



HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL IS A WORK OF THE ORDER OF MALTA
AND THE GRAND MASTER HAS ASKED ALL MEMBERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT.

FALL ²⁰¹²

NEWSLETTER

Holy Family Hospital is the premier maternity hospital and newborn critical care center for the Bethlehem region, four United Nations refugee camps, and Bedouin encampments in the Judean Desert. Most importantly it offers peace and love in action in the midst of great turmoil.



Diabetes Clinic



“Your Baby is Fine.” Those are the words that every expectant mother is anxious to hear but even more so when the woman has gestational diabetes like Jihan Hourani. Jihan is being treated at the Diabetes Clinic which was launched in 2010. The Clinic has enabled Hourani to go through her pregnancy receiving the proper medical care so that she and her much awaited first child can be healthy during pregnancy and birth.

“When I was first diagnosed with diabetes I was very sad and worried about what I needed to do for my baby,” said Hourani. “But at the clinic the medical staff instructed me on my diet, exercise and provided support. I am so thankful for the clinic which has allowed my baby to develop and for me to be safe.”

Holy Family Hospital has the only Palestinian clinic which functions as a complete diabetic care center that includes four obstetricians, a dietician and a nurse. When first diagnosed, the expectant mothers are admitted into the Hospital so that their blood sugar can be stabilized and they can learn how to test their blood sugar levels six times a day. Each woman receives a free glucometer and enough strips to test their blood sugar for the duration of the pregnancy. The women are then monitored every two weeks at the clinic.

“Since there is pre-disposition for diabetes in people of Middle Eastern descent, it is critical that such a clinic exists here,” said Dr. Salameh Qumsieh. “Prior to the Holy Family Hospital clinic, gestational diabetes cases went undiagnosed because women couldn’t afford to pay for the test in the private labs. If the diabetes goes untreated during pregnancy the fetus can grow too large and the birthing process can be very dangerous for both mother and baby, causing shoulder distortion in the baby and post-partum hemorrhaging in the mother, Qumsieh explained.

SINCE ITS INCEPTION, THE CLINIC HAS TREATED ALMOST 800 WOMEN, AND HAS EDUCATED THE PUBLIC ABOUT MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE DISEASE AND TREATMENT. AT FIRST MANY OF THE EXPECTANT MOTHERS REJECT THEIR DIAGNOSIS WANTING TO BE WHAT SOCIETY DEEMS “NORMAL.”

“They don’t want to admit there is a problem,” added clinic nurse Lorette Kassis, who is head of the post-natal department at the Hospital. “At first the women are afraid. They blame themselves for doing this to herself and her baby, as if there is something wrong with them. They feel embarrassed to admit that they have diabetes to other people.”

In the eighth month of her pregnancy Manal Albathal, 30, comes faithfully to all her clinic appointments after having first struggled with the diagnosis. “When I was first diagnosed I was very sad and was afraid,” said Albathal, who had to be hospitalized twice to stabilize her blood sugar. “At first it was hard to accept but now I accept it and hope it will be okay. Lorette is always smiling and that helps me. I am eating much less sugar. Now I am very thankful to have this clinic here.”

As the information about the clinic spreads by word of mouth, women such as Rula Safi, pregnant with her first child, are more likely to use the services after having been referred by friends. Women are now coming to the clinic from all over the region—from Hebron and outlying villages as well as from Jerusalem, including those referred to the clinic by private doctors.

