

**Bethlehem**



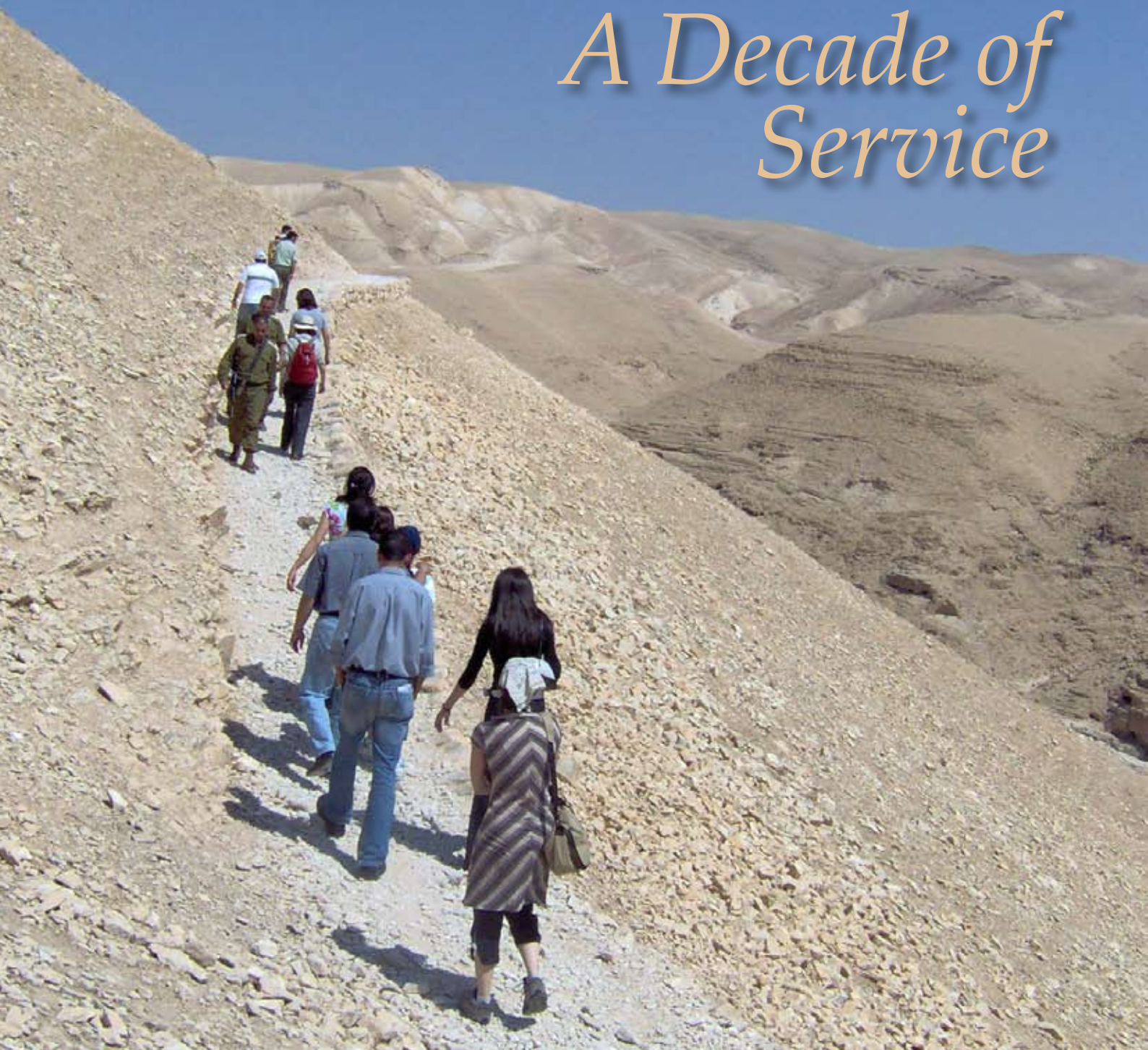
**University**

Bethlehem University News - Volume 16 Issue No. 2 - Special Edition

IN THE HOLY LAND

# The Religious Studies Department

*A Decade of  
Service*



# A Message from the Vice Chancellor

Dear Friends,

In preparation for the Tenth Year Anniversary of the Religious Studies Department at Bethlehem University, I am pleased to place in your hands the first of two special editions of the Bethlehem University newsletter that highlights the history, activities and successes of the Department.

Inside you will find the Department's most recent news, a number of activities it has carried out since its inception in 1998, detailed profiles about our faculty members and graduates, future initiatives, and feedback about the Department's work in the Holy Land from various academics, educators, religious and lay people.



The mission of Bethlehem University is to serve the young men and women of Palestine by providing quality higher education, fostering shared values and moral principles and serving the common good. Bethlehem University holds the distinction of being the only Catholic university in the Holy Land. As such, the Department of Religious Studies has a central role in advancing the University's mission. Father Jamal Khader, the devoted Chairperson of the Department and the holder of the Cardinal Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg Endowed Chair in Religious Studies, with the collaboration of Department members and students, has contributed in countless ways to the University's mission. Several graduates of the Department of Religious Studies have pursued graduate theological work and are now teaching religious studies at Christian schools in Gaza, Jerusalem, Ramallah and the Bethlehem area as well as at Bethlehem University.

The generous support of many individuals and organizations has made the activities and programs of the Religious Studies Department a reality. I am grateful to Msgr. Vladimir Felzmann, KCHS, Mr. Issa Khamis Tahhan, and Mr. Robert Benson, KGCHS, AFSC, who have provided leadership as trustees, and Mr. Tom Griffin as treasurer, in establishing the Cardinal Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg Endowed Chair in Religious Studies, the first endowed chair at Bethlehem University. With the support of many people we look forward with hope and confidence to the continued growth of the Department of Religious Studies at Bethlehem University.

Sincerely,

*Brother Daniel Casey, FSC*

**Brother Daniel Casey, FSC**  
Vice Chancellor

# Introduction from the Chairperson

In response to the need for religious education in the Holy Land and upon the request of the Conference of the Bishops in the Holy Land the Department of Religious Studies was founded in 1998 within the Faculty of Arts at Bethlehem University, primarily to prepare qualified catechists and to also offer quality Christian religious education to all students of the University. Bethlehem University, the only Catholic university in the Holy Land, established this new Department thanks to the great dedication of Fr. Peter Du Brul, SJ, the first Chairperson of the Department, with initial funding from the Jesuits followed by funding from the Friends of Bethlehem University in the UK (FoBU-UK), the German Church through MISSIO, the Catholic Archdiocese of Cologne, the German Association of the Holy Land, and the German Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher, whose support has continued to this day.



