



In support of the Custody of the Holy Land

# Annual Report 2015

*Prospects and Priorities  
for 2016-2017*

This report has been produced with guidance of Dr. Piera Benaglio from ALTIS (the Postgraduate School Business & Society of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan).

The report has been written with reference, where compatible, to the guidelines on drafting Annual Reports for non-profit organizations.

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This report is available on the website  
**[www.proterrasancta.org](http://www.proterrasancta.org)**

and a copy can be requested by emailing  
**[info@proterrasancta.org](mailto:info@proterrasancta.org)**

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Archive of the Custody of the Holy Land

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Custody of the Holy Land - [www.custodia.org](http://www.custodia.org)  
Israel Ministry of Tourism - [www.cbs.gov.il](http://www.cbs.gov.il)  
Franciscan Pilgrim Office, Jerusalem - [www.cicts.org](http://www.cicts.org)  
Palestine Ministry of Tourism - [www.pcbs.gov.ps](http://www.pcbs.gov.ps)  
Latin Patriarchate, Jerusalem - [www.lpj.org](http://www.lpj.org)  
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## How to help

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- **CREDIT CARD / PAYPAL:**

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- **MAKE A LEGACY FOR THE HOLY LAND**

support the Holy Land for ever.

Contact us to receive the Legacies guide at:

**[lasciti@proterrasancta.org](mailto:lasciti@proterrasancta.org)** or call: **+39 02.65.72.453**





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# Annual Report 2015

*Prospects and Priorities  
for 2016-2017*

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*Dearest brothers and sisters,*

*for us the “Holy Land” consists not only of Israel and Palestine, but also Syria and the entire Middle East, including parts of Iraq. The challenges of this context – as you are well aware – are enormous, and when the storm ceases, it will be very difficult to rebuild mutual trust among the different communities.*

*This is the challenge throughout the Holy Land, a challenge that has already started. We Christians will remain small in number, but we will remain here, we are not going to leave. Our presence will be saved by the little ones, by those who with courage take every challenge and freely love their brothers, risking their own lives at times; being Christians to the end. The images that reach us are overwhelming and leave us dismayed; it is legitimate to ask ourselves what we could or should do. We are obliged to become actively involved in ending this tragedy, which affects all of us.*

*But our action must be accompanied by a deep and serene conviction that for it to bear fruit, it must be united to the action of Christ. “Each act of solidarity and union with other humans continues Jesus’ solidarity with all humanity, but were this to end, it would be evidence of the supreme failure since it is precisely this solidarity that is consumed and becomes perfect in the death of the Cross. The death of the Cross is the way to resurrection and the resurrection is no longer the solidarity of Jesus with men, but the union of men with the risen Jesus. Each act of solidarity with men, each union with them is the means and the necessary way to the union of men with God; if it does not lead to this it is vain, it does not save, it only makes us participants in pain, in poverty, of death; it does not give us life.” We are in need of everything in the Middle East: financial, military and political aid, mediation, and support. But above all we need to still believe that it is possible to love one another. The testimonies tell us that, despite everything, thanks to the little ones this force is still alive. Thanks also to your help, and with the simplicity of the little ones you have given us the strength – and the concrete possibility – to remain here, in the name of and for the entire universal Church.*

Fr. Pierbattista Pizzaballa

Custos of the Holy Land  
and President of Association pro Terra Sancta

*Dear Friends,*

*The annual report that we have the pleasure to present you is simply the story of our daily work in the Holy Land, carried out to promote our projects to preserve the Holy Places that have been cherished for centuries by all peoples, and to support people and communities in need.*

*The projects and activities documented in this report are supported by institutions and friends from all over the world.*

*Many of us continue to look with passion to the Holy Land and its places, as has been the case from the time of Jesus until today. So many of us wish to safeguard this land, preserving the precious stones of memory and encouraging the living stones – Christians and non-Christians – to remain there despite the enormous difficulties. All of us, collaborators, volunteers and supporters, wish to continue to live in the Holy Land. Donating time and money is another, and very special, way of responding to our need. Thank you for your help, advice and above all for the friendship you have shown in different ways. Thanks to all those who have come to visit us in order to pause, touch and pray at the Holy Places for our peace and that of the world. Our work – and we are well aware of this – is but a drop in the bucket, but it is important. I would like to mention in particular the concrete aid sent to the communities in Syria, to the refugees in Lebanon and Jordan, along with the numerous people involved in the preservation and development projects, and those assisting with education and care for the neediest.*

