

2012



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

SPRING

NEWSLETTER



Sireen

Just One Mother's Story...



Sireen, 28, and Nasser, 38, a young Christian couple from Bethlehem, were very excited to learn that Sireen was pregnant with a baby boy and that they would soon be bringing home the long awaited baby brother to their beloved three-year-old daughter, Deena. Although their financial situation was tight, they decided that they would save up money so that Sireen could deliver the baby at Holy Family Hospital.

During delivery the doctor detected that the baby's heartbeat was weakening which required that Sireen be rushed urgently into the Hospital's operating room for an emergency cesarean section. After the operation, Sireen had to be placed in the Intensive Care Unit for follow-up care. Thankfully the baby boy, who was named Sameer, was born healthy and both mother and child were discharged as scheduled. Unfortunately, the unexpected costs loomed heavily over the couple's joyful time. As a result of the unforeseen medical care, the Hospital bill doubled from the couple's saved \$532 to \$1,064.

Since the construction of the Israeli security wall, a barrier now exists and prevents Nasser from traveling to a reliable source of employment as a manual laborer. Because of the restrictions on movements and goods within the West Bank, construction jobs are rare and have resulted in Nasser not having a steady income. Before the birth of Sameer, Sireen was a public elementary school teacher and the steady wage earner in the family with a monthly salary of \$480. Since the death of Nasser's father, the couple has also been supporting his elderly mother and unmarried adult sister.

"WE HAD SAVED UP FOR THIS DELIVERY AT HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL. THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT AND WELL-KNOWN HOSPITAL IN BETHLEHEM WITH EXCELLENT CARE. WE DIDN'T EVEN THINK OF GOING TO ANOTHER HOSPITAL," SAID SIREEN, AS SHE CRADLED SAMEER IN HER HOSPITAL ROOM ON THE DAY OF THEIR DISCHARGE. "I AM SURE SOMEONE WILL HELP US. GOD WILL BRING SOMEONE TO HELP US BECAUSE WE REALLY NEED HELP."

"The couple is deeply in need of financial assistance for their medical care," said Holy Family Hospital social worker Mary Maoh. "Nasser is not currently working and Sireen is supporting her own family and the extended family of her husband."

Despite their modest means, Sireen and Nasser maintain a healthy environment for the children in their home, which belongs to Nasser's extended family, said Maoh.

Through her devotion to helping the neediest patients, Maoh has been able to arrange partial assistance for Sireen and her family through the local Latin Parish, which will be paying \$269 towards their bill. Thanks to the generous donations of U.S. supporters of the Hospital, the outstanding amount will be covered for the couple.

"I do not want to even consider what could have happened to me and the baby if I had not given birth at Holy Family Hospital" Sireen said, "especially with the emergency medical situation which arose during his birth."

2011

– a year of *peace* and *love* in action

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

In 2011, Holy Family Hospital had a tremendous impact on the mothers, babies and families living in one of the most impoverished regions in the world.

2011 was a blessed year with the hospital delivering 3,303 babies – all bringing hope for a better tomorrow. The Mobile Outreach Clinic regularly traveled to the Bedouin encampments Beit Fajjar, Teqoa', Nahalin and Ras-haideh – performing 2,543 exams to women who otherwise would not have access to adequate medical care.

The Hospital's Outpatient Department provided 18,912 consultations in 2011 – an average of almost 52 every day of the year! Among them were 10,347 gynecology and obstetrics cases, 2,176 pediatric cases and 819 consultations in the Diabetic Clinic for pregnant women.

As Holy Family Hospital enters its 22nd year of service to the poor families in the West Bank Region, the staff sees ever-increasing needs for its state-of-the-art facilities and services.

