



# Holy Family Hospital

An Institution of the Order of Malta



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## HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS

Manger Square (Bethlehem)  
Sunday, 25 May 2014



“This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger” (*Lk 2:12*).

What a great grace it is to celebrate the Eucharist in the place where Jesus was born! I thank God and I thank all of you who have welcomed me on my pilgrimage: President Mahmoud Abbas and the other civil authorities; Patriarch Fouad Twal and the other bishops and ordinaries of the Holy Land, the priests, the good Franciscans, the consecrated persons and all those who labor to keep faith, hope and love alive in these lands; the faithful who have come from Gaza and Galilee, and the immigrants from Asia and Africa. Thank you for your welcome! The Child Jesus, born in Bethlehem, is the sign given by God to those who awaited salvation, and he remains

**TO MAKE A DONATION:**

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P.O. BOX 765 - BETHLEHEM WEST BANK VIA ISRAEL BANK № 89 /BANK BRANCH № 450  
IBAN: PS52PALS045003890000333000000 (EUR)  
IBAN:PS47PALS045003890000013000000 (USD)

*Graphic Design by  
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forever the sign of God's tenderness and presence in our world. The angel announces to the shepherds: "This will be a sign for you: you will find a child...".

Today too, *children are a sign*. They are a sign of hope, a sign of life, but also a "*diagnostic*" sign, a marker indicating the health of families, society and the entire world. Wherever children are accepted, loved, cared for and protected, the family is healthy, society is more healthy and the world is more human. Here we can think of the work carried out by the Ephpheta Paul VI institute for hearing and speech impaired Palestinian children: it is a very real sign of God's goodness. It is a clear sign that society is healthier.

To us, the men and women of the twenty-first century, God today also says: "This will be a sign for you", look to the child...".

The Child of Bethlehem is frail, like all newborn children. He cannot speak and yet he is the Word made flesh who came to transform the hearts and lives of all men and women. This Child, like every other child, is vulnerable; he needs to be accepted and protected. Today too, children need to be welcomed and defended, from the moment of their conception.



Sadly, in this world, with all its highly developed technology, great numbers of children continue to live in inhuman situations, on the fringes of society, in the peripheries of great cities and in the countryside. All too many children continue to be exploited, maltreated, enslaved, prey to violence and illicit trafficking. Still too many children live in exile, as refugees, at times lost at sea, particularly in the waters of the Mediterranean. Today, in acknowledging this, we feel shame before God, before God who became a child.

And we have to ask ourselves: Who are we, as we stand before the Child Jesus? Who are we, standing as we stand before today's children? Are we like Mary and Joseph,

who welcomed Jesus and care for him with the love of a father and a mother? Or are we like Herod, who wanted to eliminate him? Are we like the shepherds, who went in haste to kneel before him in worship and offer him their humble gifts? Or are we indifferent? Are we perhaps people who use fine and pious words, yet exploit pictures of poor children in order to make money? Are we ready to be there for children, to "waste time" with them? Are we ready to listen to them, to care for them, to pray for them and with them? Or do we ignore them because we are too caught up in our own affairs?

"This will be a sign for us: you will find a child...". Perhaps that little boy or girl is crying. He is crying because he is hungry, because she is cold, because he or she wants to be picked up and held in our arms... Today too, children are crying, they are crying a lot, and their crying challenges us. In a world which daily discards tons of food and medicine there are children, hungry and suffering from easily curable diseases, who cry out in vain. In an age which insists on the protection of minors, there is a flourishing trade in weapons which end up in the hands of child-soldiers, there is a ready market for goods produced by the slave labor of small children. Their cry is stifled: the cry of these children is stifled! They must fight, they must work, they cannot cry! But their mothers cry for them, as modern-day Rachels: they weep for their children, and they refuse to be consoled (cf. Mt 2:18).

"This will be a sign for you": you will find a child. The Child Jesus, born in Bethlehem, every child who is born and grows up in every part of our world, is a diagnostic sign indicating the state of health of our families, our communities, our nation. Such a frank and honest diagnosis can lead us to a new kind of lifestyle where our relationships are no longer marked by conflict, oppression and consumerism, but fraternity, forgiveness and reconciliation, solidarity and love.





## LOURDES PILGRIMAGE - 2014

### Bethlehem First Time Participation in Lourdes



And the angel came in unto the virgin Mary, and said, highly favored, the Lord with thee: blessed thou among women. **Luke 1:28**

The month of May is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. She is the mother of the Church and the first saint; it is the month of the Holy Rosary too, when we pray for peace in our hearts, our families, our Church and our world.

In the occasion of the pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes, May 1<sup>st</sup> until 8<sup>th</sup> 2014, a lot of Knights and Dames, family members, chaplains, malades and companions participated in the Order of Malta's International annual pilgrimage.

The great apparitions literally put Lourdes on the map. Lourdes has subsequently attracted millions of visitors from around the world. Also, the Church has recognized many cure miracles that have taken place after patients bathed in the springs of Lourdes.