*Despite the social situation, that is very complex and full of injustices, I recall with gratitude the testimonies and moments of encounter shared with Christian friends of many different denominations, as well as Jews and Muslims.*

*When reading these pages, you will notice the importance of the things that have been carried out together. We hope that you will wish to know more, returning or coming to visit us for the first time, to become even more involved with us and with our reality.*



Tommaso Saltini  
Director General  
Association pro Terra Sancta



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A photograph of a church interior. A bright beam of light streams through an archway on the left, illuminating a large mosaic on the wall. The mosaic depicts a religious scene with several figures. The architecture features multiple arches and a decorative frieze with circular medallions. The overall atmosphere is dramatic and spiritual.

# About Us

*“Full of splendor and majesty is His work”*

(Psalm 110,3)



In support of the Custody of the Holy Land

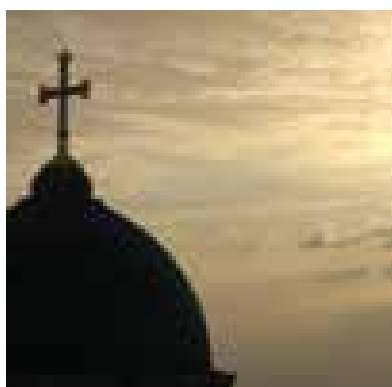
## Association pro Terra Sancta

is the non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO) *servicing the Custody of the Holy Land*, present wherever there are Franciscan friars in the Middle East.

The projects of Association pro Terra Sancta are aimed at providing support and training for the Christian communities, preserving and enhancing the Holy Places, and carrying humanitarian aid to those in need in the Holy Land.

The activities of Association pro Terra Sancta are based on the method of encounter with the other, regardless of religious affiliation, social condition and ethnic origin. The Holy Places are the origin of our faith and our culture; this is why we wish to offer everyone the opportunity to cooperate with us to safeguard them, keeping the Christian memory in the Holy Land alive.

To help means *to cherish, to love, to remember and to live* a lasting bond with the Holy Land.



### Mission

PRESERVE THE  
**HOLY  
PLACES**



SUPPORT THE  
**CHRISTIAN  
COMMUNITIES**  
IN THE MIDDLE EAST





**CUSTODIA  
TERRÆ  
SANCTÆ**

## Custody of the Holy Land

is the name by which the Franciscans of the Order of Friars Minor are known today. They have been present in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean since the earliest days of the Order, which was founded by St. Francis in 1209.

### *In the wake of History, between preservation and charity*

*Safeguarding the Holy Places is a special form of Franciscan preaching integrated into the particular cultural environment of the territories “beyond the sea”. In past ages this task entrusted to the Franciscans by the universal Church brought with it - in some cases - martyrdom. Today the mission is carried out daily in a discreet manner through liturgy, prayer, interfaith dialogue and support to the Christian community.*

*The Franciscan friars are witnesses and heralds of the message brought by Jesus starting right from the Holy Land. The result of this message is not only the mass of pilgrims who arrive to the Holy Places, but above all the Christian communities that have resided there for 2,000 years, increasingly scarce and fragile, with the knowledge of their history and roots. The friars are in addition a point of cultural contact and mediation between the different Jewish and Muslim communities.*

*For centuries the friars have striven to provide education, work and, when possible, spiritual assistance. Since the 15th century, in the vicinity of the monasteries, there have been schools, workshops, pharmacies and clinics. A particular attention has been given, with extraordinary results, to the training of artisans working with wood and mother of pearl, activities which have unfortunately suffered a slow decline, especially during the 20th century, and are today recovering as a result of training and development projects.*

*We should note with particular attention all the efforts carried out in the past and present (today the humanitarian disaster in Syria), the unceasing caring for the bodies during the public health emergencies. Providing charity can be at the cost of one's life. Bearing witness to this are the numerous friars who died from the pest or other contagions while providing assistance to residents, known for this reason as “martyrs of charity”.*

