



CNEWA-Pontifical Mission

establishment and work today

In 1949, after the Arab Israeli war and the occupation of Palestine, Pope Pius XII founded the Pontifical Mission for Palestine (PMP) as his special agency for relief and development in the Middle East. The Pontiff entrusted its leadership and administration to the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) in New York, USA. CNEWA was founded by Pope

Pius XI in 1926 to support the work and activities of the Eastern churches in Northeast Africa, India, and Eastern Europe.

Today, PMP continues to channel donor aid in collaboration with partners and local institutions to the communities in Israel and Palestine. Our mission is to accompany the local churches, respond to human needs and provide emergency relief to those in need. We also continue to share CNEWA's vision, together as an agency who works as an instrument of healing and hope, bind the wounds of a broken world. As a regional office of CNEWA-Pontifical Mission, we have developed decades-long relationships with the people and institutions we serve and the ministries we support; they come from the communities of faith we serve for the common good of all.

Values: As a humanitarian agency, we believe in the value of spreading & nurturing HOPE.

This priest, the only Catholic priest in the whole of Gaza, welcomed 270 families in his church in 1948.

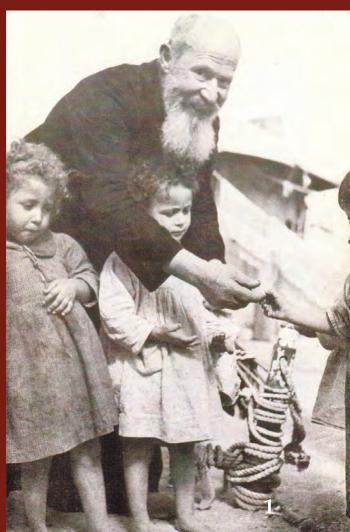


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Forward

Since March 2020, the Holy Land has faced a series of crises that have severely impacted the local economy, particularly affecting middle and lower-income communities. While COVID-19 brought global disruption, its effects here were magnified by pre-existing Israeli restrictions on trade, movement, and access to natural resources—creating a perfect storm of economic hardship. Despite these immense challenges, our office has been working tirelessly to nurture hope and empower Palestinians to live a dignified life in their ancestral homeland.

Late 2023, with hopeful signs for recovery, the outbreak of war in Gaza brought renewed devastation. To date, over 55,000 civilians

have been killed, including thousands of women and children. In direct response to the unfolding crisis, the Jerusalem Office launched an emergency appeal to save lives in Gaza, in close cooperation with the local Church and four partner organizations situated across the Strip, distributing food packages, potable water, hygiene kits and medical supplies and organizing psychosocial activities for women and children.

Adding to this immense suffering, Israel's suspension of work permits has deprived hundreds of thousands of Palestinians of their livelihoods in Israel and Jerusalem. This has also disrupted Israeli businesses that rely on skilled Palestinian labor. The human cost is profound; since October 2023, over 140 Christian families have tragically left the Bethlehem area, and alarming numbers are now seeking emigration, threatening the long-standing Christian presence in the Holy Land. The Jerusalem Office launched a campaign to provide job creation initiatives in Bethlehem

A testament to their unwavering commitment, the Chairman of the Board of CNEWA – Pontifical Mission accompanied by the President of CNEWA - Pontifical Mission, Msgr. Peter Vaccari, and the Director of Development, Michael La Civita, on a historical pastoral trip to Israel and Palestine in April 2024, even amidst the Gaza war. His Eminence engaged with the Jerusalem team and our operations, participating in interfaith and ecumenical visits, and

gaining firsthand insight into the vital mission of our Church institutions. A highlight of His Eminence's visit was the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Home Notre Dame des Douleurs in Abu Dis, Jerusalem. This significant event celebrated the launch of a $\[\in \]$ 2 million project designed to profoundly impact elderly care and employment in East Jerusalem.

Among our significant achievements this year was the preparation of an academic resource book: "Palestine- the Cradle of Christianity" which focuses on the history of Palestine in the first seven centuries. This book will help foster stronger Christian-Muslim relationships as both communities rediscover their roots, but it also aims at strengthening the sense of belonging to the Holy Land, driving the families and younger generations to be more committed to maintain the Christian presence in their homeland.

Your continued generosity is vital as we work to sustain hope and rebuild lives in the Holy Land amidst this ongoing crisis. In 2025, we aim to maintain our emergency support for Gaza and Bethlehem, while continuing our mission to support the Churches and the local Christian community, through health, education and social projects.