The Department received its first group of students, which included catechists, religious and lay people, in 1998 for a four-year bachelor's program with a major in Religious Studies. In the summer of 2008, the seventh cohort of students will graduate from the program. The graduates come from the Roman-Catholic, Greek-Catholic, Greek-Orthodox, Syrian-Orthodox, Maronite, Chaldean and Armenian Churches. In addition to the Religious Studies Major, the University also offers a Minor in Catechism and a two-year upgrading program for catechists in Aman, Jerusalem and in Ramallah. Furthermore, the Religious Studies Department offers courses for all students of the University no matter what their academic major or religious affiliation, thereby providing Christian and Muslim students the opportunity to engage in religious dialogue and to know the other religion from the inside. This course is unique with university programs in the Holy Land.

Maintaining the mission of the Department and developing its work are possible only thanks to the dedication of its faculty, enthusiasm of its students, support of the administration and the financial help of many friends. With support from our benefactors, the University will continue to serve the students of Bethlehem University as well as the local community and the local Church, promoting the Gospel values of justice, respect, love and peace.

Gratefully,



**Fr. Jamal Khader**

Chairperson, Religious Studies Department  
Cardinal Basil Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg  
Endowed Chair in Religious Studies

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## Mission Statement

*Bethlehem University is a Catholic co-educational institution in the Lasallian tradition whose mission is to provide quality higher education to the people of Palestine and to serve them in its role as a center for the advancement, sharing and use of knowledge. The University emphasizes excellence in academic programs and the development of students as committed people prepared to assume leading positions in society. The University aspires to fostering shared values, moral principles and dedication to serving the common good.*

## NEWS

# Bethlehem University Graduates Return as Teachers



Sally Kaissieh (BU '04) and Michel Rock (BU '02)

Sally Kaissieh (BU '04) and Michel Rock (BU '02) are two graduates of the Religious Studies Department who returned to Bethlehem University in the Fall of 2007 with their masters' degrees in hand to share their

knowledge and experiences with the next generation of Religious Studies students as new members of the University's faculty.

Sally is teaching the Old Testament and Catechism, while Michel is teaching Introduction to Theology. "I am delighted to have this teaching position at my alma mater. It is a tremendous opportunity for me to give back to the Department and the community," Sally said. "Teaching here is really a dream come true. It is the culmination of my efforts over many years," she added.

Sally believes strongly in the power of education to initiate change and her daily commitment to her students illustrates that. In addition to her university courses, Sally teaches religion to 3rd through 12th graders at the Latin Patriarchate School in Beit Jala, a position she has held since 2006. She also tutors students in English and mathematics.

Michel Rock is quite dedicated to his role as an educator and has certainly found his place among his colleagues. "Fr. Jamal and Fr. Peter really mentored me throughout my time at Bethlehem University and beyond," Michel said. "I am honored to be teaching at Bethlehem University. I know it will broaden my experience significantly." In addition to his teaching responsibilities at Bethlehem University, since 2001 Michel has been teaching religion, history and geography at the Terra Sancta Girls School in Bethlehem.

Both Sally and Michel earned their masters' degrees from Saint Michael's College in Vermont with generous funding from Saint Michael's College and the assistance of many friends.

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St. Giorgios Monastery, Palestine

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# BU Religious Studies Department Launches First Comprehensive Website

The Religious Studies Department at Bethlehem University in the Holy Land launched its first comprehensive website in June 2008 in order to provide potential students, faculty and donors with detailed information about the Department since its inception in 1998.

The website, funded by the Friends of Bethlehem University in the UK (FoBU-UK), includes detailed accounts of the Department's activities, profiles on its

students and faculty, past and recent activities, photos, videos and much more. The Department's mission is to train catechists for the Holy Land. It makes considerable efforts to connect with the communities outside the University in the Bethlehem, Ramallah and Jerusalem areas, initiating interreligious dialogue aimed at educating Muslims and Christians about each other's faith in order to improve the quality of their daily interactions.

The Religious Studies Department welcomes visits and links to its website as well as inquiries about its role in education and in the greater community.

"The new, first-of-its-kind web site for the Department of Religious Studies is an exciting development in the history of the 10-year-young Department!" commented Br. Robert Smith, FSC, Ph.D., acting Vice Chancellor and Vice President for Academic Affairs, adding, "I find the web site engaging, well designed, user-friendly, and inspiring. Everyone will learn that the Department of Religious Studies is a concrete and contemporary expression of the University's heritage and mission to be of service to the Palestinian community." To visit the website go to

[www.religiousstudies.bethlehem.edu](http://www.religiousstudies.bethlehem.edu)



[www.religiousstudies.bethlehem.edu](http://www.religiousstudies.bethlehem.edu)

### International Religious Conference Concludes With Deep Hope For Future

Participants in the first-ever International Religious Conference “Exploring Christian-Muslim Relations in the Middle East and the West” held at Bethlehem University in September 2007 concluded their three days of presentations and exchanges with a positive and hopeful outlook for the future. The presenters and participants from Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Sweden, Israel, the United States, the Philippines, Egypt, Jordan and Palestine left the Conference with a better understanding of and a deeper responsibility for the future of Christian-Muslim relations in their respective communities.

“Interreligious dialogue is possible,” said Fr. Jamal Khader, Chairperson of the Religious Studies Department at Bethlehem University. “Our belief in God, in human beings and in the power of education pushes us to be optimists.” The challenge now, as it has always been, is how to continue this dialogue in a way that will produce concrete change.

Dr. Werner Wertgen, Professor of Theology from Katholische Fachhochschule, University of Applied Sciences in Germany, noted that it was imperative to understand the context in which the religious communities live before initiating dialogue. One conference participant, George Rishmawi, founder of the Siraj Center in Beit Sahour, called dialogue a tool for justice, while Fr. Vincent Hanssens, former general secretary of the International Federation of



*Participants at the International Religious Conference at Bethlehem University*

Catholic Universities (IFCU), said, “Dialogue is the responsibility of every citizen of a multi-cultural society.”

Many noted the extreme importance of academic institutions in not only providing a space for dialogue to take place, but in making concerted efforts at initiating this dialogue and focusing it further. Presenters agreed that Bethlehem University was the ideal venue for such initiatives, considering its location in the Holy Land, the crossroads of the three monotheistic religions.



## NEWS

Under the auspices of the Cardinal Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg Endowed Chair in Religious Studies at Bethlehem University, which was established through the generosity of the Friends of Bethlehem University in the UK (FoBU-UK), it was suggested that Bethlehem University hold a yearly international religious conference on interreligious dialogue. “We believe in what we are doing. With the on-going support of our friends and benefactors, and the blessings of God, we at Bethlehem University will do whatever it takes to continue interreligious dialogue in the Holy Land,” concluded Father Jamal.

The International Religious Conference at Bethlehem University included more than 15 sessions about Christian-Muslim relations and dialogue in 11 countries around the world. Its main aim was to address the challenges of coexistence between Christians and Muslims in the Middle East and the West by sharing the personal experiences of academics and students alike.

Following the Conference, Fr. Jamal met with other Bethlehem University and Department faculty to

define the next step. “We are planning a second conference for the Fall of 2008, and we hope to have a comprehensive website about interreligious dialogue,”



*Conference presenters on a trip to Jerusalem*

Fr. Jamal said. Conference proceedings, including the full presentation of each speaker, will be published during the summer of 2008 and are available from the Public Relations Office ([info@bethlehem.edu](mailto:info@bethlehem.edu)).