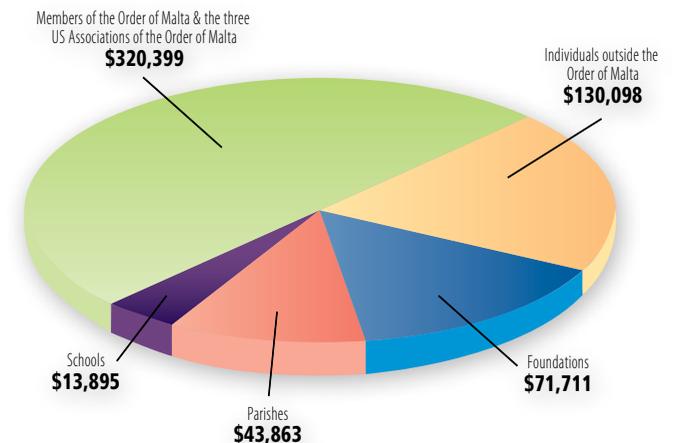
As the numbers increase, the goal remains the same in the Birthplace of Hope, only a short walk from the traditional birthplace of the Messiah – to assure that no one ever arrives at the door to hear "there is no room."

To meet these demands, the Hospital budget has grown from under \$1 million to \$3.6 million annually- about half of which is met by donations from generous donors from around the world.

The U.S. Foundation

The Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation is an established 501(c)(3) foundation registered and maintained in the United States. The Foundation is managed by a Board of Directors that are comprised of U.S. members of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Two members of its board also serve on the Hospital's board. The Foundation was organized in 1997, exclusively to generate and distribute funds for the services at Holy Family Hospital. It is through the generosity of others that we can care for the poor women and infants of the West Bank.

**THE 2011 RESPONSE
TO THE FOUNDATION'S
ANNUAL FUND PROGRAM
GENERATED \$579,966
FROM 537 DONORS.**



ANSWERING THE CALL FROM THE HOLY LAND

THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS, THE U.S. FOUNDATION IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT IT WILL BE FUNDING **TWO IMPORTANT INITIATIVES** AT HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL: A NEW VAN FOR THE MOBILE OUTREACH CLINIC (COST OF \$140,000) AND THE CONTINUATION OF THE OVER 45 WELL WOMAN PROGRAM (COST OF \$106,485).

THE MOBILE OUTREACH CLINIC

The Mobile Outreach Clinic is an important component of Holy Family Hospital and fulfills the Order of Malta's mission of caring for "our lords, the sick and the poor." Lack of financial resources and access to transportation restricts the ability for expectant mothers to travel to local hospitals for pre-natal care— leaving the least amongst us isolated and untreated.

The Mobile Outreach Clinic began in 1995, after Holy Family Hospital noticed a lack of treatment being provided to women and children in the Judean desert. These families live in extended groups of 20 to 40; small communities with no running water, no electricity, and no sanitation. Each week the Mobile Clinic visits the same three locations at a scheduled time. The medical team performs pre-natal exams, lab tests, pediatric exams, and gynecology exams inside the van. These services are essential to detecting and treating any problems that might affect the mother and child during pregnancy and lead to severe complications. The team also examines the living conditions and educates mothers about hygiene and childcare. Simply the Mobile Outreach Clinic enables women and children to live healthier and fuller lives.

WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CLINIC, ONE PATIENT HADEED SAID, "HOW ELSE WOULD I BE ABLE TO CHECK THE HEALTH OF MY BABY? WE WAIT FOR THE CLINIC EVERY THURSDAY, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US. MY MOTHER HAD ALL TEN OF HER CHILDREN IN A TENT WITH NO MEDICAL CARE. I HAVE THE CHANCE TO BE SAFER IN MY PREGNANCIES."

The Hospital requested that the U.S Foundation purchase a new van for two significant reasons: first, to replace the existing Mercedes van which is more than ten years old and secondly to enable the Hospital to expand its services with a focus on an increase to quality of care. The new modern up-to date Mercedes-Benz Vehicle type Sprinter 319-CDI will be fully equipped with the best modern medical equipment as well as the specifications for a clinic area.

A vital new item is an 80 liter refrigerator that will allow the medical team to carry medicine for immediate treatments. For the first time, the Hospital will be able to transport insulin which requires refrigeration. Insulin is used to lower the blood sugar level of an expectant mother. If levels are untreated it can result in high risk problems to both mother and unborn child. It will also enable the medical team to perform blood tests on the patients. This will address the problem of isolated women not being able to travel to a location to have the test performed. The marked blood tubes will be kept in the refrigerator until the medical team returns to the Hospital where the laboratory will perform testing.