Joseph Hazboun Regional Director



2024 Program Review

Thanks to donors and partners, CNEWA – Pontifical Mission was able to fund humanitarian and development projects that supported the programs in Palestine and Israel. Funds amounting to \$2,438,529 funded a total of 97 projects: 79 projects in Palestine and 18 programs in Israel.

Most of the funds to support our work comes from CNEWA New York and Canada. The remaining portion of these funds comes from restrictive and non-restrictive grants from our donor partners located in Europe and the UK.

Responding to Human Needs

- Palestine: USD 1,1 million - Israel: USD 165,000

Accompanying the Local Church

- Palestine: USD 328,000 - Israel: USD 185,000

Emergency Relief

- Palestine: USD 710,000



Responding to Human Needs

Churches and CBOs in Israel and Palestine continue to face mounting challenges. Their programs and services have been reduced or cut as a result of these challenges, curtailing vital service support for people in need. We support a network of Christian organizations in Israel and Palestine that offer education, health care and social services, especially the marginalized and needy.

Israel:

PMP recognized the need to continue to back health care and educational facilities operated by the churches in Israel as financial needs of the community continue to increase. In 2024, we supported programs that provide pastoral and humanitarian assistance to sustain the church and the communities in the cities of Haifa, Nazareth, Jaffa, Shefa-'Amr and Kafr Yasif.

This effort has been successful, as we have reached our target of supporting 6,797 children, youth adults and the elderly during the year.

Highlights from our work carried out in 2024 include:

- Support the Hospital of St. Vincent de Paul Geriatric Department including medical care and food for 30 elderly residents.
- Support pastoral activities, bible summer camps and Sunday schools for the Greek Catholic Churches in the Galilee region in northern Israel reaching 3,500 Christians; 900 of which are children aged 4 12 years old.



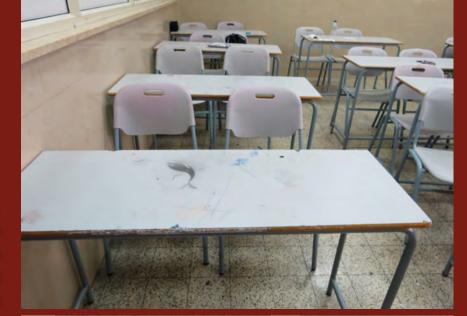




Impact Story –

Terra Sancta School, Jaffa

Terra Sancta School in Jaffa, Israel was established in 1730, is one of the oldest private schools in Israel and is one of tens of church-based schools located in Israel. For many years, the school has been unable to fundraise for projects needed to maintain education standards as required by the Israeli MoE. The school principal appealed to renew student and teacher's desks/tables and chairs for the 11th and 12th grade classrooms. With the support of our partner donor Manos Unidas in Spain, a better learning environment was created in the uppergrade classrooms supporting 72 students' achievement in school.







Impact Story

- House of Grace

The House of Grace in Haifa organized a summer camp program for Arab youth at risk in Haifa to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of these disadvantaged and marginalized youth, in order to develop impactful programs tailored to their evolving needs. Specifically, the summer camp created a supportive environment to enhance the personal growth, selfesteem, and social skills of 20 Arab youth from Haifa through specialized activities and initiatives. The creative workshops enabled them to learn how to develop better self-expression and communication skills, confidence and group cohesion. This effort ensured that young people have the tools and knowledge needed to be resilient young people in the face of challenging situations that may arise in their lives.





Palestine:

PMP continues to prioritize and focus on developing lay leadership through various programs, including the local scout movement, Christian youth centers and catechism programs in Palestine. The programs are crucial to ensure the Christian presence in the Holy Land and to prepare future leadership for the Christian organizations that provide employment and essential services, such as education and health care, for the general population.

PMP also commits towards the education of young people, awarding student scholarships for university students in the Gaza Strip and in Bethlehem Governorate, especially as economic hardship has hit so many Palestinian households.

We also recognize the need to support Christian organizations and Churches, allocating funds and fundraising to repair to church facilities and financially support catechetical formation, pastoral care programs, pastoral youth initiatives and Bible camps.

In 2024, a total of 64 projects were implemented in the health, education, and social service sectors which reached thousands of people in Palestine.