Bethlehem University thanks all of its guests, students, faculty and staff for participating in and contributing to the conference. For their generous support in making this conference possible, the University community gives special thanks to its partners: the Friends of Bethlehem University in the UK (FoBU-UK), the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and an anonymous donor.

### Religious Pluralism in the US Example for Peace?

Fr. Jamal Khader, Chairperson of the Religious Studies Department, participated in the International Visitor Leadership Program “Religion in America” in August 2007 to learn more about how different religions coexist in the United States.

The U.S. State Department sponsored program included visits to five states along with a series of meetings at the State Department, the Department of Justice, several religious institutions— mainly those who work on interfaith dialogue— and several churches, mosques and synagogues. “The program was intensive, well organized and fruitful,” Fr. Jamal said. “It provided us with opportunities to examine the main problems and tensions between the different religions in the U.S., especially how the US Constitution addresses these issues. Even if our experience is different, the experience of another country like the U.S. can be useful and inspiring.”

Several religious leaders from the West Bank were also invited, but were unable to join the group. However, in addition to Fr. Jamal from Bethlehem University, Sheikh Mahmoud Adawi from Al-Aroub Refugee Camp near Bethlehem participated. The program was organized by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the State Department of the U.S. and is an integral component to its mission to foster mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries through international educational, professional and cultural exchanges. Participants visited Washington D.C., Detroit, Austin, Philadelphia, and New York.

*We would love to hear your  
comments and feedback.  
Please send us your letters  
to: [info@bethlehem.edu](mailto:info@bethlehem.edu)*

# Historic Visits of Church Leaders:

## UK & Germany 2006-2007



*Br. Daniel Casey welcomes UK church leaders to Bethlehem University. From left to right: Revd. Nathan Hovhannisian, Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Great Britain, Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor, Archbishop of Westminster, Br. Daniel Casey, FSC, and The Most Revd. and Rt. Hon. Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury.*

As part of their historic Advent Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in December 2006, Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor, Archbishop of Westminster, The Most Revd. and Rt. Hon. Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, Revd. David Coffey, Moderator of the Free Churches Group, and Revd. Nathan Hovhannisian, Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Great Britain, visited Bethlehem University students, faculty and administrators.

Students reflected on the harsh realities of living under Israeli military occupation, spoke of their hope for a better future and expressed their appreciation for the solidarity and support of the international community. In the spirit and tradition of gifts received from the Wise Men of the East some 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem, just prior to the ecumenical prayer service celebrated in the University Chapel of the Divine Child, the students of Bethlehem University presented the Church leaders with three gifts symbolizing their hardships, hopes and appreciation for solidarity: a stone from the West Bank home of one of the students which was recently demolished by the Israeli authorities; a candle from the Nativity Church, source of the light of hope for us all; and a Friends of Bethlehem University ceramic tile expressing gratitude for the solidarity and support of the international community.

Three months after the visit of the UK Church leaders, the members of the Permanent Council of the German Bishops' Conference visited Bethlehem University in March 2007 as part of their unprecedented joint visit to the Holy Land. The Bishops were received by the University's Board of Trustees, the Brothers Community, faculty, staff and students. "We are happy to host you, the Bishops of Germany, to our campus community to witness first-hand the joyful reality of the significance of the Church's educational mission at Bethlehem University and to allow us to express our gratitude for the tremendous support from the people of Germany for the University as we struggle with the devastating reality of living within the Separation Wall. Everyday our faculty and staff are challenged to help our young men and women see the possibility of a better future and this solidarity visit demonstrates that bridges of hope are still alive," said Br. Daniel Casey, Vice Chancellor, in welcoming the Church leadership of Germany.

Archbishop Fouad Twal, President of Bethlehem University and Coadjutor Archbishop of Jerusalem, commented, "The visit of the Church leaders from Germany renews our hope and assures us all that we are not forgotten. Bethlehem University, the first university established in the West Bank, has always been an oasis where we celebrate faith, academic excellence and diversity— all made possible by the generosity of our committed friends and benefactors around the world."



*Archbishop Fouad Twal, President of Bethlehem University, center, and Br. Daniel Casey, FSC, Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University, front, second from right, hosted the members of the Permanent Council of the German Bishops' Conference on March 3, 2007 during their unprecedented joint visit to the Holy Land.*

# ACTIVITIES

## Galilee

Faculty members in the Religious Studies Department try each year to arrange trips outside the Bethlehem area as a supplement to classroom learning. On one such trip in early May 2003 Bishop Boulos Marcuzzo, Latin Patriarchal Vicar of Nazareth, arranged to take Religious Studies Department students on a pilgrimage to Nazareth, one of the most important Christian cities in the Holy Land and a place that most students never have a chance to visit.

They stayed for one night and two days with the Sisters of Nazareth and visited the Church of the Annunciation, Beisan, Capernaum, the Mount of Beatitudes, Tabgha, Lake Tiberius, and the Church of Saint Elias in Haifa.



who joined the pilgrimage, commented, “Not only was it a much needed change of atmosphere for all of us, but more importantly, it was marvelous to be able to see and touch what we had been studying in class all these years. Opportunities like these make our time at Bethlehem University all the more memorable and meaningful.”

Michel Rock (BU '02), a religion teacher at Bethlehem University, said that his class trip to the Galilee in 2000 was special for a number of reasons. “It was an exceptionally

personal trip because it was the first time many of the students in the Department were able to visit the sites that are sacred to the Christian faith,” Michel said. “I will never forget the experiences of this trip because together all my friends and I followed in the steps of Jesus. It was an incredibly spiritual feeling.”



when he was an undergraduate student. He sold books and gave explanations about the iconography to guests. “These activities give us something to look forward to,” Ra’fat said. “We feel special being part of the Department, especially because many students outside the Department attended and we were given various leadership responsibilities.”

## Religious Activity Week

The Religious Studies Department typically organizes a week of religious activities each year to provide students a fuller and more varied learning experience. The main components of these special weeks are the Christian Book Fair, film screenings such as “The Passion of the Christ,” various Christian art exhibits, including a variety of Oriental icons, and guest lecturers, including Dr. Bernard Sabella, Archbishop Elias Chakour, Rev. Naim Ateek, and H.B. Michel Sabbah, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Ra’fat Salsa’ (BU '06) assisted Fr. Jamal during these times

Another Religious Studies major, Issa Abu Sa’da (BU '06), also offered his assistance during these busy weeks. “Selling books and holding icon exhibitions has been very important in showcasing the work of talented writers, filmmakers, academics and artists who have made Christianity or elements of Christianity central to their work,” Issa said. “Of course it also helps to teach others about Christianity and how it has been interpreted in different parts of the world,” he added. All Bethlehem University students and faculty were welcome to these events, those majoring in Religious Studies and those majoring in any other academic discipline.