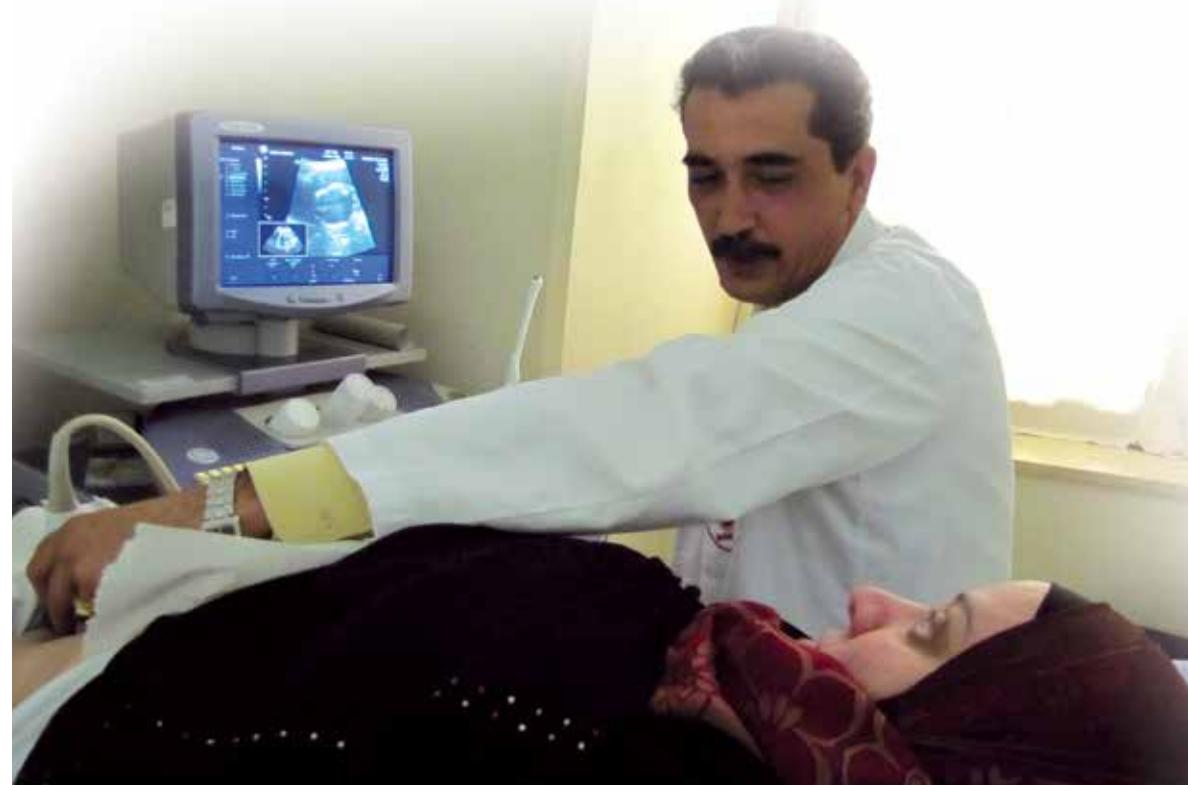
“I feel glad when I have new patients. That means people are hearing about us and our good work,” said Kassis. On average they see about 18 patients every week, she added. On this day there were five new patients. It is this growing awareness about gestational diabetes amongst the women which makes her job so gratifying, said Kassis.

Staff dietician Hana Abu Zuluf faces the challenging task of helping the women learn how to change their dietary habits. In a society where there is little awareness about healthy eating and exercise, it was difficult at first for women to accept the connection between diet and the health of their babies and their own well-being during

pregnancy, noted Abu Zuluf. At first it is hard to convince the women that they must refrain from eating some traditional foods, such as the wild hyssop herb mix called “za’atar” which is prepared with olive oil and sesame seeds and is sprinkled on many Palestinian delicacies, and “hallabe”, a sesame seed sweet traditionally eaten by nursing mothers to help with the milk production.

“In the beginning it is not easy for them to acknowledge that they have to follow a special diet, but now most of them understand that this is for their own health and for their baby’s health,” said Abu Zuluf, who also meets with the women during their visit to the clinic. “I tell them this is part of a healthy lifestyle. They can prepare these foods for their whole family, not just for themselves. It is so important that we can treat all the aspects of the women’s health needs in one place.

