOLARSHIPS

THE PROGRAM

Based on the success of the University Scholarship Program, FFHL now provides vocational and technical scholarships to young adults interested in learning the trades of electrical, carpentry, mechanics, plumbing, telecommunications and culinary. Each school offers a two-year study program. Upon graduation, students receive a diploma attesting to their skills and expertise in their respective fields.

FFHL, in its quest to help stem the Christian exodus, is enrolling students in two-year vocational & technical schools such as the Notre Dame School of Cooking and the Lutheran World Federation Vocational School in Jerusalem.





HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS



THE PROGRAM

Located in the city of Bethlehem, this home takes care of Christian children with special circumstances. The program assists those who struggle with serious social, psychological and economic problems and provides them with a safe and loving shelter.



The Home provides a safe environment to help the children socially adapt naturally back into their lives. This happens according to sound professional scientific programs in cooperation and coordination with their parents, supervisors and specialists to achieve the best service to this targeted group. The Home focuses its work and philosophy on the values of respecting human rights, love and forgiveness according to the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the call of St. Francis of Assisi.



CHILDREN WITHOUT BORDERS



THE PROGRAM

The mission of Children without Borders is to cultivate and invest everything that is creative, constructive, and industrious; to empower and enhance children's vision of peace, coexistence, and gender equality; and to expose children to new experiences in their own lives, and those of other children living in other parts of the world. Children without Borders seeks to ensure the mental, moral and physical empowerment of children living in the different cities of the Holy Land. The Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land funds the program at a cost of \$500 per child per year.



This program has expanded throughout the years to other cities in the Holy Land; including Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, Jerusalem, Jericho and Jenin. There are 1,300 soccer players, 13 coaches, as well as volunteers making Children without Borders a key pillar of FFHL.

In spite of war, siege, deprivation, and persecution, Children without Borders offers peace, liberty, and cooperation to children through the fun and fellowship of sport.





THE PROGRAM

The Children's March for Peace in Bethlehem gives the community a sense of unity and collective accomplishment, while at the same time drawing attention to this demonstration for peace. At the Christmas celebration, children exchange gifts, play games, and put on shows. In Manger Square, bouquets of white balloons float to the heavens as a sign of peace and freedom.



Established in 2003, the March for Peace seeks to build bonds of friendship between children of the Holy Land, and provide them a day of joy and celebration as they relive the Nativity story where it took place. This day also brings together the local communities to increase appreciation of their common heritage in the roots of Christianity, and a sense of identity in the Holy Land.

The very first march was led by the Mayor of Bethlehem and the Minister of Tourism, along with Fr. Ibrahim Faltas OFM, Director of John Paul II Foundation, and Fr. Peter Vasko OFM, President of FFHL.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM | BETHLEHEM

THE PROGRAM

Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus Christ, is now a “walled” city, a virtual prison. Yet, the light of Christ will not be extinguished. People of goodwill continue to ensure that this light burns bright.

Each year, through the generosity of FFHL supporters, Christmas gifts are distributed to over 900 children living in the Bethlehem area, and donations support a Christmas musical for the community. Pictures can only begin to capture the pure joy of a child opening a present on Christmas morning.



Fr. Marwan, Principal of the Terra Sancta School in Bethlehem and Director of the Franciscan Boys' Home, is very grateful for the generous support from U.S. Christians. “Giving presents at Christmas is itself a joyful encounter,” says Fr. Marwan. “But seeing the beaming eyes of these little children as they open their presents is truly a gift from God.”





CHRISTIAN FAMILY CENTER | NAZARETH

THE PROGRAM

At the request of the Franciscan Custody and the Parish in Nazareth, FFHL established a community center for Christian families with social needs. This center is modeled after the Franciscan Family Center in Bethlehem.

Fr. Amjad Sabbara, pastor of the Church of the Annunciation, is presently taking a course on the "Family" at John Paul II Pontifical Institute in Rome. He hopes to bring new ideas and skills to help the center.



The goal is to make life more meaningful for all. "We Christians," stated Kameel Spanioly, Program Director, "must rebuild our spirits and our souls from within both mentally and spiritually."