# World Youth Day



*The Palestinian flag raised high in celebration of World Youth Day 2005 in Cologne, Germany*

Marie von Mirbach-Harff, a German graduate of Hebrew University, hosted in her home a group of Bethlehem University students, including some from the Religious Studies Department, in Cologne, Germany, for World Youth Day in 2005.

Marie arranged daily Mass for the students in preparation to join Pope Benedict and the two million youth who gathered each day for seven consecutive days. His Beatitude Michel Sabbah, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, was one of the priests who celebrated Mass at Marie's home with a congregation that included Arabs from Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Israel. Also, the Palestinian and German students performed a play about the Three Kings for the local community as an effort at bringing people together to reflect on the coming of the Savior and the occasion

of World Youth Day.

"It was nice to converse with people about who we are and where we come from," Imad Abu Sa'da (BU '05), a chaperone for the trip, said. "Most people living abroad do not know that Palestinian Christians exist, so it was good for them to meet us. We value their acknowledgement and appreciate their spiritual support also."

"It was a very rich experience. Marie wanted to do something special for Bethlehem University," Imad said, "And we are most grateful."

A group of 10 students and two faculty members are currently planning to attend World Youth Day in Australia in the summer of 2008.



*Bethlehem University students celebrate Mass at the home of their German hostess, Marie, in preparation for World Youth Day 2005*



*Pope Benedict XVI leads World Youth Day 2005 in Cologne, Germany*



**“Our students come from diverse faith backgrounds, including Catholic, Maronite, Syriac, Greek Orthodox and Armenian.”**

**Fr. Jamal Khader** has held the post of Chairperson of the Department of Religious Studies since 2003. He has made it his mission to reach out to schools and churches throughout Palestine in hopes of standardizing and improving Christian religious education. “We absolutely have to work harder in this,” Fr. Jamal said. “We are in the Holy Land. We can and must set the standard for Christian education.” He has also put a lot of effort into providing the Department’s students with as many opportunities to learn outside of the classroom in addition to what is learned inside the classroom. Fr. Jamal’s regular responsibilities at the University include celebrating Mass in the University Chapel, directing weekly meetings with the Christian Youth Group, welcoming journalists and visitors, organizing lectures and pilgrimages and promoting the Department to students who have passed their Tawjihi exams (standardized exams taken upon high school graduation).

“Our students come from diverse faith backgrounds, including Catholic, Maronite, Syriac, Greek Orthodox and Armenian. Some belong to a religious order and are already teaching catechism, and others are here for their first time.”

Fr. Jamal said. “Nevertheless, all of our students come here because they feel education leads to positive change and promotes understanding among people with different beliefs and cultures.” He added, “We are a tight-knit group. The Department really builds on the teachings of Jesus and tries to find creative ways to help its students put Jesus’ teachings into action.”

The 2007 International Religious Conference was Fr. Jamal’s most recent activity within the University. Also in 2007, Fr. Jamal completed a five-state tour of the United States as a participant in the International Visitor Leadership Program “Religion in America,” organized by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. State Department.

Fr. Jamal teaches at the Latin Seminary in Beit Jala, the Emmaus Center in Beit Sahour, the Family Center in Bethlehem and Mar Elias College in Ibillin. He also teaches Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution Strategies for the master’s in International Co-operation and Development (MICAD) program at Bethlehem University.

Fr. Jamal was born in the Christian Palestinian village of Zababdeh in the northern part of the West Bank. He has a doctorate of Divinity from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome where he completed his thesis on the official dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. He is a member of the Theological Reflection Committee of the Latin Patriarchate and of the Committee of Dialogue with Jews.



**Fr. Peter Du Brul, SJ**, was the first chairperson of the Religious Studies Department and is the former chair of the Humanities Department. He oversaw the merging of the Saint Cyril diploma program, which began in 1992 under the Faculty of Education, into a full-fledged bachelor’s degree offered by the

Religious Studies Department in 1998. “I offered to kick-start the program and after talking to the Jesuit Provincial from Rome, not even thinking about the funding aspect of the program, he told me they had just the right amount. I mean it literally fell from the sky,” Fr. Peter said, “and with that we started the full-time program at Bethlehem University.”

A dedicated and well-known professor, Fr. Peter has taught

at Bethlehem University since 1975 and has been in and out of the Middle East since 1961.

Although he agreed to chair the Department in the beginning, he insisted that a local Palestinian take his place as soon as possible, hence the appointment of Fr. Jamal Khader. “Fr. Jamal has a challenging job as the only full-time professor in the Department,” Fr. Peter said. “He is very committed to outreach. Under his leadership, the Department initiated a Diploma in Education to qualify teachers in primary and secondary schools.”

Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, Fr. Peter has his bachelor’s from the University of Damascus, master’s from Boston College and doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Lyon. He also has a License in Theology from the Faculté Jésuite à Fourvière in Lyon.



**“It is essential to teach future religious educators how to teach religion.”**

**Father Ibrahim Nairouz** was born in Nablus, Palestine, ordained an Anglican priest in January 2008 in Jerusalem, and has been working as a religion teacher at Bethlehem University and the Bethlehem Bible College since 2003 and 2000, respectively. At Bethlehem University Fr. Ibrahim teaches Christian Curriculum, Contextual Theology, and Archaeology and Spirituality of the Holy Land. His students say they like him because he challenges them to reach for higher ideals and higher standards. “I have clever students,” Fr. Ibrahim said. “They question everything and that is what I want them to do. In this life, you must be inquisitive, curious and interested, because true understanding and preparedness only comes after one explores and challenges beliefs to the very core.”

Fr. Ibrahim is one of several academics who developed the Christian curriculum that is now required by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education in all public schools. “This new development has created a high demand for religion teachers, which is where Bethlehem University comes in,” Fr. Ibrahim

said. “It is essential to teach future religious educators how to teach religion.” He hopes to see the Department expand to offer courses in English for students coming from abroad.

Fr. Ibrahim earned a BA in Theological Science from the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, Egypt, a master’s in Islamic Archaeology from Al-Quds University in Abu Dies and a second master’s in Contemporary Arabic Studies from Birzeit University in Ramallah, Palestine. He has written three books, including *Ramallah: Geography, History, Civilization* (Dar Al Shourouk 2004). Fr. Ibrahim is responsible for the Heritage Committee in the National Committee for the Preservation of the Christian Heritage in the Holy Land and is a member of several archaeology, history, and religion curriculum organizations.



**“Working at Bethlehem University has enriched my understanding of Christians in Palestine and it has given me an opportunity to reflect on my own faith.”**

**Dr. Sofi Ghanem**, a resident of Jifna, near Ramallah, has been a part time professor in the Religious Studies Department since 2001. She obtained her BA from Jordan University and her M.A. and Ph.D. from the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome with a specialization in School Pedagogy and Social Communication. “Working at Bethlehem University has enriched my understanding of Christians in Palestine and it has given me an opportunity to reflect on my own faith,” Dr. Ghanem said, commenting on the number of Christian denominations that are present in the Holy Land.