*This activity has also led - among other things - to important developments in the field of medicine and hygiene. In the 17th and 19th centuries the Franciscan friars of the Custody founded various workshops and initiated remarkable entrepreneurial activities. Among the various workshops founded to meet the needs of caring for the Holy Places and the resident communities, and also to provide work and specialized technical training. Special mention should be made of the printing shop, due to the important role it played in spreading information about the Holy Land throughout the world and for the specialist publications of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. And yet it is neither the first one nor the most profitable. The workshops produce everything necessary for the daily life of the monastery, for both maintenance and restoration. At the end of the 19th century in St. Saviour Monastery there were workshops for kitchen activities, carpentry, organ building, tailoring and iron-working, along with stonemasons, cobblers and millers.*

*The projects promoted and implemented by Association pro Terra Sancta represent a continuation of this centuries-old tradition and serve the Franciscan charisma in its three historic missions: safeguarding the Holy Places, welcoming pilgrims, and caring for the local communities, by supporting their cultural and economic development.*



## Live in the Holy Land for ever

Giving away one's money to the poor is an act at the very roots of human life, because it is accepting the way of life of Christ, who "for your sake became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor 8:9). The apostle Paul presents contributions for the poor as a grace, a sharing, a love in which the generosity and grace of the Lord can be seen in action (Rom 15:25-27). The strong bond between God and the Holy City was expressed on several occasions in the Old Testament. The earthly Jerusalem, mother of all peoples, has always been linked to the heavenly Jerusalem. The Patriarch Jacob in fact saw a stairway connecting the two cities and "the angels of God were ascending and descending on it" (Gen 28:12). Affirming that "God will not enter the heavenly Jerusalem before entering the earthly Jerusalem" (Talmud, Taanit 5a), the tradition recognizes that everything in the Holy City has its counterpart in the celestial Jerusalem.



# Areas of activities and priorities

# Preservation and development

## Caring for the Holy Places and development of the local communities

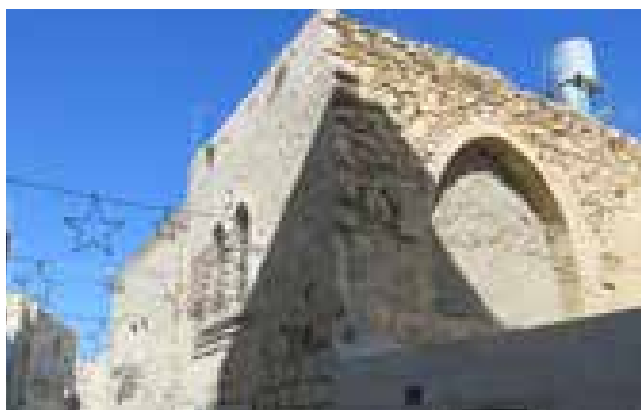
In 1342 Pope Clement VI proclaimed the bull that officially established the birth of the Custody of the Holy Land. Since then, the preservation of the Holy Places has remained the principal task of the Franciscan friars who live in these lands.

Over the centuries these places have become a cultural heritage and an essential resource for the entire region and the local communities, increasingly called upon as a source for rediscovering human growth and development opportunities.

*Association pro Terra Sancta, in contributing to preserving the Places, is committed to raising awareness of their value to all local communities, including the Jewish and Muslim ones.* In addition, the activities of restoration and enhancement provide opportunities to train laborers and skilled craftsmen, occupying young people (encouraging the involvement of women and people with disabilities) and generating sources of income by facilitating social-entrepreneurial initiatives linked to sustainable tourism and new forms of hospitality. The restoration and enhancement of cultural heritage also facilitate and generate continual opportunities for meeting and coexistence among all the peoples who live in, and converge upon, this Land chosen and beloved by God.

“...[You] humbly asked us to intervene with our Apostolic Authority towards providing for the needs of these same Holy Places by sending devoted friars...”

Pope Clement VI



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# Priorities

## Bethlehem and Jerusalem

The “Our home” fund: to save the Christian identity and the Places of the origins

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We suggest to groups, communities, and families to contribute to the fund in order *to restore abandoned residences in the historical centers of Bethlehem and Jerusalem*, in close proximity to the Church of the Nativity and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. With the collected funds we will recover and register the properties to the Custody of the Holy Land and restore them so that they can be provided to families in difficulty, while others will be used for hospitality and for workshops producing local foods and handicrafts. A particular aim is to contribute to the improvement of the economic and cultural conditions of the population, by providing employment opportunities to local people through their direct involvement in the restoration works of the chosen places and in the management of the social-entrepreneurial activities. In addition, supporters will be able to enjoy - making advance reservations each year - the restored properties and benefit from the hospitality services. In this manner they will have the opportunity to stay at the Holy Places and enter into contact with the local communities that are being supported. The ancient centers of Bethlehem and Jerusalem will thus gradually be able to be reborn and save their Christian identity.

