

THIS *Lent*, JOIN US IN DELIVERING

Life, Peace, and Hope

TO MOTHERS AND BABIES IN THE HOLY LAND.

Babies in Bethlehem – Sample Reflections for Students/Teens in Ministry

(This sample speech may be used by students and youth ministry members as a way to introduce parishioners to Babies in Bethlehem and the work of Holy Family Hospital. The reflection is well-suited for a second collection during Lent or any time of year.)

Hello, my name is _____, and I am here to tell you about how my class has been preparing this Lent for the resurrection of Jesus. We are participating in a project called Babies in Bethlehem to learn about Holy Family Hospital and its special ministry in the Holy Land. Located only 1,500 steps from where Jesus was born, this Catholic maternity and neonatal hospital delivers thousands of babies every year. We've learned about how families in Bethlehem today – like Mary, Joseph, and Jesus – often are very poor and must travel great distances to access healthcare. Holy Family Hospital works to make sure all families are cared for and never turns anyone away.

This Hospital offers its state-of-the-art services to all women, children, and families in Bethlehem and beyond, regardless of their religion, nationality, or lack of funds. The Hospital's Mobile Outreach Clinic travels to remote desert villages, where families are very poor. The Clinic also serves United Nations Refugee camps, where more than 25 percent of its patients live.

To give an example of the amazing impact that Holy Family Hospital has, I brought a true story with me today to share with you. Not long ago, twin girls were born prematurely at the Hospital at 24 weeks. The smallest weighed less than 1.5 pounds. Their father travelled an hour and a half from their village every day to be with his new daughters. They were so small that, for some time, their dad couldn't even hold them. He could only sit with them and rub their heads with his little finger. After the girls' safe return home to their village, this grateful man sent a letter thanking Holy Family Hospital for not only saving his daughters, but for also teaching him to be a good parent. The letter said:

“The efforts of the doctors and nurses to save my daughters' lives taught me patience and love, and how to be a good father.”

Tragically, a baby weighing 1.5 lbs. cannot survive at many other local hospitals in Bethlehem. But Holy Family Hospital values life in absolute terms and dedicates all the time and resources within its NICU to save the lives of the smallest of babies. This taught me a lot about the value of every life, especially those in a region that knows so much suffering.

It has been so rewarding to raise money to bring these families comfort, relief and, perhaps most importantly, hope. We have been collecting donations in our Bethlehem Boxes (hold up box) from our friends and family all throughout Lent and now we'd like to invite you join in! Donation envelopes have been placed at the end of each pew for you to prayerfully consider what you feel called to give. So far, my class has raised (\$ amount), which provides direct relief to poor and sick families cared for at Holy Family Hospital. As you can see, donations of any amount can make a real difference.

It was so important for me this Lent to be able to give of myself to someone in need. It made me feel especially good to be able to help someone as small and defenseless as a little baby. Thank you for helping us give back to Holy Family Hospital this Lent. To learn more about the lifesaving work of the Hospital, please visit birthplaceofhope.org