Dr. Ghanem is a much needed addition to the Department as her teaching experience in pedagogy has encouraged the Department to emphasize more this essential component

of religious education. “Pedagogical skills are often lacking in Christian religion teachers,” Dr. Ghanem said. “We need to put a lot of energy into pedagogical training in order to fulfill the Department’s mission.”

Dr. Ghanem feels the Department has had a significant impact on the community in the Bethlehem District. “Our presence in the community helps Christians and Muslims open up to each other. It also gives Christians a way to keep in touch with their own faith,” Dr. Ghanem said.

Dr. Ghanem helped to prepare the curriculum for the Higher Diploma in Religious Education that was modified to become the Teaching Diploma in Christian Religion offered at Bethlehem University to qualify the current religion teachers in the Holy Land. She also coordinated a series of seminars for teachers at the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem. Additionally, Dr. Ghanem helped prepare the outline of the mission of the Catholic Schools in the local community and the Church, and supervised the production of the 9th grade book for the Palestinian Ministry of Education in 2002. In her spare time, Dr. Ghanem volunteers for the Salesians, organizes retreats and chaperones summer camps for Christian youth groups.



**Sally Kaissieh** (BU '04) is a spirited young woman from Bethlehem. She graduated from Bethlehem University with honors in 2004 with a major in Religious Studies and

a minor in Religious Education. She recently completed her MA in Theology at Saint Michael's College in Vermont, and has been teaching religion to students from 3rd to 12th grade at the Latin Patriarchate School in Beit Jala since 2006. In 2007 she began teaching a Fall course on the Old Testament and Catechism at Bethlehem University, in addition to tutoring students in English and mathematics.

"I felt I had a calling to study in the Department of Religious Studies at Bethlehem University," Sally said. "When I was still in secondary school, I saw a notice about the different bachelor's programs offered at Bethlehem

University. I read them all and when my eyes reached the Department of Religious Studies, I just knew that was it." Family and friends discouraged her, mainly because they thought that only members of religious congregations majored in Religious Studies. "Once they saw how determined I was and what a positive role the Department has played in my life they have been very supportive and proud of me," Sally said.

In September 2006, Sally traveled with five 8th grade students from the Latin Patriarchate schools in Palestine, to Charlotte, North Carolina as part of the 40 day Children's Peace Program, Ambassadors for Peace. The aim of the annual program is to build bridges of understanding between

Christians in the West and Christians in the East. Each student is placed with an American host family from Saint Matthew's parish in Charlotte. "The program was very enlightening and challenging for me and the students. It was an incredible experience and prepared me for my career in teaching."



**"I had a difficult time attending Bethlehem University...crossing Israeli military checkpoints that were intense."**

**Sister Lucy Geegeeh** (BU '98) is the Headmistress of the Rosary Sisters' (Primary) School in Beit Hanina, near Jerusalem. With an enrollment of some 1,600 students, Sister Lucy and her teachers serve Palestinians of all faith traditions, illustrating how far-reaching the work of the University's graduates is. A majority of the students in Sister Lucy's school are Muslim, while half of the teachers are Christian. Thus, Christian and Muslim youth exchange ideas, learn together in a respectful and safe environment, and grow in mutual understanding and respect.

Each year there are approximately 20 to 25 Sisters enrolled in a variety of majors at Bethlehem University. "I had a difficult time attending Bethlehem University," Sister Lucy confided, "I had to commute from Jerusalem twice a week, crossing Israeli military checkpoints that were intense, especially during the years of my studies."

How is it that she continued to daily face these challenges? "My professors at the University were highly qualified, a good number of them were priests. Their expertise along with their pastoral concern really encouraged me to make the trip to Bethlehem, despite the difficulties encountered on the road."

Sister Lucy is originally from Ajloun, in the north of Jordan. In 1989, she moved to Jerusalem to begin her novitiate as a Rosary Sister. After completing a bachelor's degree in Music, Sister Lucy enrolled in the Religious Studies' post-graduate Diploma in Catechetics. Sister Lucy is currently working on her master's degree in Democracy and Human Rights at Birzeit University in Ramallah.

# PROFILES



**"The Holy Land is the cradle of monotheism but locals can hardly access their own holy sites."**

**Issa Abu Sa'da** (BU '06) is currently enrolled in the seminary school of the Latin Patriarchate in Bethlehem. A seemingly quiet and introspective young man, Issa's professors say he will be a good priest, a kind priest.

Like his classmate Nariman Qumsieh (BU '08), Issa appreciated the opportunity that the Religious Studies Department at Bethlehem University gave him to learn more about Judaism and Islam, in addition to deepening his understanding of Christianity. "Without the financial and spiritual support from my scholarship sponsor, Fr. Adam Forno, a kind and generous priest from the United States, I would not have been able to afford my University education," Issa said.

The Bethlehem University program enabled Issa to easily move onto his studies at the seminary. "The program at Bethlehem University was very helpful to me because the courses were taught in Arabic, in their students' native language, which allows them to comprehend the main ideas and concepts in a deeper way."

Ironically, one major challenge the University faces is to be able to give students a more tangible experience of Christianity because of the lack of freedom of movement for Palestinians to visit the holy sites in Jerusalem and in



Israel. "It is important that the students see what they are learning in their books. It is the Holy Land. The Holy Land is the cradle of monotheism but locals can hardly access their own holy sites - the backbone of Christianity.

We are a group of priests and students studying religion. Like the Israelis, we deserve access to our holy sites too."



As part of his studies at the seminary, Issa and his colleagues work in parishes each summer with youth (6-15 years). "We teach religion, art, music and sports classes five days a week from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.," Issa explained. "This summer I went to Ajloun in Jordan.

It was good for me because I felt I was giving them something else to think about, which is exactly how I feel about the Department of Religious Studies at Bethlehem University; it gave me something else to think about and now I have an opportunity to pass that on to others."





**“Bethlehem University...has given me an opportunity I wouldn’t have otherwise to meet and learn about Muslims and how they live out their commitment to God.”**

**Nariman Qumsieh** (BU '08) from Beit Sahour is a fourth year student in the Department of Religious Studies. She is married and has four children: Razan, Ramiz, Da'ed and Wala'. Da'ed and Wala' are also studying at Bethlehem University.

In addition to being a mother, wife and full-time student, Nariman works as a Religion and Physical Education teacher at Shepherds' High School and also teaches drama, dabke (Palestinian cultural dance) and choir, focusing on religious songs. The Headmaster of the Shepherds' High School, who also happens to be the Vice-Mayor of Bethlehem, George Sa'da, urged Nariman to get her bachelor's in Religious Education because of her excellent grades and commitment to teaching. Nariman accepted, saying, “Really, I was very happy because I love teaching children.” She will graduate in 2008 and would like to move on to a master's in Religious Education.

One aspect of the program at Bethlehem University that particularly interests Nariman is that she is learning about Christianity at a Christian university surrounded by

mainly Muslim colleagues. “I cherish this aspect of Bethlehem University. It has given me an opportunity I wouldn't have otherwise to meet and learn about Muslims and how they live out their commitment to God,” Nariman said. “It is stimulating to be in class with them, because they ask me challenging questions and I feel comfortable answering them honestly because we are in a safe environment.”