## Bethany

Town of Lazarus, Martha and Mary

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The project aims to redevelop the site of Bethany, whose historical-religious fame is due, according to tradition, to the various visits of Jesus in the house of his friends Lazarus, Martha and Mary, and to the miracle of Lazarus’ own resurrection. Through the different activities we intend *to improve the living conditions of the population*, promoting the employment of young men and women in the context of enhancing the cultural and archaeological heritage, in addition to encouraging tourism.


## Sabastiya - Nisf Jubeil

Tourism and local hospitality

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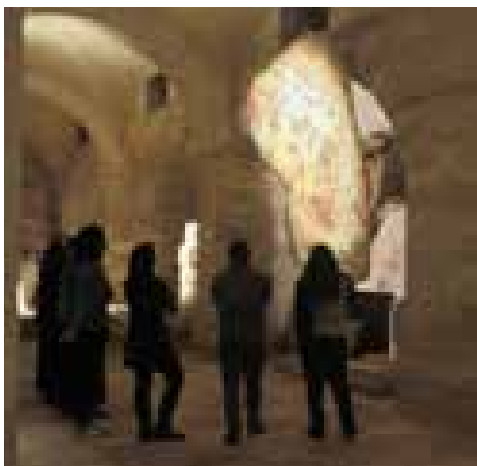
Located in the northern part of Samaria, Sebaste (Sabastiya in Arabic), an ancient settlement, was rebuilt by Herod the Great in the 1st century BC. Above the acropolis the remains of the Roman city can still be seen today. During the Byzantine period a church was built in memory of the burial of John the Baptist. The current building was rebuilt by the Crusaders in the second half of the 12th century and was second in size only to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The project of the Association aims *to develop and enhance the cultural heritage* through the involvement of young people, women and people with disabilities in the creation of a sustainable local economy that *will improve the economic conditions of families*. The project will concentrate on the special features of the place – its biodiversity, its abundant cultivation of fruits and olives, and its extraordinary historical and archaeological riches – and in enhancing the artistic qualities to be used for creating handicraft products (production of mosaics and ceramics), encouraging the many qualities of the local population, notably its hospitality to tourists.

## Terra Sancta Museum

 Il Terra Sancta Museum,  
the first museum on the origin of Christianity

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A permanent exhibition of archaeological finds and works of extraordinary historical and artistic importance (preserved by the Franciscan friars during nearly eight centuries) to inform the entire world about the Christian presence in the Holy Land and support the development of the local communities, encouraging opportunities for encounters between different cultures and religions.



# Education and support

## Support to social works for the education of the weakest

For the Franciscan friars in the Holy Land, assisting the poor and the needy has always been of paramount importance, but it is not enough. As a matter of fact – even according to the Church’s teachings – it is also important to improve the efforts for human development. It is not enough to feed, you need to teach people to earn their own living. Education and training of the new generations is fundamental, if there is to be any future hope of peace.

*In recent years the Association pro Terra Sancta has developed a number of projects, directly and in collaboration with local associates, to assist the weakest and to train a new generation of young people. We are supporting children with disabilities, the elderly and many poor families, with a special focus on women.*

“In imitation of our Master, we Christians are called to confront the poverty of our brothers and sisters, to touch it, to make it our own and to take practical steps to alleviate it”

Pope Francis





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# Priorities

## Charitable works

Services in hospitals, schools and in other facilities

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Creating charitable works is a fundamental characteristic of the Christian presence in the Holy Land. Hospitals, schools and various social welfare structures have been created by the religious over the course of the centuries to support those who live in the vicinity of the Places sanctified by the passage of Christ.

*The Association pro Terra Sancta supports serving the neediest through numerous charitable works guided by the Christian religious in the Middle East, linked above all to the presence of the friars of the Custody; these works open to all the many and varied local communities.*

## United through music

Education to beauty and to open dialogue with everyone

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In the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem is the *'Magnificat' Institute*, a unique kind of music school promoting the study of music, and serving above all as a place of dialogue and education for peaceful coexistence where Muslim, Christian and Jewish youths can study together, sharing their mutual passion for music. Since 2014 the Association has also contributed to carrying out the *Terra Sancta Organ Festival*, a cultural and musical activity that allows everyone to enjoy the beauty of the Custody's heritage of organ pipes, which otherwise would be reserved only for the Christians of the Latin rite during liturgical services.