FRANCISCAN FAMILY CENTER | BETHLEHEM

THE PROGRAM

The Franciscan Family Center was established in Bethlehem to provide professional counseling to Christian families who have suffered psychological trauma. They also provide sponsored educational programs for children and adults. The Center collaborates with the Franciscan Parish in Bethlehem to promote services and assistance for Christian families. The Franciscan Family Center also created programs for employment for the Bethlehem community as well as working with the marginalized Christian families to assist in home renovations.



The Center promotes the development of strong families and seeks to restore the dignity of the family unit, both spiritually and in their basic needs. This is achieved through education, faith sharing and growing the sense of community through programs offered by the Center.

Because religious education is a priority for Catholic families, the Center seeks to help defer costs and provide enriching faith formation opportunities. There are over 80 boys and girls from low-income families currently receiving a free grammar and elementary education. Lack of funding should never deprive Catholic families of meaningful faith formation for their children.





FRANCISCAN SOCIAL SERVICES | BETHLEHEM

THE PROGRAM

The Franciscan Social Services Organization (FSSO) was established to care for those individuals and families in the Bethlehem area in need to do financial, medical, or social environment issues. The organization does its utmost to reach all impoverished families and individuals through home visits and taking care of cases recommended by the parish priest. This past year, FSSO asked FFHL to assist them by funding medicine for those who are unable to pay.



The FSSO has 4 areas your donation will support:

- Monthly assistance and allowances for elderly, widows, and families in special need
- Medical and pharmaceutical assistance
- Utility invoices and food coupons
- Education