Nariman considers Fr. David Neuhaus her best teacher. “I have learned the most from him. He really pushes me to look deeper into each of life's lessons, whether they are from the Bible or from my own life.”



Nariman finds a special joy in learning about Jesus and the Bible and spends a lot of time trying to find creative and fun ways to teach children about Jesus. She said that if these subjects, which are at the center of Christianity, were given more attention when she was going to school, she would have understood her faith and religion earlier on. “It is clear that the professors at Bethlehem University are deeply faithful and it is through their faith that I am discovering my own.”



*Religion and Physical Education teacher at Shepherds' High School, Nariman Qumsieh (BU '08), begins each class with a prayer.*

# Future *Initiatives*

The Religious Studies Department is in a continuous process of development and improvement. The faculty strives on a daily basis to improve by responding to feedback from their students, their colleagues, and outside religious and academic institutions. The Department has decided on several initiatives it would like to undertake in the near future.

## Religious Studies Minor

In response to the needs of the students, the Department would like to offer a minor in Religious Studies for students who are majoring in any other academic discipline, thus providing a greater opportunity for teaching and learning in the Religious Studies discipline.

## Christian Education Diploma in Amman

For many years, the Diploma Program in Christian Education at the Jesuit Center in Amman was affiliated to the Faculty of Education at Bethlehem University. This two-year program was designed for the graduates of the Jesuit Center to continue their BA requirements at Bethlehem University. However, in recent years, due to a lack of students, the program was discontinued. The Department would very much like to restart this program in order to realize its dream of making the Religious Studies Department at Bethlehem University a center of Christian religious learning known and respected throughout the Middle East.

## Canon Law & Ecclesiology for Lawyers

In co-operation with the legal office at the Latin Patriarchate, the Department would like to offer a one year program for civil lawyers in the Bethlehem area in Canon Law and Ecclesiology in order to prepare



them for an exam at the Ecclesiastical Court for accreditation.

## Catechetical Conference

Because catechists in different schools work independently according to their school's policy, the Department feels it can help them work together. To begin, the Department hopes to organize an annual Catechetical Conference in collaboration with the Catechetical Center of the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem and the Ecumenical Joint Committee for Catechism, preferably for catechists in Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Ramallah. Starting on a smaller scale, the Department can gradually work to include more people for a longer period and on a more regular basis.

## Summer Program & Interreligious Updates

The Department would like to establish a two-week summer program as part of an academic minor that would update catechists on interreligious subjects related to Islam and Judaism. This would be open to teachers and students from the area and possibly from the region with excursions to certain holy places and meetings with local religious leaders.

# Invest in the Future!

For Scholarship  
Information

[scholarships@bethlehem.edu](mailto:scholarships@bethlehem.edu)

# Comments & Feedback

The International Religious Conference entitled “Exploring Christian-Muslim Relations in the Middle East and the West” organized by the Religious Studies Department in September 2007 was well received. Participants expressed their hope that the Conference could become annual, whereby a goal is set to produce research and perhaps even a Bethlehem University Peace Initiative, upon the suggestion of Dr. Sami Al-Deeb, Legal Advisor for Arab and Islamic Law, Swiss Institute of Comparative Law. Below are some of the many comments made by Bethlehem University faculty, Conference participants and audience members. They are inspiring and encouraging for all of us at Bethlehem University and for all of us affiliated with the international community of our friends and benefactors.

Fr. Vincent Hanssens, former general secretary of the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU), said that he hoped the conference would stimulate other universities to act more. “Bethlehem University is at the crossroads,” he said. “It offers an important and very real contextual aspect for Christian-Muslim dialogue to take place.” He



*Bethlehem University faculty stand with Conference presenters in Furno Hall*

particularly noted the importance of dialogue and Bethlehem University’s role in promoting it. “We gained the know-how and the knowledge to proceed. Bethlehem University must continue with initiatives such as these,” Fr. Hanssens said.

Christian Van Nispen, SJ, Professor of Philosophy



*Dr. Sami Al-Deeb (left) and Dr. Jean Kattan (center) listen to presenter Fr. Henri de La Hogue (right) at the International Religious Conference in Bethlehem University’s Furno Hall.*

and Islamic Studies at the Coptic Catholic Faculty of Human Sciences and Theology, said, “Meeting the other is always a challenge, as Fr. George Qanawati, O.P., from Cairo once said. We have a hope for the future. We must come to an objective and deep analysis of the fears and then decide how to overcome them.”

Dr. Eduardo Domingo, Associate Professor in the Theology and Religious Education Department at De La Salle University in the Philippines, spoke of Bethlehem University’s responsibility as an educational institution “...to clarify the challenges that exist

between people of different faiths and address them.” He also said that “because Bethlehem is a holy place, it has a unique position to act as initiator and mediator between all of us.” He particularly noted student participation in the Conference. “I loved having the students because I saw the sincerity of these young people. It gives us hope and the impetus to work for them and for the future.”

Fr. Henri de La Hogue, Vice Director of the Institut de Science et de Theologie des Religions (ISTR) at the Institut Catholique de Paris, said, “Here in the Holy Land the culture and history is the same. Because of this you have the opportunity to build a model for the whole world. Bethlehem University can show the world that dialogue is possible and fruitful.”

# FRIENDS & BENE

Bethlehem University has the challenging yet honorable responsibility to fully embrace, live out and share the true meaning of Christ's teachings with other Christians and with all people of good will in order to promote peace, tolerance and co-operation. The Department of Religious Studies is an important component of Bethlehem University and the future of the Religious Studies Department is the concern of everyone who believes in the power of Christ's teachings to bring people together. Without the support of the local and international community the Religious Studies Department at Bethlehem University simply would not exist. People and organizations, such as the Friends of Bethlehem University in the UK (FoBU-UK), the German Church through

Joachim Cardinal Meisner, is the President. You may visit their website at [www.erzbistum-koeh.del](http://www.erzbistum-koeh.del) for more information.

The **Friends of Bethlehem University** in the UK (FoBU-UK) is a Registered Charity, which exists to support the development of Bethlehem University and, in particular, to fund and support the Cardinal Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg Endowed Chair in Religious Studies.

FoBU was founded upon the initiative of its current Chairperson, Msgr. Vladimir J. Felzmann, KCHS, who, after hearing that his dear friend, Cardinal Basil Hume, OSB, OM, Archbishop of Westminster (1976-1999) was terminally ill, spoke to the current Vice-Chairperson

of FoBU, Mr. Robert Benson, KCSG, KGCHS, AFSC and Mr. Issa Khamis Tahhan about establishing an Endowed Chair in Religious Studies at Bethlehem University. Fortunately, some years before, a foundation had also been established in the memory of Cardinal de Furstenberg, who had been the Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre and also the Prefect of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches. Its principal aim was to promote an international conference on interreligious dialogue. With the establishment of FoBU-UK and the amalgamation of these two foundations, it became entirely feasible to set up the Cardinal Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg

Endowed Chair in Religious Studies.

