



# Holy Family Hospital



An Institution of the Order of Malta

*“Where there is always a place in the inn for all”*

By Dr. Jacques Keutgen  
General Manager

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 9, ISSUE 9 SEPTEMBER 2008

### Contact us:

HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL  
322-326 Paul VI Street  
P. O. Box 8 – Bethlehem  
Palestinian Authority

Tel: +970 2 274 1151  
Fax: +970 2 2741154

E-Mail:  
[info@holyfamilyhospital-bethlehem.org](mailto:info@holyfamilyhospital-bethlehem.org)

Website:  
[www.holyfamilyhospital-bethlehem.org](http://www.holyfamilyhospital-bethlehem.org)

## Private Afternoon Clinics

A total of 670 patients with prenatal care appointments scheduled in July and August for the hospital’s private afternoon clinics that serves pregnant mothers. The hospital witnessed an increase of 82.7% during the last two months compared to the previous months due to the qualified consultants who were able to operate the private afternoon clinics in the outpatient department of the hospital. It’s worth to mention, that the hospital managed to provide women in Bethlehem district with this service 7 days a week.

## A mission to Gaza

Dr. Jacques Keutgen, General Manager of HFH, was a member of the mission team that was sent to Al-Shifaa Hospital in Gaza within the Belgian-Palestinian Health Care Project and the Belgian Technical Corporation. The purpose of the mission was to evaluate the quality of maternity and childbirth care for mothers and newborns in one of the largest hospitals in the Palestinian Territories. Part of the problems of the neonatology department in this hospital were due to a complete lack of qualified personnel. As means of increasing efficiency, the BTC will cover the expenses of six people from the nursing team of Al-Shifaa Hospital to obtain 2 years postgraduate diploma in Neonatology at Bethlehem University. In addition, a development plan is set ahead to be implemented in the near future to help the hospital function professionally.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Hospital’s News	1
Editorial	2
Activity Report	4

Graphic design  
Mrs. Juliana Saca Hodali

TO MAKE A DONATION:  
BANK ACCOUNT:  
HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL  
ACCOUNT No : 9050-701600-0-510  
WITH:

ARAB BANK PLC– BETHLEHEM BRANCH  
INTERMEDIATE BANK: CREDIT SUISSE, ZURICH

SWIFT CODE: ARABPS22050  
SWIFT CODE: CRESCHZZ80A

# EDITORIAL



**Dr. Jacques Keutgen**  
General Manager

*" Now let's  
continue to  
move forward  
with  
your solidarity  
and support "*

Five years ago to the day I came to Bethlehem in order to accept with enthusiasm, self confidence and modesty the challenges of leading Holy Family Hospital as director general. It has not been easy; challenges were numerous especially at that time due to the extremely tense political situation and the difficulties for pregnant women to reach the hospital. The consequences were a very high mortality rate of newborns.

Although I don't have the authority to give an opinion about the political situation in the Holy Land, we are merely making a statement that hospital's activities are dependant of the political and economical conditions of its environment. Meanwhile these last five years we have witnessed numerous local and international peace initiatives, unfortunately all these attempts have failed plunging people more and more in despair, distress and desolation. The building of the wall and further fratricidal confrontations have cropped up, putting a peaceful solution in a remote future. In spite of this overwhelming situation, since beginning of this year there has been a glimmer of hope for a better economic future for the area of Bethlehem. Tourists and pilgrims are coming back, boosting employment and the economic situation; with slightly less movement restrictions for the people, these are the only two small improvements in the daily lives of people living in Bethlehem. Unfortunately we don't have any influence on the belligerents in reaching a peace agreement, so we have further to assist helpless, but with our prayers for peace, to the worsening of the situation. In spite of

all disastrous news we reject a catastrophic scenario and are willing to fight for peace. Let us say with the late Mahmud Darwish: "I refuse the mind of defeat and strongly believe that with hope life, history, justice do still make a sense. I choose to be sick with hope".

Concerning Holy Family Hospital, I think we have done a lot of good work on the global vision on the multiple problems which we have had to face in this hospital since 2003. Achieving high medical and human standards, allowing access to the hospital for everybody especially the poor and certainly the premature babies, was and is still the most important challenge that we took upon on ourselves for the last five years. The hospital has changed a lot not only in its structure with the building and extension of the new gynaecology/Obstetrics and neonatology departments but also in its goals as we have become a teaching and referral hospital for Gynaecology/Obstetrics and neonatology for the South of the West Bank, recognized by the Palestinian Medical Council, by the Royal College of London, by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and by the European Board and College of Gynaecology.