The results of the Diabetes Clinic have been excellent. Thanks to the treatment women have been receiving at the clinic, there have not been any significant maternal complications during the birthing process.





Just One Christian Mother's Story...

Riham

Riham, 27, and Nidal, 32, are all smiles as they prepare to go home with their new daughter, Orsila. They are excited to have the newest member of the family join their four-year-old son Kusta, who is waiting eagerly at home, for his baby sister's arrival.

Just a day earlier the young Christian couple had been distraught and concerned for the safety of their unborn baby. They had learned, during a pre-natal exam, that their baby's heartbeat had weakened and Riham would need to have an induced labor in order to save the baby's life.

"SHE WAS AFRAID TO DELIVER AT ANOTHER HOSPITAL. SHE CAME HERE CRYING. THIS IS A COUPLE WHO DESERVED TO BE HELPED."

"I was so scared, but now I am happy" says Riham, the relief of being able to cradle little Orsila in her arms visible on her face. "The doctors here were excellent and worked well as a team with the nurse. They made me feel safe and I knew my baby would be safe here too."

She had some bleeding following the delivery, recounts Riham, but the nurses responded quickly with treatment and kept her under observation until they were certain the bleeding had stopped.

After having given birth to her son at Holy Family Hospital four years ago, she knew that she wanted to give birth to her daughter at the hospital as well, said Riham, who works as a teacher's assistant at a kindergarten in her native Bethlehem.

Nidal is a trained carpenter but because of

the hard economic situation for Palestinians, he fell onto hard times and had to close his carpentry workshop. Despite the difficulty he encountered supporting his family, Nidal was determined to maintain his dignity and to work. After struggling to find employment as a manual laborer, he finally began working part-time through a job program at the Franciscan Catholic Parish in Jerusalem, a week before his daughter was born.

But even with both of them working again, the young couple's joint salary will only reach \$450 a month, not enough to enable them to pay

off Nidal's business debts, pay their rent of \$200 a month as well as their utilities and feed the family.

"Riham was very stressed when she came to me asking for help," said Holy Family Hospital social worker Mary Maoh. "She was afraid to deliver at another hospital. She came here crying. This is a couple who deserved to be helped."

Thanks to the generous donations from HFH friends, the hospital was able to pay almost a quarter of the couple's hospital bill, she said proudly.

"I don't know what other hospital I would have gone to if I couldn't come here," said Riham.

"I am very happy to have a daughter," added Nidal. "I hope we can give her a good education and raise her to have a good life in Bethlehem."

OVER 45 Well Woman Clinic

Not only will the new Over 45 Well Woman Clinic bring much needed medical care to Palestinian women but it is also serving as a role model of cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis.

Prior to the launching of the new clinic, Holy Family Hospital reached out to their Israeli colleagues at the Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital in nearby Jerusalem, who already have such a clinic in place. The medical staff then traveled to the Hadassah clinic to visit and observe their medical services.

Holy Family Hospital Gynecologist Dr. Salameh Qumsieh, who will be among the staff members of the new clinic, noted that the Hospital staff will integrate suggestions and methods they witnessed at the Israeli hospital while adapting them to the specific cultural needs of Palestinian women.

The Over 45 Well Woman Clinic will improve the quality of health care for mature woman in Palestine. Offered through the clinic will be diagnosis of breast, cervical, colon, ovarian, and uterine cancer. Additionally, the clinic will be performing surgeries to correct such problems as urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapses.

"The cooperation has been good," added Dr. Jacques Keutgen, KM, Director General, Holy Family Hospital. "We are unfamiliar in this field. Until now Palestinian women have not gone for medical care after their fertility years. This is the first step. We will see how we can apply the methods we have seen at Hadassah to our clinic in Bethlehem. This interchange is contributing to the clinic."

Since this will be the only clinic in the West Bank offering treatment for the problems of mature women, the U.S. Foundation believed it was critical to the region for them to sponsor the clinic.



Did You Know?