Highlights from our work carried out in 2024 include:

- Purchase a clinical audiometer and devices for Hearing Impaired Students at Ephpheta Paul VI Institute Bethlehem, identifying children with hearing impairments and those diagnosed with hearing loss, reevaluate IEP plans for 175 Ephpheta Institute students, including 18 refugee students from Al-Aza, Aida, Dheisheh and Aroob refugee camps and 18 boarding students.



- Covered the costs of check-ups for 250 newborn babies in the pediatric clinic of Shepherd's Field Hospital, a local healthcare institution under Beit Sahour Cooperative Society for Health Welfare. Thanks to this generous grant, health monitoring services were conducted, including the successful delivery of 25 deliveries of poor women, the distribution of 250 multivitamin units and 300 vitamin D drops for pregnant women and babies, 250 CBC and HBAIC blood tests, 99 iron deficiency for newborns, and doctor's fees for deliveries and home visits of 15 new mothers to ensure the health and welfare of both mother and child.



Extracurricular Activities Program

Very few extracurricular programs are offered in the Palestinian school system, either due to school budget constraints or parents are unable to afford the costs. Moreover, the situation of Palestinian children is deteriorating, with political unrest and uncertainty in their environment which causes extreme stress, frustration and fear for both parents and children.

Over the span of nearly three years and with the financial backing of Misereor, Embrace the Middle East and Children's Relief Bethlehem funded extracurricular activities through three of our local partners: Palestine Wildlife Society, Al-Saraya Center and Al-Harah Theater in cooperation with a total of 39 private and governmental schools and 2 West Bank universities. These activities reached a total of 6,534 Palestinian school children and youth in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, especially at a time when similar programs are unavailable.

More than half of the children and youth participants polled (61.8%) say that the activities have provided a safe, supportive space in which they can express themselves, have the tools to be able to express themselves and a greater awareness about giving back to each other and the community.



Children and their parents say:

Sufian Ouksh, a seventh-grade student from Al Ibrahimieh College in East Jerusalem says: "I learned how to communicate effectively and know my rights and roles, and I now consider violence to be the last option in problems solving."

Sara Abu Teir, a tenth-grade student from Dar Al Tifel School in East Jerusalem says: "I learned that listening to others help understand them better, and that communication comes in diverse ways. I also learned that I have to ask for all my rights and not neglect them."

Tulai Qabbani, a ninth-grade student from Our Lady of the Pillar School says: "I learned that bullying is a very negative behavior that ends relationships and affects people enormously, [thanks to this course], I also learned how to positively communicate with others."

Mother of the 9-years old child Samir Al Yaman says: "I notice that my child and other kids in the neighborhood are always coming home happy back from the Center, thanks a lot!".

Extracurricular Program for the Schools in Bethlehem & Jerusalem (Misereor & Embrace the ME)







Impact Story:

Leadership through Scouts Program

Terra Sancta Scout Member: "The Eagles of the Nativity Camp 2024" was great thanks to your generous support. We hope for your continued and increased support in the coming years to accommodate the growing number of participants and the rising costs. Together, we can build a confident, virtuous, and broad-minded generation. Thank you!"

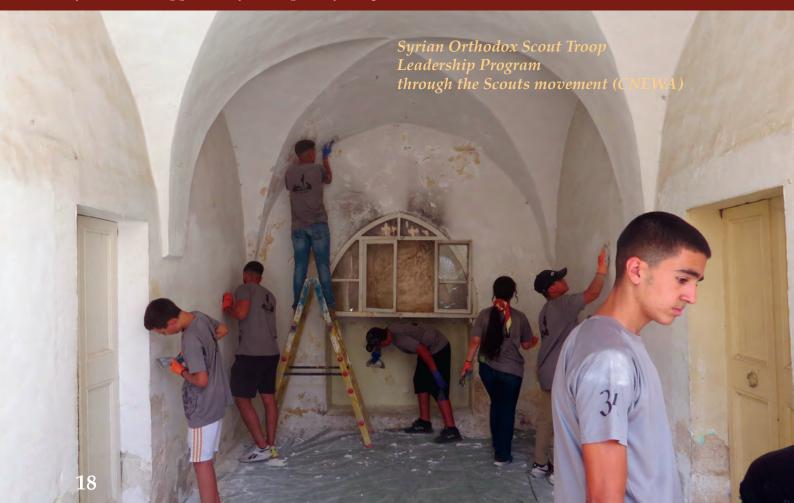




Impact Story:

Leadership through Scouts Program

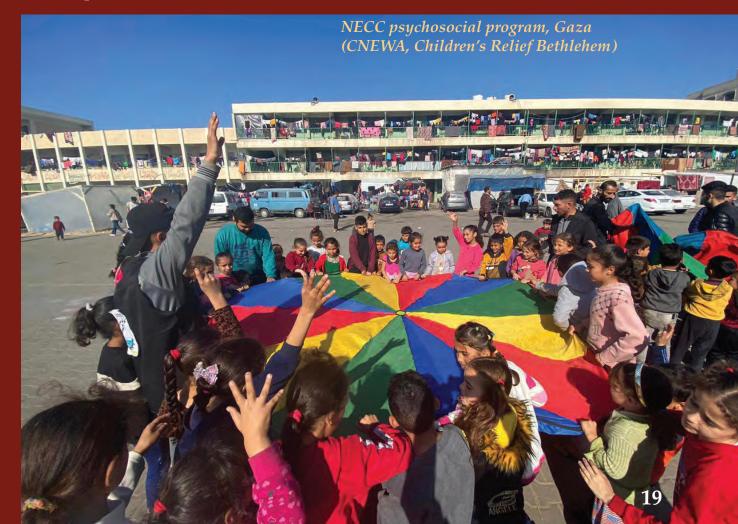
Salesian Scout Troop *Team Leader*: "The scout summer camp aimed to build confidence in individuals. It helped get the participants out of their 'comfort zone' and explore the places around them. The members experienced new adventures; they were taught to rely on themselves, survive in the wilderness (especially when they went hiking), embrace teamwork, engage with other scout members, and be responsible for themselves. We thank you for this opportunity to help our young members!"



Subsidized Institutions

PMP maintains its commitment to support three public institutions in the health and education sectors as part of the Responding to Human Needs Program to support essential health and education in Palestine.

With the support of CNEWA, annual subsidies were allocated towards 3 health and education programs of local partners reaching a total of 11,546 children and adults in the Gaza Strip and in Bethlehem.







Paul VI Ephpheta Institute

Ephpheta Paul VI Institute for the Hearing Impaired operated by the Sisters of Saint Dorothy provides specialized education services for the hearing impaired since 1971 and it is still one of only a few specialized schools in Palestine. Thanks to the financial support from CNEWA, the continuation of the educational services provided the Institute ensured that 10 teacher's salaries were covered in 2024 for their work in educating 190 Ephpheta students. Ephpheta is still one of only a few schools in Palestine that serve children and adolescence with hearing impairments, from the early integration education services until the end of high school.





PMECC

CNEWA's annual subsidy covered the operating expenses such as the staff salaries, rent, utilities, for the Pontifical Mission Education and Community Center in Bethlehem and relaunch the center's 4th annual reading competition in Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Jericho in cooperation with 23 private schools with 1,026 5th graders participating in the contest who read a total of 6,607 books from September 26 until December 23, 2024. PMECC's programs have received recognition by the Palestinian Ministry of Education in addition to local private and public-school support for the quality of creativity of their programs.





NECC Mother and Child Clinics

CNEWA's annual subsidy towards NECC Mother and Child Clinics, located in Shajaia, Darraj and Rafah areas, aimed to reduce women's and child mortality and morbidity. During the recent war on Gaza, most health facilities on the Gaza Strip were no longer operational and the spread of communicable diseases like meningitis, diarrhea, scabies, parasites, Hepatitis, and other diseases was widespread among the displaced. During this time, NECC provided essential health and psychosocial services through the Rafah health clinic and later, in two makeshift medical centers, one in the east Gaza, and the second in the west Gaza in addition to outreach activities in the middle area. NECC reached a total of 10,330 children, pregnant women, and mothers in 2024, delivering antenatal care, postnatal care, well baby services, management of malnutrition cases, general clinic health education and counselling, and psychosocial support services. The impact was significant with more than 43% of all pregnant anemic women improved or fully recovered from anemia, 90% of post-partum women passed the postpartum period without complications, 30 % improvement of women's mental health 95% improvement in children's mental health.



