

Beit Afram Elderly Home

Extending the Hands of Mercy to underserved Christian Elderly in the West Bank and Jerusalem areas.

Introduction

In light of the chronic socioeconomic and political challenges in the Holy Land, the social services system in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for marginalized groups, mainly elderly is very limited and there is a severe lack of decent elderly homes that cater for this underserved segment of the Holy Land community. It is estimated that by the year 2026, the total number of people over 65 will constitute around 11% of the Palestinian population, however within the Christian community this percentage is believed to be much higher considering the high emigration rates among young Christian families who leave their homeland to seek better economic prospects, and to allow their children to live a normal life elsewhere.

For the majority of these poor families, usually elderly parents are left alone without any kind of social assistance or medical care. The LPJ wishes to support this sector in a dignified manner as they feel isolated, abandoned, and depressed. The Beit Afram Elderly Home constitute a beacon of hope to this age group and aims at reenergizing their spirits and advancing their sense of community.

Governmental support to the Elderly Sector in Palestine

Israel and Palestine share the same geography, however, there are huge gaps between the health service delivery systems in both countries. The West Bank and Gaza are totally dependent on irregular, scarce, restricted and external political financial assistance that hardly meet the essential needs, while Israel's health system is ranked fourth in the World. Elderly people are not entitled to free health care and monthly allocations compared to Israel, they are abandoned and sometimes supported by their extended families if they can afford to spare some financial means for their medications and other vital care costs. Let alone the inability of the Palestinian Authority to establish daycare units and elderly homes due to their chronic financial crisis since their inception in 1994.

Mar Afram LPJ Elderly Home / Taybeh – Palestine

The Elderly Home of Taybeh, also called *Beit Afram Home*, was established in 2005 to offer an elderly-friendly healthy environment for the senior members of the society within the surrounding towns and villages. At first, this home was opened for five elderly people including a priest who was recovering from his illness. Gradually, the house became fully operational to receive more elderly people from several neighboring towns and villages.

The Home focuses on providing skilled and respectful care to its residents with the help of a medically knowledgeable team of caregivers. The center also engages the elderly in social interactions with diverse groups such as school students, youth groups and ecclesial movements which keeps them actively engaged in their community, as a way to preserve their dignity and self-worth and give them an excellent quality of life.

Additionally, this Center offers a comprehensive healthy environment for the elderly; thus, improving their quality of life through assistance in health care, nursing care, medication, hygiene, physical therapy, nutrition, human and psychological support and other needs. It is worth noting that the center fosters the Christian faith and encourages the spirituality of the residents.

Statement of Need

Inspired by Christ's Love and Witness to those who suffer the most, the LPJ is proposing to render a comprehensive care package for the elderly communities in need, especially those who were totally dependent on their relatives to cover part of the minimal subsidized monthly fees through fully or partially financial coverage. This will give an assuring sense to the elderly that they are not abandoned and that their costs to live with dignity are covered by generous benefactors who care about them.

How can you help?

Through your small to medium sized donations, you will help to maintain the Center's services and contribute towards its social outreach program for elderly.

The Elderly Home has to cover the service providers' costs, caretakers, nursing professionals' fees, utilities expenses, electricity, water, transportation, communication, supplies, maintenance and other operational costs. The total required resources for running this home range between 370,000 to 390,000 USD per year.

Ideas to help us:

- A total sponsorship of \$1200 per month per elderly.
- A 50% sponsorship of \$600 per month per elderly.
- Any contribution towards the growing costs will help us sustain a vital service for this underserved community segment.