*The Association pro Terra Sancta is committed to supporting various activities related to music, offering a real possibility of meeting between people.*

## Schools, studying and libraries

Scholarships, after-school activities and cataloguing

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The Franciscan friars have always given particular importance to educational and training activities; beginning in the 16th century they gave life to a long tradition of academic training for youth, which today finds expression in numerous schools, called *Terra Sancta College*, found in the different countries of the Middle East.

*The Association pro Terra Sancta intervenes in support of the poorest pupils, allowing them to attend school by providing scholarships and encouraging after-school activities to engage children in a healthy and constructive way, in a number of cases keeping them off the streets.* The Association also promotes cultural activities such as the cataloguing of ancient and modern books in order to enhance the great cultural heritage and make it available for both the local and the international community.



# Emergencies in the Middle East

## Alongside the war-affected communities

Despite the heartfelt appeals of the Pope, the humanitarian emergencies in the Middle East remain the order of the day: wars that manifest the greatest atrocities just a few steps away from the places sanctified by Jesus. For this reason the friars have given their all in remaining alongside those affected by the violence that offers no respite in the Holy Land.

*The Association pro Terra Sancta is alongside the Franciscans to coordinate the collection and use of funds.*

“The greatest challenge that faces us is that of overcoming indifference in order to build together peace in the land that God has favored and chosen to show to everyone the face of his mercy.”

Pope Francis



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# Priorities

## + Lebanon, Jordan, Rhodes and Kos

### Welcoming refugees

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In Lebanon and in Jordan the friars are hosting and attending to many refugees who have fled from Iraq and Syria, while on the Greek islands of Rhodes and Kos the Franciscan friars - in collaboration with the Greek Caritas - are welcoming those who manage to reach the islands' shores.

## + Gaza

### Help for the small Christian community

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In Gaza, through which the Holy Family passed on its flight to Egypt, lives the smallest Christian community in the Holy Land. Gaza is a small strip of land that lives under a continuous emergency. In Gaza City, Association pro Terra Sancta is supporting the charitable activities of the parish and of the religious communities with a project in favor of children from 0 to 11 years of age and adolescents with various forms of disability.

## + Syria

### Emergency centers

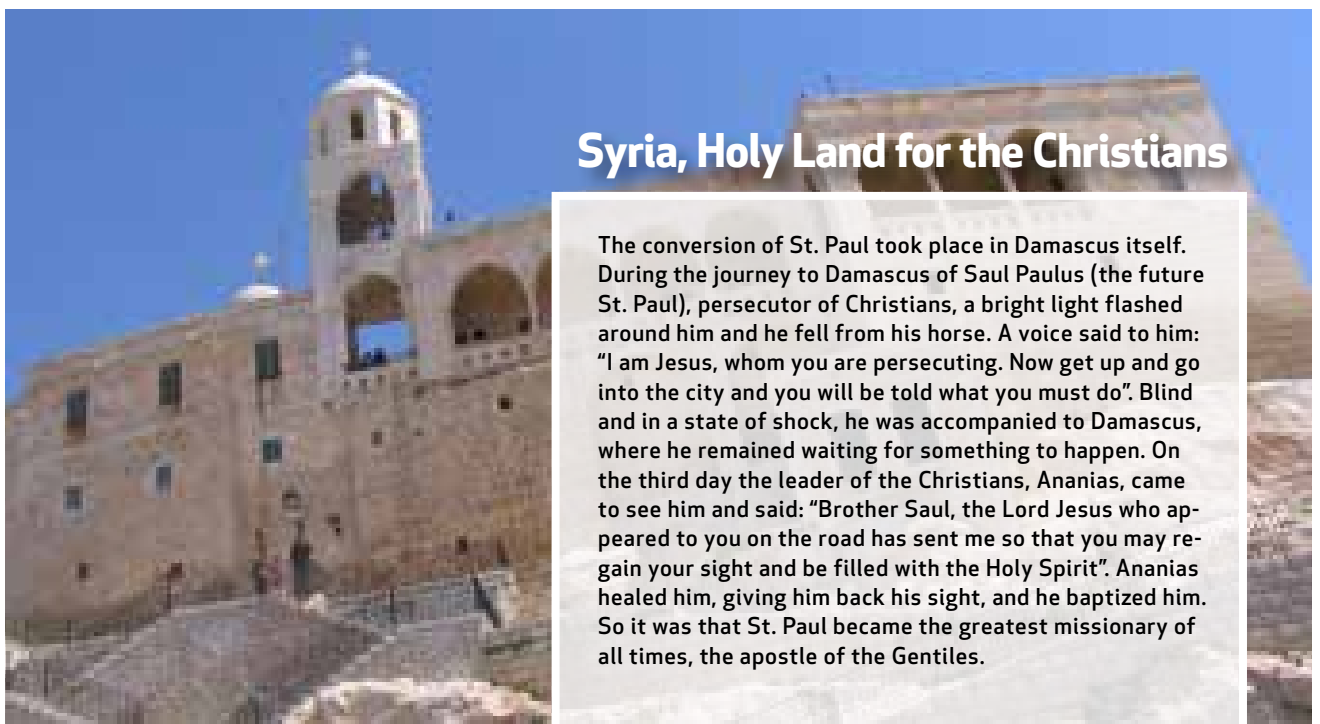
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We are present in Syria in *Damascus, Aleppo, Latakia* (a city on the coast) and several villages in the North in the Orontes Valley (*Knayeh, Yacoubieh*). Since the beginning of the war we have activated 4 emergency centers that provide basic needs (food, clothing, medicine), aiding the population without regard to race, religious affiliation or nationality, with a particular focus on children and women.