Donations are needed and welcomed in order to secure the continued development of the Endowed Chair and to expand and enhance the development of the University. Donations from UK taxpayers are eligible for Gift Aid. If you are unsure whether your donation qualifies for Gift Aid (tax relief), or for more information, please contact:

Msgr. Vladimir Felzmann, KCHS  
Chairperson of FoBU, Director of All Saints Pastoral Centre  
London Colony, Hertfordshire AL2 1AF England

[vladimirf@compuserve.com](mailto:vladimirf@compuserve.com)



*Br. Daniel Casey, FSC (left), welcomes Mr. Robert Benson, KCSG, KGCHS, AFSC to Bethlehem University*

MISSIO, the German Association of the Holy Land, the German Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and many individual donors and parish organizations have given much to support the activities and programs of the Religious Studies Department. For this we are forever grateful. We hope we can improve and enhance these relationships for years to come.

The **Catholic Archdiocese of Cologne** has a long history of support for Bethlehem University, which continues to this day. The Archdiocese helps local churches in need according to its means and it places significant importance on supporting pastoral work around the world. It has a special relationship with the Middle East region and the Oriental Churches through the German Association of the Holy Land, of which the Archbishop of Cologne,

# FACTORS

The **German Association of the Holy Land** is a Catholic relief organization founded in the 19th century whose major aim is to support the Christian community in the Holy Land. The Association owns several institutions in the Jerusalem area and in the Galilee (a school, a home for the elderly, two convents and two pilgrim guest houses) and regularly supports several other institutions, including Bethlehem University.

The Association also offers social services and organizes pilgrimages to the Holy Land in an effort to maintain a strong connection between the faithful of Germany and the Holy Land. For more information visit their website at [www.heilig-land-verein.de](http://www.heilig-land-verein.de). For English, visit [www.dvhl.de/](http://www.dvhl.de/)

**Missio** is the Pontifical Mission Society of the Catholic Church within the Bavarian Bishops' Conference. Missio celebrates its 175th anniversary in 2008. Since its foundation by the physician Dr. Heinrich Hahn in 1832 Missio has become an esteemed partner of the World Church. The relief organization supports the establishment of local churches in more than 100 countries in Africa, Asia and Oceania, particularly in the formation of priests, nuns and catechists. Additionally, Missio finances the construction of the infrastructure of the Catholic Church for people to meet and share faith in more than 2,700 projects. Approximately 300,000 members belong to the international missionary movement. The fundamental tasks of Missio are qualified offers for formation and information for the issues of the World Church in Germany. Missio is a long-time supporter of Bethlehem University. In the Middle East like in the Holy Land Missio promotes dialogue and the meeting of different religions, the development of a Christian perspective of life and how to address the world situation from a theological point of view.

For more information, visit their website at [www.missio-muenchen.de/dcms/sites/missio/muenchen/en/index.html](http://www.missio-muenchen.de/dcms/sites/missio/muenchen/en/index.html)

Many friends and benefactors have supported Bethlehem University and the Department of Religious Studies in countless ways, providing our students with the means to study, financial assistance for programs and activities, and spiritual support. We express our heartfelt thanks to:

- ▶ *Aid to the Church in Need*
- ▶ *Anonymous Donors*
- ▶ *Archdiocese of Liverpool*
- ▶ *Archdiocese of New York*
- ▶ *Bethlehem 2000 Chile Foundation*
- ▶ *Br. John Johnston, FSC (RIP 2007)*
- ▶ *Bureau de Catechese*
- ▶ *Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA)*
- ▶ *Custody of the Holy Land*
- ▶ *Diocese of Albany, USA*
- ▶ *Diocese of Joliet, USA*
- ▶ *Diocese of Springfield, USA*
- ▶ *Friends of Bethlehem University in the UAE*
- ▶ *Grand Magisterium of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem*
- ▶ *Jesuit Fund for Development and Humanitarian Needs*
- ▶ *Latin Patriarchate*
- ▶ *Lieutenancies of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem: England and Wales, Germany, The Netherlands, Scotland, Switzerland, USA Eastern, USA Western, USA North Central, USA Southwest and USA Middle Atlantic*
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- ▶ *Palestinian Public Party (P.P.P. Youth)*
- ▶ *Provinzialat der Schulbrüder, Germany*
- ▶ *Reverend R. Adam Forno, KHS*
- ▶ *Saint Vincent de Paul Society, Jerusalem*
- ▶ *Saudi Committee*
- ▶ *Secretariat Solidarity*
- ▶ *Vatican and the Congregation for Oriental Churches*



# How you can help

**Dear Friends of Bethlehem University,**

We are in our 35<sup>th</sup> academic year and it is your support that makes it possible for us to continue moving forward with ...

- **A record high enrollment of 2,788 students**
- **A new Nursing Program being offered in Qubeibeh, Emmaus (near Ramallah)**
- **The first graduation for the Master's Degree in International Cooperation and Development**
- **A new master's degree approved for Molecular Biotechnology**
- **New Professional Post-Graduate Diplomas in Public Administration and in Small Business Enterprises.**

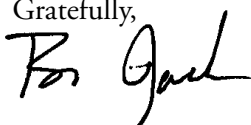
It is your support that makes possible all that we do – and we are deeply grateful! In addition to the tuition that students and their families are able to contribute, Bethlehem University is supported by contributions from individuals, foundations, corporations and governments. As illustrated throughout this publication, your donations strengthen the University and its educational and professional development services to the Palestinian people. Your contributions allow us to continue this most vital and significant ministry in the Holy Land.

Along with you, our students and faculty are people of hope! We believe that brighter days are ahead – and that education is the way forward for peace and justice in this Holy Land. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Thank you for your prayers and your visit. You make miracles happen each and every day here in the Holy Land!

God Bless You!

Gratefully,



Brother Jack Curran, FSC, PhD  
Vice President for Development



# Students & Faculty

## Prayer

The Holy Land and its people are in need. The God of all peoples is faithful. Prayers are needed for the people of the Holy Land, for the people of the world community who work for peace with justice, and for people in leadership positions around the globe. May violence, oppression, occupation, and injustice come to an end for all. God has showed us what is good and what is required: “To act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)

## Annual Gifts

The activities described in this magazine and more are possible through the generous financial support of many individuals and organizations. If you are able to keep hope alive in the Holy Land by providing financial support, here is how your financial gifts help.

- \$176 supports one student to work 6 hours per week to help pay his/her tuition.
- \$360 supports one student for one course for one semester.
- \$600 supports a partial scholarship for one of the 22 students with disabilities.
- \$1,000 provides a computer for a faculty office or student laboratory.
- \$3,600 supports the educational costs of a student for a year.
- \$5,000 provides audio-visual equipment for teachers in a classroom.
- \$10,000 provides support for on-line electronic journals
- \$22,500 provides 25 computers to upgrade a classroom laboratory
- \$45,000 provides books and print journals for the University library for a year.