Consequently the employment policy of this hospital has also changed in the last years according to the higher requirements of specialized doctors, nurses and midwives needed.

We were able to afford to do so thanks on one hand to an important amount of scholarships from USAID for specialized long term training of

five doctors in European countries and on the other hand thanks first to the Irish Association of the Order of Malta in cooperation with the Irish government and secondly to the Belgian government in getting financial support to organize a direct entry midwifery course and postgraduate courses in midwifery and neonatology at Bethlehem University. We have also to mention the success and the positive impact of the visiting professor program implemented by Prof. Bonnar, Prof. Foidart and his team, Prof. Queanen, Prof. Rigo, Dr Mostafa Mokhtari as well as by Kathryn McQuillan, Cabrini Flynn, Maeve Dwyer and her team.

We have worked hard and made a huge effort to introduce modern concepts of primary health care in the Bethlehem district especially in rural areas with our mobile clinics ("Well woman health clinic"). We are sure that these efforts have made a substantial positive contribution in decreasing drastically the maternal and infant mortality in the district of Bethlehem.

Concerning the anesthesiology department, local anesthesia are now routinely done to everybody's satisfaction, having a positive medical impact on the newborns especially in preterm deliveries. Humanly speaking, it is psychologically important for a birthing mother to be aware of the first "life cry" of her baby and to hold him/her in her arms immediately after birth.

The successful outcome of these different challenges has increased the numbers of deliveries at Holy Family Hospital by nearly 100% and concomitant the number of admitted in-born and outborn babies in our NICU as well as consequently increasing the number of hospital employees and unfortunately the needed budget to cover these new expenses.

Nevertheless instead of practicing an "every man for himself" policy we are still waiting for a coherent Palestinian health policy in which our hospital could be integrated and could play a role. The Palestinian Authority owes its citizens also to install an insurance system for each Palestinian living in this country.

There are a lot of other issues like a cooperation agreement with Caritas Baby Hospital, the building of our oxygen producer factory, the building of an incinerator for hospital waste or getting back the Palestinian ID card for the family of our neonatologist which have been solved in these past years. Each day brings its challenges, often unsuspected; this is life here in Palestine in 2008.

I would like to thank all the people who have helped me to take up these challenges: first of all my family, the Sisters of Charity, the hospital employees and the visiting professors whose devotion to our institution is unlimited and highly appreciated by the Board of Trustees. Secondly the different governmental and nongovernmental organizations, USAID, the Belgian Government as well as most of the consulates in Jerusalem, especially the General Consulate of France, which always attentively and according to its possibilities has helped us efficiently. Last but not least, I thank the Benedictine Community of Abu Gosh whose warm welcome helped to give me strength in difficult times.

Now let's continue to move forward with your solidarity and support.



# ACTIVITY REPORT

## Monthly Deliveries

The number of monthly deliveries since 1990 is as follows:

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
JAN	0	93	128	143	146	148	181	205	217	162	250	158	180	159	238	224	240	230	248
FEB	4	69	97	150	157	130	183	180	192	165	239	155	152	165	220	221	218	228	217
MAR	46	93	133	184	149	168	164	220	194	217	231	160	142	179	224	231	217	313	259
APR	68	87	116	181	135	180	180	207	185	213	274	146	82	195	222	240	216	322	270
MAY	85	92	124	170	153	188	224	233	221	246	288	195	129	214	196	238	237	366	340
JUN	85	106	145	177	145	202	212	222	227	276	294	156	132	239	252	258	219	277	291
JUL	84	101	151	165	172	188	209	261	234	302	329	148	136	249	232	235	243	276	294
AUG	71	90	151	173	163	199	226	219	244	299	309	161	122	227	246	235	256	264	279
SEP	109	103	154	171	172	167	192	241	199	276	275	146	143	220	224	234	280	233	
OCT	116	109	154	166	172	193	198	255	211	273	223	134	138	240	243	257	295	255	
NOV	97	87	150	146	149	203	196	205	161	282	165	145	121	191	221	213	257	224	
DEC	104	105	153	127	163	198	194	240	180	266	175	135	140	203	227	207	268	238	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>1135</b>	<b>1656</b>	<b>1953</b>	<b>1876</b>	<b>2164</b>	<b>2359</b>	<b>2688</b>	<b>2465</b>	<b>2977</b>	<b>3052</b>	<b>1839</b>	<b>1617</b>	<b>2481</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2793</b>	<b>2946</b>	<b>3226</b>	<b>2198</b>
<b>TOTAL DELIVEREIS SINCE 1990</b>																		<b>43 039</b>	

**August Deliveries 1990-2008**