### Support for the *Hope Hospital*

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We continue to support *the Hope Hospital (in Arabic Al-Rajaa) in Aleppo*, owned by the Custody of the Holy Land and managed by Syrian medical personnel. It has remained one of the few hospitals in Aleppo and in the entire north of the country that is able to carry out specialized operations. While facing great difficulties, such as frequent interruptions in electricity, lack of personnel, damage to structures and lack of space, the hospital has succeeded in remaining in continuous operation, receiving the wounded from all ethnic groups and religions, and children in particular.



## Syria, Holy Land for the Christians

The conversion of St. Paul took place in Damascus itself. During the journey to Damascus of Saul Paulus (the future St. Paul), persecutor of Christians, a bright light flashed around him and he fell from his horse. A voice said to him: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Now get up and go into the city and you will be told what you must do". Blind and in a state of shock, he was accompanied to Damascus, where he remained waiting for something to happen. On the third day the leader of the Christians, Ananias, came to see him and said: "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit". Ananias healed him, giving him back his sight, and he baptized him. So it was that St. Paul became the greatest missionary of all times, the apostle of the Gentiles.

A man in a dark habit is shown in profile, lighting a candle in a hanging lantern. The lantern is made of metal and has a chain of heart-shaped links. The scene is dimly lit, with the candle providing the main source of light. The background is a textured wall.

## An ongoing secular tradition

Making a donation in favor of the Franciscan friars of the Holy Land means to be part of a centuries-old tradition. The charm of this Land and the desire to see it first-hand have led many, from the earliest centuries of the Christian era, to confront all sorts of obstacles and dangers in order to be able to walk on and touch the places which witnessed the birth, death and resurrection of the Son of God. And there are numerous accounts making reference to pilgrims who sent their own personal donations to aid the sanctuaries and Holy Places, in order both to meet the needs of the poorest and to maintain a link with Jerusalem. The unity with our brothers in Christ in the Holy Land, following the example of St. Paul, has thus since the beginning been carried out with real acts of charity, made during life or after death.