## Permanent Endowment Gifts – The Gifts that Keep On Giving!

Endowment gifts provide permanent support for various activities at the University and can be made cumulatively over time, by one person or a group of people, providing donors with a superb opportunity to offer a gift in honor or in memory of someone in perpetuity. Listed below are some permanent endowment opportunities that will support and advance the mission and ministry of a particular aspect of the University. How does it work? The University invests endowment gifts so that the gift corpus remains permanently intact and each year a portion of the earned interest is used to support the University program. In this way, a donor provides permanent support to the University's programs.

- **Cardinal Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg Endowed Chair in Religious Studies**  
A one million dollar endowment has been reached. Our new goal is \$500,000 more. The Friends of Bethlehem University in the UK (FoBU) have thus far raised \$1,000,000 to establish the Cardinal Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg Endowed Chair in Religious Studies. Investment proceeds from this Endowed Chair partially support the Chairperson of the Department and also student activities related to the Department. Additional contributions to strengthen the Cardinal Hume and Cardinal de Furstenberg Endowed Chair are greatly appreciated and allow us to expand this most vital and significant work of Bethlehem University in the Holy Land.
- **The Faculty and Staff Professional Development Endowment** has reached over \$350,000... \$750,000 more to go! This endowed fund provides support for faculty and staff members to enhance their knowledge and skills in their service of the students and all people of the Holy Land. Additional contributions to strengthen this endowment are greatly appreciated and will enable the University to expand its professional development efforts.
- More than 20 students are supported each year as recipients of endowed scholarships. **An Endowed Student Scholarship** in honor or in memory of someone may be established with a gift of \$25,000 (gifts totaling \$75,000 cover the full-cost of education) to support the education of a student each and every year into the future.
- **The University seeks to establish a \$1 million Library Resource Endowment** to perpetually support and enhance the library collection of books, journals, audio-visual materials, video-conferencing facilities and other library resources.
- **The University seeks to establish a \$750,000 Student Retreat and Spiritual Development Endowment** to perpetually support student retreats and spiritual development activities at the University.

# Thank You!



*It is your support that makes possible all that we do  
and we are deeply grateful!*

In addition to the tuition that students and their families are able to contribute, Bethlehem University is supported by contributions from individuals, foundations, corporations and governments. As illustrated throughout this publication, your donations strengthen the University and its educational and professional development services to the Palestinian people. Your contributions are greatly appreciated and allow us to continue this most vital and significant work in the Holy Land.

Gifts from the **local and international** community can be made through the Development Office in Bethlehem. Checks made payable to Bethlehem University may be mailed to:

Brother Jack Curran, FSC, PhD  
Vice President for Development  
PO Box 11407  
92248 Jerusalem

jcurran@bethlehem.edu  
Tel: +972 2 2741241  
Fax: +972 2 2744440  
www.bethlehem.edu

In the **United States**, Bethlehem University is a tax deductible non-profit, eligible for employer matching grants (Tax ID 22-2997011). Checks payable to "Bethlehem University" can be mailed to:

Brother Jerome Sullivan, FSC  
US Development Office  
PO Box 692  
Lincroft, NJ 07738-0692  
jerbethlehem@yahoo.com  
Phone: 908-219-9715  
Fax: 732-219-1619

In **Canada**, gifts eligible for Canadian tax credit to support Bethlehem University made payable to "CNEWA CANADA" with a letter indicating that the gift is to support Bethlehem University can be mailed to:

Mr. Carl Hetu  
National Secretary  
CNEWA Canada  
1247 Kilborn Place  
Ottawa, Ontario K1H 6K9  
chetu@cnewa.org  
Tel: 866-322-4441 (toll free)  
Fax: (613) 738-7666

In the **UK**, the Friends of Bethlehem University (FoBU) is a registered charity (# 1077818). Donations are eligible for Gift Aid. Checks can be made payable to "Friends of Bethlehem University" and sent to:

Msgr. Vladimir Felzman  
All Saints Pastoral Centre  
London Colney, Hertfordshire  
AL2 1AF England  
Vladimirf@compuserve.com  
Fax: +44-1727-822880

In **Ireland**, Friends of Bethlehem University in Ireland (FBU-I) is an approved Charity (CHY6868) and is authorized for tax rebates (1315). Gifts can be sent to:

Rev. Raymond Staunton  
Marist Community Residence  
Chanel College  
Coolock, Dublin 5, Ireland  
rays@iol.ie

In the **United Arab Emirates**, gifts can be made through the Friends of Bethlehem University in the UAE:

Mr. Anton Kattan  
PO Box 7674  
Abu Dhabi, UAE  
askanton@emirates.net.ae  
Phone: +971-2-634-3969  
Fax: +971-2-632-5188

In **Switzerland**, gifts can be made through the Association Universite de Bethlehem (ABU) by contacting:

Klaus Rollin  
Wassergraben 4  
Postfach 397  
CH 6210 Sursee  
abu.sekretariat@klausroellin.ch  
Tel. 0041-41-920 45 37  
Mobil 0041-79-301 78 18  
Fax 0041-41-920 45 48

# Cardinals Encouraged by Faculty & Students

Peace, freedom and security for all!

“Let us pray for this University, for the Christian Brothers and for its students and teachers, who are working together to keep up hope in the midst of the difficulties that the Israeli occupation imposes on the people of this area. We ask for peace, freedom and security for all,” Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of Congregation for Oriental Churches, prayed as he knelt before the Tabernacle at Bethlehem University’s Chapel of the Divine Child during his visit in February 2008. The Vatican, through the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and the De La Salle Christian Brothers are the co-founders of Bethlehem University, the only Catholic university in the Holy Land and the first university established in the West Bank.



*Sister Ibtisam Habib Kalkawan (BU '08), left, Brother Robert Smith, acting Vice Chancellor and Vice President for Academic Affairs, second from left, and Brother Joseph Loewenstein, Director of Special Projects, right, welcome Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches, on his visit to the Holy Land in February 2008.*

Students are our hope for a better future!

“I’m delighted to hear that people belonging to different religions and denominations live together so well on a grassroots level here in Bethlehem. Many things that are going on in this region are a shame. We have to overcome these. What I have seen here at Bethlehem University gives me great hope. Your students are the hope for our better future,” Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, commented during his visit in November 2007, when Br. Daniel Casey, Vice Chancellor, presented the Bethlehem University Medal of Honor.



Without the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher, it simply would not be possible to continue our work!

“I would like to thank you in the name of the University’s students, faculty and staff. Without the tremendous moral and financial support Bethlehem University receives from the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher, it simply would not be possible to continue our work,” Brother Robert, acting Vice Chancellor and Vice President for Academic Affairs, said as he presented the Bethlehem University Medal of Honor to Cardinal John Patrick Foley, Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem (EOHSJ) during his visit in January 2008.



To arrange for your visit  
to Bethlehem University

[info@bethlehem.edu](mailto:info@bethlehem.edu)  
[www.bethlehem.edu](http://www.bethlehem.edu)