For the first time the city of Bethlehem participated in this great event. Four qualified and well trained midwives, Maria Shahwan, Lorette Qassis, Samar Abu Sa'da and Thereze Khier from Holy Family Hospital traveled to Lourdes to accompany the Maladies "poor, elderly, sick disabled and orphans" at mealtimes, Masses and other activities throughout the whole week. They were assigned into small teams, assisting different malades each day from early morning into the evening without being exhausted. Their schedule was full, but rewarding, and there was also time for rest after each activity.

As a unique experience, they attended the International Mass at Lourdes and the nightly candlelight procession in front of the Basilica, with prayer and rosary said in many languages. Accordingly, thousands of people, some in wheelchairs, stretchers, and others with crutches, were carrying small white candles. This was such a breath taking sight.

The four nurses were happy and exuding a grace which is obvious to every faithful person. Also they enjoyed sitting together at the grotto and appreciating the faith of everyone around them. They said:



“significantly no one leaves Lourdes without a great gain in faith and morals.”

“It is a big honor to express my appreciation and warm gratitude to all the people who organized this pilgrimage in Lourdes for 4 days at the first of May 2014. For me they make my dream come true, it was extra ordinary and unbelievable. In Lourdes there was time to pray, to celebrate, to take care of others , to live their suffering and the most exciting thing was to enjoy our daily live with Jesus and for Jesus we lived the joy of this pilgrimage of Lourdes .” said Lorette Alam

“My words cannot describe the happiness that filed my heart when I entered Paris and Lourdes “the Holy Town”. We felt the challenge of the handicap people while trying to get a better life. I also had the chance to observe the big Mass in which 33 countries from around the world participated in. Therefore, from deep of my heart I would like to thank the Order of Malta for organizing such a trip. “ said Samar Abu Sa’da

“During my trip to France, Lourdes I helped the handicap people in bathing, church and in the picnic activity. It was really a great time and feeling too, I saw in their eyes how they are happy to the maximum points. Honestly it was an excellent experience to gain and I really thank the Sovereign Order of Malta for this great achievement and this awesome chance.” Said Maia Shahwan

“We started our mission towards Lourdes in the train where I enjoyed the organization and the procedures of transferring the maladies as well as the thousands of volunteers from around the world. At the arrival to Lourdes I had a great feeling that could not be measured with a willingness to do anything in anytime to anyone. I really enjoyed each single minute I spent their with the French group of the Order of Malta either in the caring center or during our program or at the masses that we have attended. I felt that I have known them from long ago. Thank you.” Said Thereze Khier

A prayer from Holy Family Hospital team: Virgin Mary, the Immaculate Conception, You appeared to Bernadette, and through her, converted many to a deep faith, in Your Son. Teach us as a Hospital community to learn and grow in the Christian faith. Make us kind, helpful, loving and forgiving to our patients. Help us to love Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lady of Lourdes, Guide us to the Light.

Amen



# Lourdes Photo Gallery





# ACTIVITY REPORT

## Monthly Deliveries

The number of monthly deliveries 1990 - 2014 is as follows:

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
JAN	0	93	128	143	146	148	181	205	217	162	250	158	180	159	238	224	240	230	248	221	258	249	274	249	271
FEB	4	69	97	150	157	130	183	180	192	165	239	155	152	165	220	221	218	228	217	239	221	228	227	224	257
MAR	46	93	133	184	149	168	164	220	194	217	231	160	142	179	224	231	217	313	259	236	265	260	278	260	287
APR	68	87	116	181	135	180	180	207	185	213	274	146	82	195	222	240	216	322	270	280	298	286	265	301	267
MAY	85	92	124	170	153	188	224	233	221	246	288	195	129	214	196	238	237	366	340	284	304	285	229	250	240
JUN	85	106	145	177	145	202	212	222	227	276	294	156	132	239	252	258	219	277	291	275	333	292	261	278	
JUL	84	101	151	165	172	188	209	261	234	302	329	148	136	249	232	235	243	276	294	328	307	286	306	279	
AUG	71	90	151	173	163	199	226	219	244	299	309	161	122	227	246	235	256	264	279	280	286	292	296	289	
SEP	109	103	154	171	172	167	192	241	199	276	275	146	143	220	224	234	280	233	260	261	295	263	291	267	
OCT	116	109	154	166	172	193	198	255	211	273	223	134	138	240	243	257	295	255	277	297	270	251	281	274	
NOV	97	87	150	146	149	203	196	205	161	282	165	145	121	191	221	213	257	224	241	247	237	224	249	271	
DEC	104	105	153	127	163	198	194	240	180	266	175	135	140	203	227	207	268	238	248	265	236	243	209	242	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>1135</b>	<b>1656</b>	<b>1953</b>	<b>1876</b>	<b>2164</b>	<b>2359</b>	<b>2688</b>	<b>2465</b>	<b>2977</b>	<b>3052</b>	<b>1839</b>	<b>1617</b>	<b>2481</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2793</b>	<b>2946</b>	<b>3226</b>	<b>3224</b>	<b>3213</b>	<b>3310</b>	<b>3159</b>	<b>3166</b>	<b>3184</b>	<b>1322</b>

Baby of the Month  
Baby of the Month

*“Hope is a powerful motivation for Charity”*



**TOTAL DELIVERIES SINCE 1990**

**61, 419**