"The Management Committee of Holy Family Hospital would like to express its sincere gratitude to "Holy Family Hospital Foundation" in the U.S. for the support of our "Over 45 years Well Women Program" and the financing of the new mobile van.

Together through this support we will be able to help the poorest and older Palestinian women to overcome many medical problems that resulted from multiple and close intervals pregnancies and hence to contribute to their well-being and living a life of dignity.

Your help plays an integral part in the success of our work and strengthens our commitment to the Palestinian women. Thanks to the generous support of the Foundation's donors, our efforts to brighten the life of the mothers living in Bethlehem and the surrounding region will maintain."

Dr. Jacques Keutgen, KM, Director General, Holy Family Hospital

OVER 45 WELL WOMAN PROGRAM

The board of the U.S Foundation approved a grant of \$106,485, annually, for the next three years to continue the Over 45 Well Woman Program. Clinical care for women over 45 years of age had never existed in the West Bank until last year when USAID/West Bank/Gaza partnered with the Hospital to provide these services. With a one year grant from USAID/WBG, the Well Woman clinic was instituted and attracted women with chronic health problems. The clinic was a great success and word quickly spread throughout the community.

Dr. Harry Johnson, KM, the chairman of the International Medical Committee of the Holy Family Hospital Board of Directors, said "Women in the region marry young, spend their adult lives bearing or nursing babies, and at an earlier age suffer related medical problems. The Over 45 Well Women Program improves the quality of health care for mature women in Palestine. Offered through the clinic is preventative care— diagnosis of breast, cervical, colon, ovarian, and uterine cancer as well as performing surgery to correct problems such as urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapses."

Since this is the only clinic in the West Bank offering treatment for the problems of mature women, and Holy Family Hospital personnel are uniquely qualified to serve these needs, the U.S. Foundation believed it was critical to the region to continue the clinic.



OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE GOES TO OUR BENEFACTORS WHO THROUGH THEIR DEVOTION TO THE HOLY LAND FAMILIES ENABLE THE FOUNDATION TO MEET THE EXPANDING AND EVOLVING NEEDS OF THE HOSPITAL.

A Day at HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL

Mashour and Samah Al Fakhoury have waited three weeks for this special day—the day they will finally bring their little son Mohammed home. Mohammed was born at 32 weeks at Holy Family Hospital and needed specialized care in the Hospital's neo-natal intensive care unit.

"I am very happy he is coming home," said his mother Samah, 33, as she prepared to take him to meet his older brother and five older sisters who were anxiously waiting for him in their home in Hebron.

Mashour explained that their three youngest children were also born at the Hospital.

Having experienced a significant difference of medical services at Holy Family Hospital to the other hospitals, they do not want to go anywhere else.

Seeing the happy parents taking home their healthy baby after days of worrying and waiting makes all the hard work and long hours worthwhile for the staff in the neo-natal intensive care unit:

"THE SURVIVAL RATE IN OUR DEPARTMENT IS VERY GOOD," SAID NEO-NATAL PEDIATRICIAN DR. SALEEM KUNKAR. "WE CAN COMPARE OUR DEPARTMENT TO SIMILAR DEPARTMENTS IN EUROPE OR OTHER PARTS OF THE DEVELOPED WORLD. I AM FROM BETHLEHEM AND IT MAKES ME FEEL PROUD TO BE HELPING THESE FRAGILE BABIES."

As the only neo-natal intensive care unit in the Bethlehem region, it is almost always operating at full capacity which is 19 babies, said Dr. Kunkar. As a result of the Hospital's role in the region, he was able to receive advanced medical training in France through an awarded grant.

Dr. Kunkar explains how important this specialized care is to babies with health complications. One of those babies is tiny Ali, who was born at 25 weeks and weighed less than two pounds at birth. He was also born with a congenital heart defect which requires corrective surgery.



"For the time being," said Dr. Kunkar as he peers into the incubator where Ali is sleeping with monitors attached to his chest, "Ali will stay at the Hospital where he is receiving the best medical treatment available until he is strong enough and large enough to undergo heart surgery."