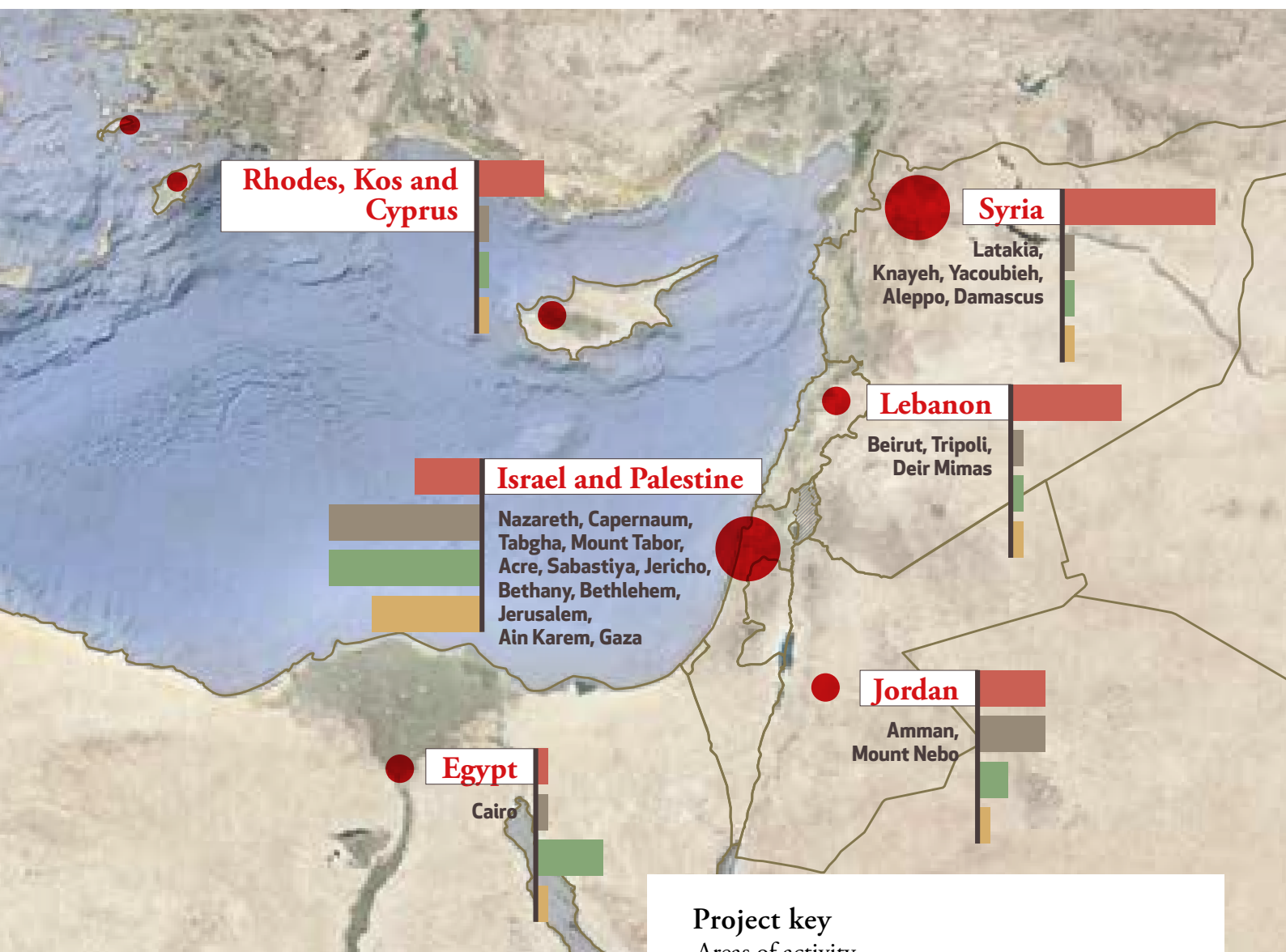
Much of the land on which today there are sanctuaries comes from donations of pilgrims who decided to allocate part of their inheritance to this blessed land. The simple people gave food and animals: camels, ponies, horses, pigs, sheep, poultry and doves. For a pilgrim, to donate was and remains a gesture of belonging to the Mother Church of the Holy Land and this is why everyone gives what he or she is able to, since the value arises from the intention of the act, which is pure charity.



# Places and Beneficiaries



# Places and Beneficiaries



The map shows the Middle East region where we operate, considered by the Christian world to be the Holy Land. That same land that saw the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Land where the first apostles lived, and from where they began their journeys, bringing the good news to the world.

The activities promoted and coordinated by Association pro Terra Sancta, with the help of so many supporters, both institutional and private, have brought the Places mentioned above conservation and development projects for the local communities; support for educational and social welfare works; and aid to help deal with the serious humanitarian emergencies. The Association is also coordinating the on-site participation of numerous qualified volunteers and the sending of materials and goods donated by companies, institutions and private benefactors.

