How can we face the reception of refugees in Jordan?

An interview with Wael Suleiman, director of Caritas Jordan

The Caritas team in Jordan works hard for the refugees. In this photo, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches, who came to encourage its work.

In recent months the Order has contributed to the reception of refugees in Jordan, alongside other ecclesial institutions, such as the Italian Episcopal Conference. The director of Caritas Jordan kindly responded to our questions on emergency aid for families who are fleeing the conflict in the Middle East.

What exactly does Caritas Jordan do for the refugees' children on the Jordanian territory (which is part of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem)? Can you give us some concrete examples, particularly with regards the children's schooling?

Caritas provides portions of tuition fees for children whose parents, for many reasons such as unemployment and poverty, are incapable of paying costly tuition fees in Jordan. We also provide remedial classes for children, who fall behind in their academic learning in a bid to improve their performance at school. These children consequently obtain higher grades and achieve better academic results.

Furthermore, we organize extra tuition classes, which entitle children who have missed school years because of war in their home country, to enroll in afternoon nonformal education classes, enabling them to catch up on their learning and be prepared to be re-enrolled in the formal education system, get formal degrees and resume their higher education.

Finally, part of Caritas learning process is to sustain extra-curricular activities where children and their parents are enrolled in recreational activities, sporting and art events that aim to stimulate their

mental capacities and enhance their resilience and co-existence, solidarity and capacity to work together with peers from different nationalities.

How is Caritas Jordan funded to support this service of welcoming refugees and do you have enough resources to answer their needs right now?

Caritas work is based on volunteerism and solidarity which suggests utilizing holistic services and approaches in responding to refugees' needs, in a sense that volunteers, from different nationalities, are considered an integral part of Caritas dynamic power in its structure. Caritas secures funding from different donors in an aim to cover all vital sectors and services offered by its centers that are spread in a number of governorates.

Caritas Jordan seeks funds from philanthropic benefactors both nationally and internationally in response to its specific project proposals; or through its membership and affiliation to local partnerships as well as contributions from sister organizations all around the world.

As needs mount due to hosting large refugee population from 49 countries with dwindling resources and extreme poverty, Caritas feels that resources are needed as long as there are no imminent solutions to the wars and repercussions that are happening in the neighboring countries.

Caritas does its utmost not to cut or reduce any assistance as long the need is high, therefore it does not stop advocating for refugees rights to live in peace and be provided with protection and basic necessities, arranging fund raising campaigns and speaking on behalf of refugees locally and internationally.

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