Downstairs in the women's ward, staff nurse Lorette Kasis is juggling patients, phone calls and visitors. Like upstairs, it is a busy day with three cesarean sections and four gynecological cases in addition to the numerous mothers who have already given birth.

"IT IS A NORMAL DAY FOR US," SAID KASIS. "WE WORK VERY HARD BUT WE ALL WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE THE WOMEN FEEL AS COMFORTABLE AS POSSIBLE. IT IS SUCH A JOY TO KNOW THAT AFTER THEIR SUFFERING TO GIVE BIRTH, IN THE END THEY HAVE SUCH A PRECIOUS GIFT. IT IS SO WONDERFUL TO BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THAT EXPERIENCE."



Khadja, 26, and Sumaya, 25, share a room where they are recovering from cesarean sections. Both young mothers are from the nearby village of Teqo'a. Khadja is ready to go home but Sumaya has just given birth and must rest. Sumaya's sister-in-law and mother come to pay her a visit.

"I CHOSE TO HAVE MY BABY HERE BECAUSE I AM AFRAID TO GO TO A PUBLIC HOSPITAL," SUMAYA SAID. "I FEEL SAFE AT HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL."

"We like it here," concurs her mother, Sa'adah Ibayad, 50. "It is clean and the doctors are respectful."

In the outpatient clinic waiting room several mothers cradle their babies as they wait for their appointment with the pediatrician. Sana, 30, and her husband Murad, 34, sit in the sunny corridor with their 10 month old baby girl Bushra who was born in the Hospital. The couple has just moved back to a Palestinian village from the United States, where they had been living for almost eight years. Sana is pregnant with their fourth child and they are waiting for some lab work.

After experiencing the birth of Bushra at Holy Family Hospital, they are convinced that this is where they want to have their next baby as well. "Here they really take care of mother and child," said Murad. "The level of care is very high."

FOR SANA, THE SIMPLE FACT THAT THE STAFF WAS ALWAYS SMILING AT HER AND TREATED HER KINDLY DURING HER STAY MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN HER BIRTHING EXPERIENCE, SHE SAID. "THAT IS VERY IMPORTANT. IF YOU GO TO OTHER HOSPITALS YOU DON'T EVER SEE ANYBODY SMILING, THEY JUST LOOK AT YOU AND SPEAK SHARPLY TO YOU, TELL YOU TO JUST SIT AND WAIT," SHE SAID. "HERE I FELT LIKE I WAS IN THE UNITED STATES. IT WAS SO NICE. I FELT LIKE THERE WAS NO ONE ELSE IN THE HOSPITAL EXPECT FOR ME."



Dr. Saba Abu Farah, head of the obstetrics/gynecology department, stated that this is the high level of care being given so that the entire experience of being at the Hospital is as pleasant as possible for the women. "Over the past two years there has been a lot of advancement in the OB/GYN department of our Hospital," said Dr. Abu Farah as he took a break from his rounds. "We are always trying to improve."

The Hospital has launched a diabetic clinic for pregnant women where gestational and non-gestational diabetes can be better diagnosed and treated. "In the past many such cases went undiagnosed because women couldn't afford to pay for the test in the expensive private labs," he noted. "Now the Hospital offers universal screening for every pregnant woman."

In addition, the Hospital has opened a state-of-the-art operating theater to perform several surgical procedures including hysterectomies by laparoscopy surgery. This reduces the need for major surgery as well as the number of days the woman needs to be hospitalized.

"WE ARE THE ONLY PALESTINIAN HOSPITAL DOING THIS," SAID DR. ABU FARAH. "WE ARE BRINGING ADVANCED MEDICAL CARE TO A POPULATION WHICH OTHERWISE WOULD NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THIS. I AM SO PROUD TO HAVE SUCH A FACILITY HERE IN THIS HOSPITAL AND TO BE ABLE TO OFFER THE VERY NEEDEST PATIENTS THE KIND OF CARE WHICH WOULD MEET THE MOST STRINGENT OF EUROPEAN OR AMERICAN STANDARDS OF CARE."

Back upstairs in the neo-natal emergency ward Mashour and Samah have received their release papers. As he readies to take Mohammed, Mashour bends down and kisses his son tenderly. Samah is all smiles.