Impact Story:

Mira, aged 5 years old, from Al Toffah in northern Gaza suffered post-traumatic from stress disorder (PTSD) witnessing after the loss of her home and the displacement of her family. Mira's recovery was possible thanks to NECC's psychosocial program that provided Mira with access to free in-group counselling sessions and recreational activities for children and debriefing activities aimed at reducing the trauma Mira has experienced. By the end of her treatment, Mira's behavior improved, and she is very grateful and expressed her gratitude to NECC health and psychological staff.





Gaza Scholarship Program

The escalation of the conflict in Gaza beginning on October 7, 2023, has further exacerbated these challenges, leading to complete destruction of the education sector in Gaza. Despite this tremendous setback in terms of higher education in Gaza, some of the universities have still managed to operate online through online platforms which have enabled both university professors to conduct virtual lectures, upload assignments and exams for students. CNEWA's grant enabled 17 Gaza Christian students to continue their university studies during the war where 6 students reached their academic goal and graduated from university.

Impact Story – Gaza Christian Student

One of the most inspiring success stories from the scholarship program is that of Maryan, a determined student who refused to let the war derail her dreams. Despite losing her home and facing immense personal loss, Maryan continued her studies. She was able to access online courses and acquire the necessary study materials. Maryan recently completed her degree in Laboratory Medicine, an achievement that seemed impossible at the start of the conflict.



Accompany the Local Churches

Central to CNEWA's commitment is the concern for leadership development — especially for those preparing for lives of service as priests, religious sisters and brothers, and as lay catechists and community leaders. Accompany the Church allocates donor funds for programs that form church leaders, lay, religious and clergy and to further their education; and fortify the local churches. CNEWA – Pontifical Mission upholds this commitment to support and accompany the local Churches in Israel and Palestine.



Israel: In 2024, we allocated funds towards programs for religious and lay leaders, including seminarians of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church in Galilee. These funds contributed towards the maintenance and expansion of church and pastoral centers and supported parish schools.

Catechism and parish centers play a vital role in preparing faithful, committed and capable young lay leaders. As part of this effort, we supported catechism programs for

children and funds special training in Christian leadership and religious education for youth throughout 2024. We also promoted educational and cultural events that help the Christian community to remain faithful to its identity.

Highlights from our work carried out in 2024 include:

-Maintenance work on the existing elevator at the Carmel du Mount Carmel Monastery ensured that the elevator is not only functional, but safe for the 25 Carmelite Sisters and volunteers who reside and work at the convent

-Foster relations between the Church and the Christian youth of Haifa and northern Israel by supporting pastoral youth programs of the Maronite Archdiocese benefiting 820 Maronite children and youth from Haifa and northern Israel.



Impact Story:

St. Vincent de Paul Geriatric Home, Nazareth - Israel

The churches and parishes and institutions in Israel are increasingly need aid that covers overhead costs and essential programs. In Nazareth, St. Vincent de Paul Hospital, has been in place since 1898 and provides geriatric care for Arabic-speaking elderly people who are no longer able to take care of themselves at home. Through a grant from CNEWA, the operations of the Geriatric Department and the services provided within the department were covered this year which supported the residential living of 30 patients, covering essential medicine, food, household expenses, and other needs. This utilities generous donation ensured that the hospital ward is suitable for residents to live year-round.







Palestine: CNEWA - Pontifical Mission is focused on developing lay leadership through various programs, including the local Scout movement, Christian youth centers and catechism programs. The programs are crucial to ensure the Christian presence in the Holy Land and to prepare future leadership for the Christian organizations that provide employment and essential services, such as education and health care, for the general population.

Pastoral activities are also supported under this program. Palestinian Christians, who are a minority group in multi-ethnic, multicultural, multi-religious, and multi-lingual society, struggle with their own self-identity and sense of belonging. We work in partnership with Churches and Church-affiliated organizations (CROs) funding pastoral programs at parishes, monasteries, Churches, and Christian youth centers in Palestine. Grants are allocated for equipment, furniture or rehabilitation work that supports these important programs. Grants fund pastoral activities such as catechetical and Sunday school programs, Bible summer camps and Bible competitions.

Highlights from our work carried out in 2024 include:

- Support the historical Christian institutions throughout the Holy Land by replacing 15 windows with new windows at the Benedictine Monastery on the Mount of Olives, improving the living and working conditions within the monastery.
- To help Christians, Muslims understand and accept each other in order to create a suitable atmosphere for a common living by supporting Al-Liqa Center in Bethlehem's women's empowerment program, interreligious dialogue conference, various publications and cover part of maintenance work in 2024.
- Enhance the Greek Catholic Melkite community's the sense of belonging for the Greek Catholic Church in Israel by supporting the Greek Catholic Bishop and Church-related activities and rehabilitation project the improve access to facilities for 1,500 members of the Greek Catholic community.