The unemployment rate for people ages 15 - 24 is 47%, #5 on the world list.

The overall unemployment rate is 23.5%, up from 16% in 2010.

18% of the population is under the poverty line.



The GIFT of GIVING!

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The poor, who walk in the steps of our Savior, will be served by your kindness and charity in many priceless ways. You can help by sponsoring the following items:

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SPONSOR A FAMILY THROUGH PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH	\$1,000
SUPPORT AN INFANT IN THE NEO-NATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT	\$500
DELIVER A BABY IN BETHLEHEM	\$250
PROVIDE PRE-NATAL CARE TO AN EXPECTANT MOTHER	\$150
PURCHASE MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR THE MOBILE CLINIC	\$75

By check, please make your check payable to: Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation and use the attached envelope for mailing.
By credit card, please visit birthplaceofhope.org.
Donations are tax-deductible according to current IRS guidelines.



Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation

Another Christian Mother's Story...

Pauline

First time mother Pauline, 20, was surprised to learn at her pre-natal check-up that she was in the advanced stages of labor and needed to go to the hospital immediately. "I had felt a contraction earlier but didn't realize it was time to deliver!" laughs Pauline as she recalls her rushed arrival at Holy Family Hospital.

At first I was scared said the young Christian housewife but I was soon put at ease by the very kind nurses and the pleasant atmosphere. "The nurses interact and communicate with the patients so well and the doctors are excellent" said Pauline.

Within an hour of her arrival at the Hospital, Pauline delivered a healthy baby boy that the couple named George. "I was so happy when my baby was born," she said. "It is a huge responsibility to be a mother."

"WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL OUR GENEROUS DONORS FOR KEEPING THIS CHRISTIAN BEACON LIT FOR THOSE STRUGGLING IN THE BIRTHPLACE OF JESUS."

A responsibility that Pauline and her husband, Issa, took seriously when choosing a hospital for the delivery. "I only wanted to deliver my baby at Holy Family Hospital! They are the best for maternal and infant care. We were not sure how we could afford the extra cost of Holy Family Hospital --- the government run hospitals are slightly cheaper. We knew we would need some assistance in covering the medical bills".

Issa is a barber and was able to provide a comfortable life for him and Pauline when they first got married. They were renting their own apartment and preparing to have their own

family. Since that time Bethlehem has changed drastically--- now a high wall surrounds the area and there are checkpoints within that impedes daily life and impairs an already poor economy. This has been taking a major toll on Issa's income which has placed financial strains on the young couple's budget. Issa had no other choice but to move them in with his parents and brother.

Mary Maoh, the Hospital's social worker, remembers the first time she met the expectant mother. "Pauline came to me crying, afraid that she would have to go to a public hospital without our help because they could not afford to pay the entire medical bill on their own". Mary reviewed their case and determined that the Hospital could cover a quarter of their hospital bill.

"We are grateful to all our generous donors for keeping this Christian beacon lit for those struggling in the birthplace of Jesus," said Maoh. "I am really thankful to be able to help young Christian couples like Pauline and Issa," said Mary.

For Issa, it was a relief to know that his wife and child would be able to be at Holy Family Hospital. "We don't have another hospital like this in Bethlehem," said the new father. "It is a Christian hospital!"

Since the Christian population is dwindling in Bethlehem, it will be an honor as well as a challenge to raise our son as a Christian, said Issa.

Counseling at HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL



AS YASMIN PREPARES TO LEAVE THE OFFICE WITH YOUSEF TO MAKE HER WAY BACK HOME TO HEBRON, SHE PRESSES A GIFT OF FRESH BUNDLE OF MINT LEAVES, CALLED NANA IN ARABIC INTO MAOH'S HANDS.
"THE WOMEN CAN'T PAY, BUT THESE GIFTS ARE SOMETHING FROM THEIR SOIL, FROM THEIR HANDS," SAID MAOH.

