



## BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY

جامعة بيت لحم

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

29 October 2009

Bethlehem, Palestine

### Seeking HELP for a Bethlehem University Student

29 October 2009: Bethlehem

The Israeli military has gone one step further in denying a young Christian woman her right to complete her bachelor degree at the Vatican-sponsored Bethlehem University in the Holy Land.

On Wednesday, 28 October 2009, we learned that Ms. Berlanty Azzam, a Bethlehem University student studying business administration and translation, was arrested by the Israeli military.

On Thursday, 29 October 2009, we spoke with Berlanty via mobile phone and learned that on Wednesday night at 11:00pm the Israeli military loaded her into a military jeep - blindfolded and handcuffed - and moved her from Bethlehem to Gaza - against her will.

Since August 2005, Berlanty, a 21 year old Christian woman, has been a student at Bethlehem University. "Since 2005, I refrained from visiting my family in Gaza for fear that I would not be permitted to return to my studies in the West Bank," said Berlanty. "Now, just two months before graduation, I was arrested and taken to Gaza in the middle of the night, with no way to finish my degree." Berlanty is scheduled to complete her bachelor degree in December 2009.

#### **Why was she removed from Bethlehem (in the West Bank and not in Israel) and taken to Gaza?**

Just because her address in the Israeli-controlled Population Registry is listed in the Gaza Strip- but she lives in Bethlehem and has done so since the year 2005.

We need your help. **Berlanty needs your help.** What can you do to help?

RIGHT NOW, please send an email to:

- The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Avigdor Liberman): sar@mfa.gov.il
- The Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs (Mr. Yaakov Margi): yakovm@dat.gov.il
- Your elected representatives in your home country.

Let them know that you demand that the Israeli military immediately return Berlanty Azzam to Bethlehem so that she can resume and complete her last few weeks of studies to complete her bachelors degree at the Vatican-sponsored Bethlehem University.

Visit our website ([www.bethlehem.edu](http://www.bethlehem.edu)) and Gisha ([www.gisha.org](http://www.gisha.org)) for more updates.

May God Bless You!

With more than 10,800 graduates, Bethlehem University is the first university established in Palestine and the only Catholic university in the Holy Land with courses offered in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Qubebeh, Ramallah and Amman, Jordan. Founded in 1973 as a co-educational institution of higher learning conducted by the De La Salle Christian Brothers, the University is supported by the Vatican, Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre and many benefactors as it strives to foster shared values, moral principles and dedication to serving the common good. The University is open to students of all faith traditions, currently enrolling 3,000 students in its undergraduate and post-graduate master degree and diploma programs in Arts, Business Administration, Education, Nursing, Science and Hotel Management and Tourism, with an additional 1,200 students in professional diploma and on-going education programs through the Institute for Community Partnership. A member of the Association of Arab Universities, International Federation of Catholic Universities, and Lasallian Association of Colleges and Universities, Bethlehem University is one of more than 1,000 Lasallian educational institutions in 84 countries of the world in which nearly 6,000 De La Salle Christian Brothers and 80,000 dedicated religious sisters, priests, and lay women and men of all faith traditions serve.

