LATIN PATRIARCHATE OF JERUSALEM

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Scholarship Program for High Education in Palestine and Jordan

GA 048/16

General Administration
Project Development Office
March 2016
“Find new ways to spread the Word of God
to every corner of the world.”
(H.H Pope Francis)

THE LATIN PATRIARCHATE

The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (LPJ) was restored in 1847, and since then is promoting the best interests of the local communities it serves. Today, the Patriarchal Diocese oversees about 90,000 faithful in four countries, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan and Cyprus, covering a rich tapestry of cultures, languages, religions and traditions. Serving all with special emphasis on the support and care of indigenous Holy Land Christians remains the enduring mission of the Mother Church, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

It is the LPJ goal that the family is the fundamental building block of the local community and of society at large. As a result, the Church takes a holistic approach in its work and assistance. While starting with the children and youth who are the youngest group in the society; LPJ builds outward to serve the immediate parents, the surrounding community and ultimately the society as a whole.

INTRODUCTION

Through the Scholarship Program, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem supports students with university tuition fees. It is an essential intervention for it empowers the future generation to become more productive members of the society.

Last year, the LPJ was able to reach 352 students in universities, colleges and schools. This year, funding for higher education has declined by nearly 60%. Only 120 students from Palestine and Jordan were benefited from the scholarship program at a time when the demand for higher degrees is at an all-time high. The same students that were already granted a scholarship covering 60-80% of the university tuition fee are receiving only 10%. With the decline in funding, the students are left with no choice but to put more of the financial burden on their families and themselves.

Education offers the best hope for change for Palestinians living in the midst of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and facing daily challenges and obstacles in their lives. Since education is a tool of comprehensive development, socially and politically, the LPJ intends to continue helping the Palestinians who are seeking higher education to attend any university they choose in Palestine or Jordan. The Scholarship Program is an empowering opportunity that provides financial and social support to students from Jordan, as well. It encourages young people, men and women alike, to enroll in universities and colleges to get higher degrees and prepare them for future careers in a technologically advanced society.
The Latin Patriarchate main target groups are from families who have three or more students in the family. Through this intervention, the LPJ lessens the financial burden of the needy Christian families.

- Criteria to obtain university scholarships:
  - GPA of 2.5 or above.
  - The student/family covers 40% of tuition fees.

- LP requirements for each university student to apply for scholarship:
  - Photocopy of the personal ID
  - University print of the total tuition fees
  - GPA of previous semester

**NEEDS**

Scholarship fund is very essential in the Holy Land. Year by year, the need is increasing due to the dire economic situation that the Christian families live in. Life is getting more expensive particularly in Jerusalem; not so well to do Christian families struggle to make ends meet for cost of living, utility bills, continuously rising rent and tuition fees; therefore many families rely on the support of local organizations and the Latin Patriarchate.

For many years, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem has been offering and providing its services and its resources to those in need, regardless of their religious denominations. Its doors are always open to Christian families who are in desperate medical, social and financial need and have nowhere else to turn to.

The Latin Patriarchate serves the Christian communities from East Jerusalem, the Palestinian Territories & Gaza strip, and Jordan. The separation wall, the numerous checkpoints and obstacles make life very complicated for the Palestinian families in the Palestinian Territories for they lack freedom of movement and need special permits to work in Jerusalem and Israel.

**Jerusalem:** is comprised of almost 10,000 Christians. The needs have increased immensely due to high taxes, unemployment, high rent and children sent to private schools, (Christian families have no choice but to send the children to private Christian Schools). These factors are heavy burdens on the families. The minimum wage is not enough for the family to survive and most of them turn to Christian organizations for assistance. The challenges are tremendous as the demand for assistance continues to increase.

**Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour:** the Christian population is estimated at 33,000 people (according to the Bethlehem municipality) and 35% are Christians. This area has the largest Christian population in Palestine. The Christian population receive assistance from different Christian organizations; however, the large responsibility is on the Latin Patriarchate that contributes the majority of the financial assistance and make the major coordination.
Ramallah area: the Christian population is roughly 20,000 people, including the Christian villages of Taybeh, Aboud, Ain Arik, Bir Zeit, Jenin, Zababdeh and Nablus. In coordination with the local parish priests, the Christian population receive assistance through the funds that the LPJ provides.

The Gaza strip: 80% of Gaza’s population depend on humanitarian assistance. Gaza is considered the most densely populated area in the world with 1.8 million inhabitants and with only 1,313 Christians living there today (according to the latest survey conducted by YMCA in 2013), who are referred to us through the local parish priest for medical and educational and humanitarian assistance.

Gaza is a special case; people live in a very isolated and hard condition. The last war damaged all their fragile resources, infrastructure, water and power stations. There are thousands who are displaced in temporary shelters and UNRWA schools. Contagious diseases are widespread and almost everyone is traumatized, particularly the children.

OBJECTIVES

• Provide scholarship opportunities to needy students in Palestine and Jordan.
• Help students who are seeking higher education to achieve their goal and study in the universities that they choose.
• Provide equal opportunities for men and women alike to study and enroll in higher education institutions.
• Lesson the financial burden on families that cannot afford to pay tuition fees of their children.
• Continuing the mission of the Mother Church, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, in serving everyone with special emphasis on the support and care of indigenous Holy Land Christians.

BENEFICIARIES

Listed below are the conditions determining the eligibility to be part of the Scholarship Program:

• Families whose income is insufficient to provide for the basic needs of their members.
• Families whose wage earner is ill or recently deceased.
• Families that cannot afford medical expenses for a critically ill member.
• Families that do not have health insurance.
• Elderly people – including those with chronic diseases and no source of income
• Wage earners who are unskilled laborers, or whose opportunities to find work are limited due to lack of employment opportunity in their area.
Some examples of the scholarship fund beneficiaries from last academic year 2015-2016:

- L.A. is a 21 year old young man from Beit Sahour. He is studying at Al Petra University in Jordan, and in his fourth year in the faculty of accounting. Each semester costs JD450 and through this fund the Latin Patriarchate helped him cover his university tuition fees. His mother is a teacher receiving NIS 2,500, which is the only source of monthly income for a family of four members. His father is living alone in his apartment and with psychological problems. The children live with their mother and maternal grandparents. Due to their unstable economic situation, the LPJ helped L.A. cover the university tuition fees, so that he could continue his studies and assist his family financially.

- N.K. is a 38 year old married woman from the Old City of Jerusalem. She lives with her husband and two children in a rented house. Her husband is the only wage earner for the family, who works as a cook at an elderly resident home, and earns NIS 6,500. The two little children are too young to attend school. NK is studying special education at the Open University of Israel and needs some help to cover part of her tuition fees which amounts to NIS 15,000. She paid NIS 8,000 and needed NIS 7,000. Through this fund the LPJ was able to help NK continue her education in order to help her husband in the future.

- F. KH. is a 22 year old young man from Madaba (Jordan), studying Civil Engineering at American University of Madaba. This is his third year, his Cumulative Average 87.7%. Each semester costs 2200 JD. Through this fund the IPJ was able to cover half of the tuition fees for each semester (1100 JD) lives with his father who is unemployed and earns JD 650. He has two brothers both of them are studying in the university.

**EXECUTION/ DURATION**

The scholarship funds will be granted for students from the West Bank, Gaza and Jordan for the academic year 2016-2017.
PHOTOS
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