Yasmin, 31, cradles her 2 ½ month old son Yousef in her arms. His large brown eyes search unseeingly around the room.

Yasmin's fears have just been confirmed and she now knows that her son is blind. He was also born with several other medical conditions including a heart defect. In addition, a shunt needed to be implanted into his brain in order to drain liquid which was building up--a procedure which has caused his skull to become misshapen. It now also appears that the cherubic baby may also have some spinal nerve defects and may not be able to walk normally.

It is a very difficult time for the young mother who also has three other children to care for. But today she smiles shyly, and even laughs at times, her own beautiful brown eyes sparkling as Holy Family Hospital social worker Mary Maoh coos over Yousef and affectionately calls him her "dear friend."

YASMIN, WHO IS FROM HEBRON, IS AMONG THE 60 WOMEN WHO COME TO MEET WITH MAOH EVERY YEAR BEFORE OR AFTER GIVING BIRTH FOR COUNSELING FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS. HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL IS THE ONLY MATERNITY HOSPITAL IN THE WEST BANK WHICH HAS A SOCIAL WORKER ON STAFF TO TAKE CARE OF THE EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF THEIR PATIENTS IN THIS WAY, PROVIDING A VITAL LIFELINE TO MANY WOMEN WHO FEEL THEY HAVE NO ONE ELSE TO SPEAK TO ABOUT PRIVATE ISSUES AND DO NOT KNOW WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP.

"It is very important for these women to have access to someone who can help them with these issues. There are women who have so many problems," said Maoh. Generally the women who come for counseling have suffered miscarriages, stillbirths or have given birth to a baby with special needs, she said. "They need help in accepting the new situation in their lives."

Sometimes the women are suffering from post - partum depression and sometimes, even in this conservative society it is the husband who

makes the initial contact with Maoh, asking for help for his wife.

"Before I came to Mary I was always depressed and nervous. I felt hopeless about my life," said Yasmin. "I had no one to talk to and I felt like dying with my baby. But then I came here and Mary gave me some hope. Her support is very important."

Still, because of cultural norms Yasmin prefers to keep the counseling sessions private and does not tell her friends about her visits to Mary. Today Yasmin is adjusting to her role as a mother of a special needs child and is eager to find her son the help he needs so he can live as fulfilling a life as possible. The first step for her now is to acquire a special shunt headdress for Yousef, which can not be obtained in Palestine but which would help re-shape his skull.

Although Palestinian society is not as open to counseling as many Western societies, gov-

ernmental hospitals do not have the budget to employ a social worker to address the emotional needs of their patients. "When the women come to me they are very forthcoming with their concerns and emotions. They are very open and tell me everything about their lives. This is a place where they feel safe," Maoh noted.

In addition to providing a safe and empathetic environment where the woman can truly express herself freely, Maoh said she is also able to help the woman tangibly by directing her to the

proper organizations, who can provide her with services she or her baby may need.

Expectant mother Nasreen, decided to come to Mary after she became pregnant with her second child while her three-year-old son is suffering from cancer. The stress was too much for her says Nasreen.

"The fact that I can come here for help is definitely important for me," she says following her first meeting. "I felt safe coming here, and also a bit relieved, like I will finally get the help I need. I thank God there a place like that here."

For Maoh, the satisfaction from her job comes when she sees how she has helped a young

mother move forward with her life. That the mother has accepted her situation and has the tools she needs to move in a productive direction for herself and her baby.

"It is a great feeling when I help the women change their attitude to their situation, when I can help the husband change his attitude also towards his wife," said Maoh.

As Yasmin prepares to leave the office with Yousef to make her way back home to Hebron, she presses a gift of fresh bundle of mint leaves, called nana in Arabic into Maoh's hands.

"The women can't pay, but these gifts are something from their soil, from their hands," said Maoh.