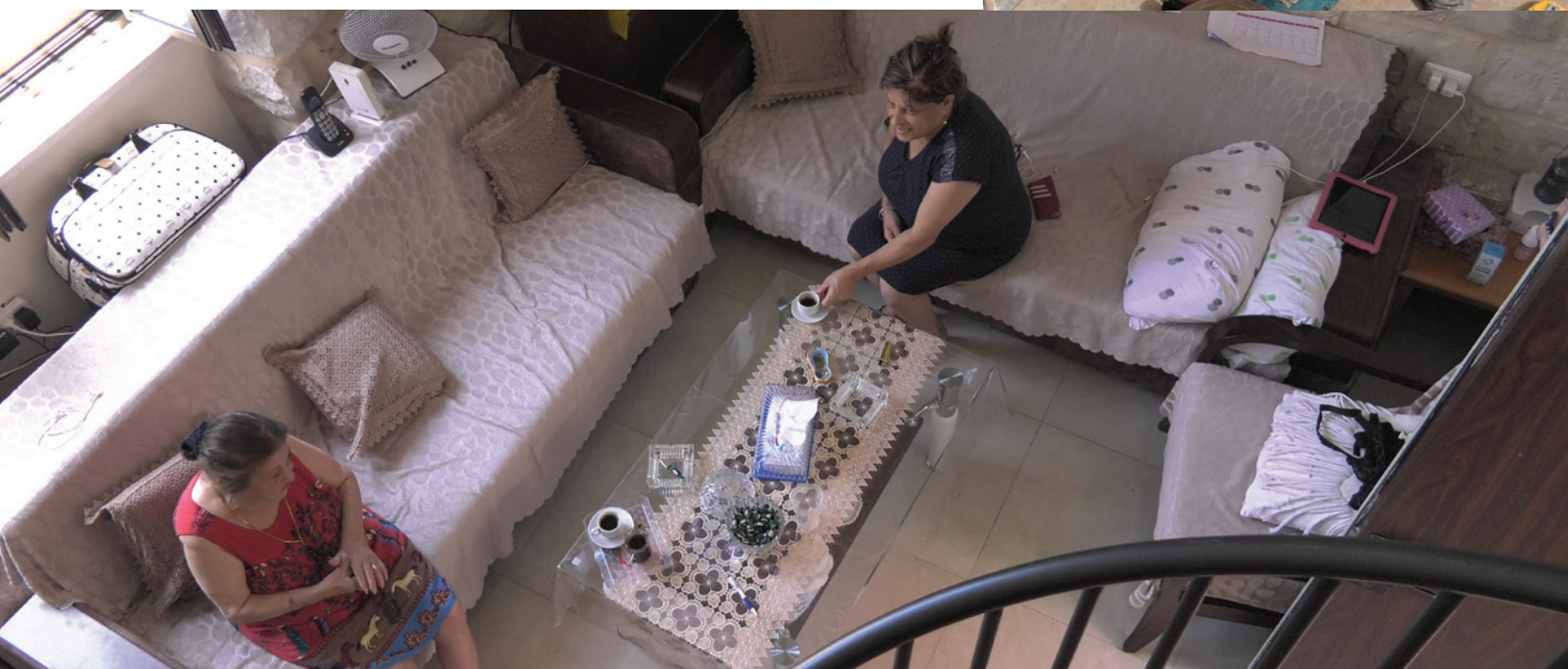
HOUSING PROGRAMS



HOUSING RENOVATION

THE PROGRAM

Many houses in Bethlehem and in the surrounding area are in dire need of repair. The Emergency Job Creation Program was established by the Franciscan Family Center to provide employment for local Christians to do repair work on these houses so that they will be safe and livable again.



Project Director, Sr. Maria, continues to visit local families to assess their needs. She recommends families to FFHL who are in need of housing repairs but are unable to afford the high costs associated with renovations.

While plans to build more units are underway in Beit Hanina, St. Francis Village in Bethphage (Jerusalem) is currently under construction with ten new units thanks to the support and generosity of FFHL supporters.



SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

THE PROGRAM

One of the primary goals of FFHL is to provide housing for Christian families. FFHL partners with Christian construction companies to develop two- and three-bedroom apartment buildings. The original plan was to build dozens of subsidized housing units for Christian families across Bethphage, Jericho, Beit Hanina, Nazareth and Bethlehem.

There are plans for 30 more units in Jericho and an ecumenical complex in Jaffa of 26 stories and 120 units. Many Christians are cut off from economic opportunities, and these projects will offer employment as well as access to basic amenities without going through checkpoints or traveling miles to the next available alternative.



COMPLETED HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS:

- 1994** - Friendship Housing Project I & II in Bethany
- 1999** - Ram Housing Project in Jerusalem
- 2001** - Beit-Hanina Housing Project in Bethlehem
- 2005** - Child Jesus Housing III Project in Bethlehem
- 2006** - St. Francis Village Housing Project in Jerusalem

ON-GOING HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS:

- 2018** - St. Francis Village Housing Project in Jerusalem





OTHER PROGRAMS



JOB PLACEMENT

THE PROGRAM

The majority of Arab Christians look to the tourism industry for employment. Many of them work as guides and bus drivers for pilgrimages, serve as hotel managers, or are shop owners. There is a special connection when pilgrims realize their guides and other Christians in the Holy Land live out the mission of Christ and His disciples, sharing the Gospel message.



When cultural, political, and economical factors, intervene Christians of the Holy Land often find themselves without reliable employment. When tourism and pilgrimages decline, the local Christians struggle. Palestinian unemployment is about 65 percent. FFHL seeks to provide job opportunities in the private and public sectors. Our scholarship recipients who have graduated go on to become professionals and are often placed in the fields of business, law, medicine, accounting and engineering. It is FFHL's goal to help Christian's meet basic needs through employment, even in times of economic hardship.



MAINTENANCE OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

THE PROGRAM

Given that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the historical location of the Crucifixion, Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ, its upkeep and maintenance is of utmost importance.



One major benefactor of FFHL has committed funds to the Custody's Foundation for the ordinary, monthly expenses of the convent at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.





THANK YOU, GOD BLESS.

Without the support of our gracious and generous donors, we couldn't provide the level of assistance and opportunities that these programs afford our brothers and sisters living in the Holy Land. Would you like to add your support to Christians in the Holy Land?

MAKE YOUR DONATION AT WWW.FFHL.ORG/DONATE-NOW

The Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land is a tax-exempt non-profit organization pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Our EIN is 33-0628775.