



Bethlehem ushered in the year 2022 still suffering from the twin humanitarian economic and health crises. The town was still empty as pilgrimages were not yet allowed to restart. Bank accounts ran empty after two years without salaries. Nerves were beginning to fray as the Bethlehemites wondered when hope would return to Bethlehem. The doctors, nurses and midwives at Holy Family Hospital know hope because it emanates from a Child born 2000 years ago in Bethlehem just 1500 steps away. Hope never leaves the only neonate and maternity hospital in Bethlehem. Hope is embodied in a newborn baby tenderly tucked into her mother's arms. Hope is the face of a brand-new Dad admiring his tired wife after delivery. In 2022, this hope was repeated 4627 times at Holy Family Hospital.

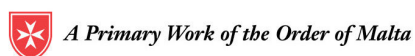


A newborn baby tenderly swaddled and ready to go home to meet the family against the backdrop of growing poverty and diminished hope, shows that hope is not gone but only waiting to be rediscovered. In early spring, pilgrimages began anew. A few buses made their way to the Church of the Nativity like the first swallow of spring. The weather warmed after the coldest winter in decades and Bethlehem began to reopen.

Holy Family Hospital prepared for a busier fall and winter as weddings began to be scheduled and employee vacation days were entered on the Hospital calendar for the first time in two years. The noise of construction and delivery trucks began again as work resumed on the new wing. Waterproofing, insulation and finally the iconic Bethlehem limestone began to envelop the concrete shell.

A generous donor, touched by the stories of increasing poverty met only by growing tables and neighbors' generosity announced a large challenge grant to help families through these difficult times. A matching donor was found rather quickly and the program to introduce holistic care began. Families would no longer have to decide between medical care and groceries or medicine and electricity. Holy Family Hospital would send each baby home to their families with their dignity intact and newfound hope.

Each morning at Holy Family Hospital, the resident doctors conduct rounds with their supervisor, Dr. Salameh (pictured, right). Afterwards, they convene to discuss their cases and have a presentation to further their skills. We thank a special family, who in memory of their Husband and Father a beloved physician, for underwriting the costs of a resident doctor for her tenure at Holy Family Hospital. This is a true blessing and an act of hope for Holy Family Hospital.



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Construction progress at the Hospital, also a sign of hope, became more evident daily. The workers, grateful for their employment, redoubled their efforts proud to be working on such an important touchstone of their community. They agreed to extended working hours to speed up the work.

The restart of construction spurred donors on to support the works with new grants. A generous donor made a gift to supply the beautiful Bethlehem limestone for the Hospital exterior. Another donor named overnight rooms in honor of his favorite priests. The new administrative department will have a beautiful conference room named in memory of a donor's parents. The opportunity to name a project after a loved one in Bethlehem is a beautiful way to remember and honor those we hold dear. There are

currently a few more of these opportunities left as the project enters Phase II.

Our wonderful recurring donors allow us to ensure uninterrupted care restoring health and renewing hope without regard to need or creed. We are indeed grateful. 2022 was a challenging year, but the generous gifts arriving daily sustained our spirits and our works in Bethlehem. Thank you.

The 200 employees of the Hospital come together to deliver care and upkeep of the Hospital. I am grateful for them and especially for you- our thousands of donors who contribute throughout the year to keep hope alive in Bethlehem.

We received news of bequests from some of our members of the Three Kings Society. We were saddened by the loss of our friends and asked for Masses and prayers in Bethlehem for their families and their souls. They live on now in the many everyday miracles they supported during their lives, having ensured hopeful futures for our patients and staff members through their wills.



2023 will continue to challenge us in our increasingly complicated work at the Hospital and in our ability to raise the required funds to support the staff in Bethlehem to deliver life, peace and hope just 1,500 steps from the manger.

May I count on your ongoing prayers for our work, for the staff and for the families of Bethlehem in this new year?

Blessings from Bethlehem,

Ambassador Michele Burke Bowe, GCM



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