Grand Cross

Awarded to Board Member of
Holy Family Hospital & the U.S. Foundation

Federal Association Dame — Kathryn S. Abell, GCMOb

Congratulations to Mrs. Kathryn Abell, GC-MOb, who received the Grand Cross Pro Merito Melitensi from H. E. Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager, Grand Hospitaller of the Order of Malta. The award recognized her dedication and service to the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem - one of the three primary hospitaller works of the Order worldwide.

Kathryn was appointed to the Holy Family Hospital Foundation's original steering committee in 1995. She served as the national co-chair of the Foundation's major gift campaign which raised \$8.5 million. Kathryn has also served as the chair of the nominating committee and a member of the development committee for the Foundation. For seventeen years, Kathryn tirelessly showcased the

work of the Hospital to Knights and Dames in the U.S., to Congressional supporters and to the general public in the United States.



As a member of the Hospital board, Kathryn annually traveled to the Hospital to oversee the Order of Malta's premier maternity hospital and newborn critical care center in the region. On receiving the award Kathryn said, "It was a nice surprise, but more an award for all the wonderful, dedicated people who work to keep the Hospital open for the poor, than for me."



Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation, we extend heartfelt congratulations to our esteemed Board member, Mrs. Kathryn Abell, GCMOb, who was awarded the Grand Cross Pro Merito Melitensi of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta.

We are bursting with pride because this honor is so well-deserved for her long time commitment to the Board of the Hospital in Bethlehem and for her tireless work over many years as co-chair of the major gift campaign of the Foundation. With her characteristic modesty, Kathryn gave credit to many others for past and present fundraising successes. But, without her extraordinary focus and leadership, the fundraising efforts would not have been nearly as successful. Her wide range of contacts at home and abroad helped immensely in the support of this signature activity of the Order of Malta worldwide.

Be assured, Kathryn, of our continued assistance in every way for the ongoing support of the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem.

With enormous gratitude from your fellow Board members,



Ellen S. Shafer

Ellen S. Shafer, DM/Ob.
Chairman of the Board
Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation

Join the **Three Kings** SOCIETY

Among the many ways you can help the mothers and babies of Bethlehem is to remember them in your will. Whether or not you can make a donation now, remembering the Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation in your will, is your legacy of care for those most vulnerable and poor. Your generosity will be honored in perpetuity on a memorial plaque located at the Hospital in the Holy Land.

All bequests to Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation, as a charitable, not-

for-profit organization, are fully deductible for estate tax purposes.

It is always advisable to consult with an experienced estate planning attorney about drafting provisions for your will.

Please notify the Foundation of your bequest or planned gift so that you can be honored in the Three Kings Society and commemorated on the memorial plaque.



A Historical Day At Holy Family Hospital

On March 29, 2012 the Hospital celebrated its seven year successful partnership with the U.S Agency for International Development/West Bank Gaza (USAID/WBG).

Since 2005, USAID/WBG has supported the Hospital as a center of excellence for quality maternal and baby care, especially for high risk pregnancies and newborns. USAID funds have helped the Hospital expand services in response to evolving community needs, and promote the sustainability of the facility's specialized care capacity.



Participating in this joyful celebration were staff from USAID/WBG, Palestinian delegates, doctors and media from around the region along with management and staff from the Hospital.

The total funds awarded from 2005-2012 was \$5.8 million and produced the following outcomes:

COMPLETED \$1.4 million of construction and renovation activities at the Hospital, including a delivery ward, intensive care unit, emergency room, well baby nursery, and a special sterilization unit.

PROVIDED nearly \$1.6 million worth of medical equipment and furnishings.

DESIGNED and implemented a Well Woman Health Care program through the Hospital's outpatient clinics and the outreach clinics in remote villages, and expanded the program by supporting an additional gynecologist.

SUPPORTED the residency costs of three staff doctors – one in obstetrics/gynecology, one in neonatology and one in OB/GYN, and supported the continuing education of ten nurses.

DEVELOPED and produced a Health Education Kit to be distributed to mothers who receive care at the Hospital.