Impact Story:

Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate

Pastoral Program & Bible Summer Camp for the Children & Youth

The Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, St. Mark Monastery, organized a pastoral program for young people including a children's Bible summer camp, and a Youth Gathering project which helped enrich Christian life and Christian practices among young teens. CNEWA's financial support for the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate projects has reached a total of 450 young people. CNEWA's support for the Syriac Orthodox community is crucial to the ability for the Church to organize children's and youth activities this year. The organized pastoral created a solid foundation and helped build and foster a sense of belonging to the Church and community.



Rushing Emergency Relief

Palestine: Since the Gaza war began, CNEWA-Pontifical Mission coordinated with partners on the ground in Gaza to distribute hot meals, food packages, medicines, hygiene kits, diapers, fuel, cooking gas, bottled water and cleaning supplies to those in need.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, individuals and donations from the local community, we disbursed \$410,584.00 to Gaza partners and leaders on the ground to deliver essentials to people in desperate need.

- In the first quarter of the year, we delivered hot meals (meat and rice) to 760 displaced Christians sheltering at the two churches in Gaza City St. Porphyrios and Holy Family Latin Church as well as those in the vicinity and other neighborhoods.
- Throughout the year, we covered needed medicine, bottled water, generator fuel, disbursed hygiene kits, and delivered fresh, dry and canned food for the sheltering families in the St. Porphyrios Church.
- Food parcels were delivered to 1,820 people in coordination with three local partners in Gaza.
- Psychosocial activities including art therapy and PCSS activities were organized in displacement camps and areas with sheltering families, reaching a total of 6,140 children and 500 young mothers in 2024.
- Medical services including check-ups and treatment reached a total of 1,200 people at Al-Ahli Arab Hospital.





In Bethlehem where movement and access restrictions, the cessation of the tourism industry and increased unemployment rate among Christians has increased, we implemented an emergency project that entailed a cash-for-work initiative in collaboration with local businesses and community-based institutions in Bethlehem, provided an income over a 3 month period for 15 individuals (8 men and 7 women) indirectly supporting on average, at least 3 household dependents. The project ensured that essential community programs were upheld, and operational services were delivered to the community.

The project also provided emergency medical support for people who needed access to medical treatment and care and did not have the financial means to cover these costs.

We also delivered emergency tuition relief for families living below the poverty line and or whose breadwinner lost their job, collaborating with three Christian schools in Bethlehem Governorate, providing handouts in the total amount of \$400 per student for 60 students as well as handouts for in the total amount of \$1,000 per student, for 25 university students in need.

Impact Story:

43-year old Shukri's life was challenging, particularly after his work permit to enter Israel was revoked, leaving him unemployed for ten months. During this period, he faced a series of personal and financial struggles. As the eldest son in his family, and with his father having passed away, Shukri felt immense pressure. Not being able to provide for his family, especially when they relied on him, left him feeling embarrassed and overwhelmed. However, everything changed when Shukri joined the project to work on the land of the Franciscan Monastery to pick olives during the olive harvesting season. The opportunity provided him with a job that allowed him to earn a living and support his family once again. "My biggest hope now is to have a permanent job that guarantees stability. I want to continue growing in my career and build a future where I'm not constantly worried about my job situation".

Donors & Benefactors

The Pontifical Mission in Jerusalem is grateful to CNEWA and other partner donors and benefactors that fund our work in the Holy Land. Without your generosity and support, our work would not be possible. Thank you!

- Children's Relief Bethlehem
- CNEWA
- Doty Foundation
- Diocese of Stockholm
- Embrace the Middle East
- European Union
- Friends of the Holy Land
- German Representative Office
- Kindermissionswerk
- Dutch Lieutenancy of the KHS
- Manos Unidas
- Misereor

- Porticus
- Swiss Holy Land Foundation
- UNDP

Donations towards the Gaza Emergency Program

- Al-Omri Kinderhilfe Palatina
- CNEWA U.S.
- CNEWA Canada
- Dutch Lenten Campaign
- Embrace the Middle East
- Fundação de Assistência Médica Internacional
- Stiftung Aktion Pro Humanitat
- Swiss Holy Land Foundation







