



GRAND MAGISTERIUM – VATICAN
EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM

At the service of the living stones in the Holy Land

A Christmas gift



The Order of the Holy Sepulchre also contributes to the purchase of gifts for children in the Holy Land whose families are in difficulty.

The Christmas and Easter holidays are supposed to be a time of joy and sharing, yet this is not always the reality. For families struggling to make ends meet in the Holy Land, gifts for children are an “extra” that cannot be considered. Thanks to the contribution received from the Lieutenancy for Western Spain, last year almost 1,500 Palestinian children between the ages of 4 and 11 not only received a gift for Christmas or Easter but also participated in activities that allowed them to experience a festive atmosphere.

In December 2021, parties were organised in all Palestinian parishes with games and initiatives designed especially for the little ones. Children played games, sang Christmas carols, painted decorations and listened to stories about the birth of Jesus. On that occasion 1400 gifts were distributed.

Anton is eight years old and lives with his mother and two older brothers in the Old City of Jerusalem. His father died after a long and painful battle with cancer and his mother works as a cleaning lady, surviving on a very low salary. Anton could not contain his joy when he saw the gift on the doorstep: “I have not received a gift, since Dad went to heaven. I was so happy to see that there are people who care about me and my family. Thank you for the gift and for making our Christmas happy,” he said. At Easter, the experience was repeated, but this time inviting around 60 children to come and celebrate with the guests of the Beit Afram home for the elderly in Taybeh: 30 elderly people between 77 and 90 years of age live there, many of them with health problems and no family to care for them. For them too, the holidays can be a difficult and often sad time.

At Easter 2022, the Latin Patriarchate together with Caritas Jerusalem organised a party that brought together children and elderly people who were a gift to each other. During the day they sang Easter

hymns together, had an egg hunt in the garden of the residence, enjoyed a good lunch and the children received a gift.

Fadi is from Taybeh, his father was diagnosed with a chronic illness five years ago and has not been able to work, his mother works at a hairdresser's. Fadi was among the 60 children who had an Easter party at the Beit Afram home: the experience of spending the day with a group of elderly people and playing with them was totally new to him. "I love puzzles and board games," he said, "and I can't thank you enough for giving me the Scrabble game. I love playing it with Dad and learning new words in English."

Elena Dini

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