TRAINED 279 health care professionals in advanced techniques.

Looking for a special project this *Advent Season?*



Adopting Holy Family Hospital is a meaningful and appropriate way to prepare for the birth of the Christ Child.

You Can Host a Baby Shower!

This Advent season prepare for the birth of the Christ Child by hosting a baby shower for the poor expectant mothers of Bethlehem. **By gathering together family, friends and fellow parishioners, your baby shower will bring hope and care to families who face dangers similar to those faced by the Holy Family 2,000 years ago.**

A complete baby shower kit is available online, www.birthplaceofhope.org, or by calling Colleen Marotta, executive director, at 202-331-2494. By writing a check for items on the Nativity Registry, you and your guests can guarantee that every mother delivers in a safe and state of the art facility and that every newborn can be swaddled, fed and cared for in Bethlehem.

You Can Have Your Children's School Adopt Holy Family Hospital!

Holy Family Hospital is the perfect project to teach children about the town where the Christ Child was born and how, today, one special door is open to poor and destitute expectant mothers - Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem.

Schools around the country are adopting Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem as the ideal educational and service-oriented activity for their students.

Schools raise funds for the hospital by carrying out projects such as bake sales, t-shirt contests, bottles for babies and Christmas pageants.

Visit www.birthplaceofhope.org to learn more information on how schools can help those in the Holy Land.

Holy Family Hospital **OVERVIEW**

Array of services includes: pre-natal care and delivery, out-patient postnatal care, gynecology, education about childbirth and childcare, social services for families, and mobile clinical outreach to remote areas.

The hospital now offers mammography, laparoscopic surgery, and Echo Doppler diagnosis not found anywhere else in the region.

Serves as the Referral hospital to four refugee camps operated by the United Nations Relief Works Agency.

Annually delivers over 3,000 babies.

Maintains the only neonatal intensive care unit in the region – annually saving the lives of 400 premature and low-birth-weight infants.

Provides the only available long-term hospitalization for high-risk mothers.

Performs over 22,000 outpatient consultations each year.

Every week, the Hospital's mobile clinic dispenses medical care to families living in remote areas in the Judean Desert.

The Hospital recruits and trains native-born medical professionals; particularly providing opportunities for women in a region where there are few others.

Only Hospital in the West Bank to receive approval by the prestigious British Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Provides steady employment and a fair wage for its 150 employees, many of whom are the sole support of large extended families.

Facilitates Israeli-Palestinian cooperation in the medical field.

The Hospital has twinning programs with:

- ~National Maternity Hospital in Dublin Ireland
- ~University Hospital (La Citadelle) – Liege Belgium
- ~Hospital St. Vincent – Paris France.

Did You Know?



The West Bank is 2,263 square miles, which is an area slightly smaller than the state of Delaware.

The barrier wall is approximately 258 miles long.

There are approximately 600 checkpoints in the West Bank, restricting movement between cities for Palestinian people.

The population of the West Bank is 2.6 million. 722,000 are recognized as refugees by UNRWA.

Exclusively designed Christmas cards... to benefit Holy Family Hospital!

THIS YEAR OFFERS NEW PRICING AND DESIGN!

A set of Christmas cards is \$45.00 with \$31.50 benefiting the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem.

- ~ Cards are gold foil embossed
- ~ Choice of Christian inside message
- ~ Large enough to accommodate a 5" x 7" family photo on the inside cover
- ~ Personal imprinting an option



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55,831



Holy Family Hospital
of Bethlehem Foundation
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~ A Work of the Order of Malta

Holy Family Hospital is under the direct responsibility of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

It continues the tradition of Christian love born 2000 years ago with Our Lord Jesus Christ and carried on a thousand years later for “our lords the poor and the sick” in the Order’s first hospice in nearby Jerusalem. Like the first knights whose hospice included a maternity ward, Holy Family Hospital welcomes all mothers and babies without regard to religion, nationality, or economic status.

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