They are going home.



Nancy

Nancy, 35, yearned to touch her newborn daughter who was attached to tubes and monitors—including a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) device—in the neo-natal intensive care unit at Holy Family Hospital. But Nancy was afraid that even her loving touch could put her precious daughter in contact with dangerous germs or that she might unwittingly hurt the tiny baby.

Finally, at the urging of hospital social worker Mary Maoh, Nancy scrubbed her hands clean and timidly reached out with one finger to caress her baby's arm. When she gently touched the baby's ears and legs for the first time, her eyes filled with tears.

A Christian housewife from Bethlehem, Nancy and her husband Eli, 36, had eagerly awaited the birth of a daughter after their two sons. But during a routine check up at 37 weeks the Holy Family Hospital obstetrician detected that the baby was not thriving in the uterus and ordered an emergency cesarean section for Nancy.

"I was very nervous about the birth," said Nancy, who had also given birth to her two sons by cesarean section. "I already knew what the procedure was but I was scared for the baby."

"The doctors and nurses spoke gently and helped calm me down," said Nancy. They even played one of her favorite songs, "How Beautiful" by Lebanese singer Majeda Roumi, on a CD player to make her feel more at ease. "I thanked God when my baby was born and then I thanked the doctors," said Nancy. "I was happy but afraid when they told me she would need special care. God willing, she will get better."

"I AM VERY HAPPY THEY ARE TAKING GOOD CARE OF MY BABY."

The baby, who Nancy and Eli named Leilah, was immediately placed in the neo-natal intensive care unit. The doctors believe the baby will need specialized care for ten days and will also need a special blood test to determine whether her undeveloped lungs are due to a chromosomal defect. "I am very happy they are taking good care of my baby," said Nancy. Staff nurse Rula Bandak reported that Leilah is slowly responding to the medical care and that, "We are seeing a little bit of improvement each day."

Hospital social worker Mary Maoh was concerned about how the couple would be able to pay for the critical care for little Leilah. They had saved for the cesarean section but the baby's care was money the family does not have. The daily cost in the neo-natal intensive care unit, the only one in the region, is about \$266 a day—a sum well beyond the means of the couple.

Maoh contacted the Palestinian Ministry of Health to arrange for assistance and the ministry agreed to pay for 90 percent of the intensive care unit treatment for Leilah. Thanks to the generous donations made by U.S. supporters, the Hospital will cover the remaining 10 percent of the bill.

The GIFT of GIVING

MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH YOUR CHARITABLE DONATION!

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:

PROVIDE MEDICAL CARE TO THE POOREST FAMILIES LIVING IN REMOTE AREAS OF THE DESERT **\$2,500**

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.

HOST A **Baby Shower**

GATHER TOGETHER FAMILY, FRIENDS, PARISHIONERS AND SCHOOLS FOR A BETHLEHEM BABY SHOWER

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.

A complete baby shower kit is available online at birthplaceofhope.org or by calling Colleen Marotta, executive director, at 202-331-2494.

BABY SHOWERS FOR BETHLEHEM *Mothers & Babies*

On behalf of the poor mothers and babies, we express our gratitude to the teachers at St. Catherine of Siena Preschool in Kennesaw, Georgia. In the month of December, they sacrificed their Christmas exchanges with one another to help ensure in Christ's birthplace that every newborn would be swaddled, fed and cared for in Bethlehem. They also placed their spare change in baby bottles bringing the total amount raised through their fundraising efforts \$736.00. Their teamwork and dedication to the Holy Family Hospital was impressive as well as the example they set for their pre-school children.

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA CATHOLIC PRESCHOOL



"The staff of St. Catherine's Preschool is an amazing group of incredibly giving women who have an endless love for all children. They are constantly thinking of ways to help families and children in our community through various service projects and organizations. We were offered the opportunity to work with Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation through a wonderful parishioner named Colleen Witt. These teachers are always teaching our preschool children that is better to GIVE than to GET. The St. Catherine's Preschool Staff felt privileged to be able to team up with this very worthwhile foundation and GIVE not GET!"

Karen Pickens, Director, St. Catherine's Preschool



Holy Family Hospital
of Bethlehem Foundation

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