# Lebanon

## Beirut, Tripoli, Deir Mimas

ASSISTING REFUGEES FOR HOUSING, FOOD, SCHOOL, AND SUPPLIES OF DIESEL FUEL

### Daily support to:

- 14 Syrian and Iraqi refugee families in Deir Mimas, near the border with Israel
- 19 families with 26 children in Harissa, a village near Beirut
- 6 Syrian families in Beirut

# Jordan

## Amman

ASSISTING REFUGEES FOR FOOD AND EDUCATION

### Continuing assistance to:

- 80 Syrian and Iraqi refugee families
- Scholarships for 120 children of Syrian and Iraqi refugees

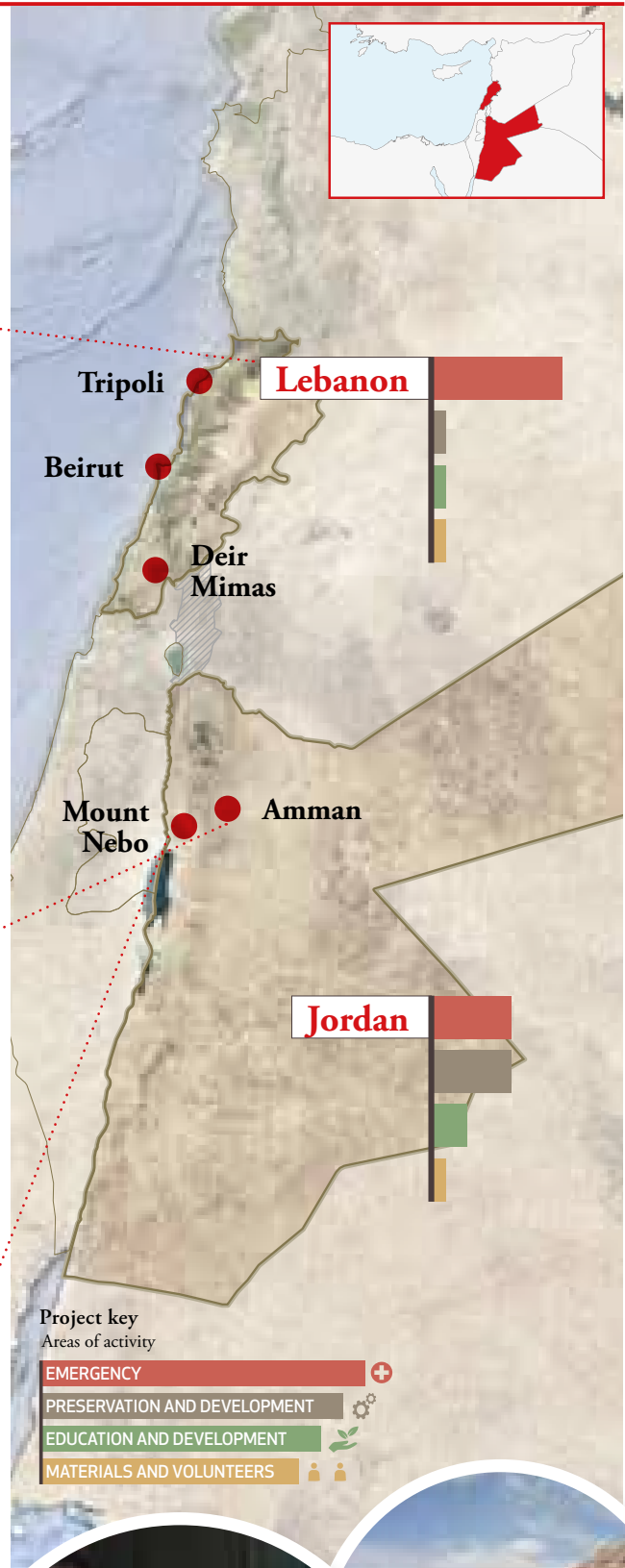
## Mount Nebo

Visitors to the site: ≈ 86.000

AID FOR ON-SITE ACTIVITIES

### Work and training offered to:

- 5 restorers undergoing training
- 10 workers and restorers employed





# Syria

Latakia, Knayeh, Yacoubieh,  
Aleppo, Damascus

Population: ≈ 17,800,000

Displaced: ≈ 10,000,000

AID TO THE SYRIAN POPULATION

## People aided in the reception centers:

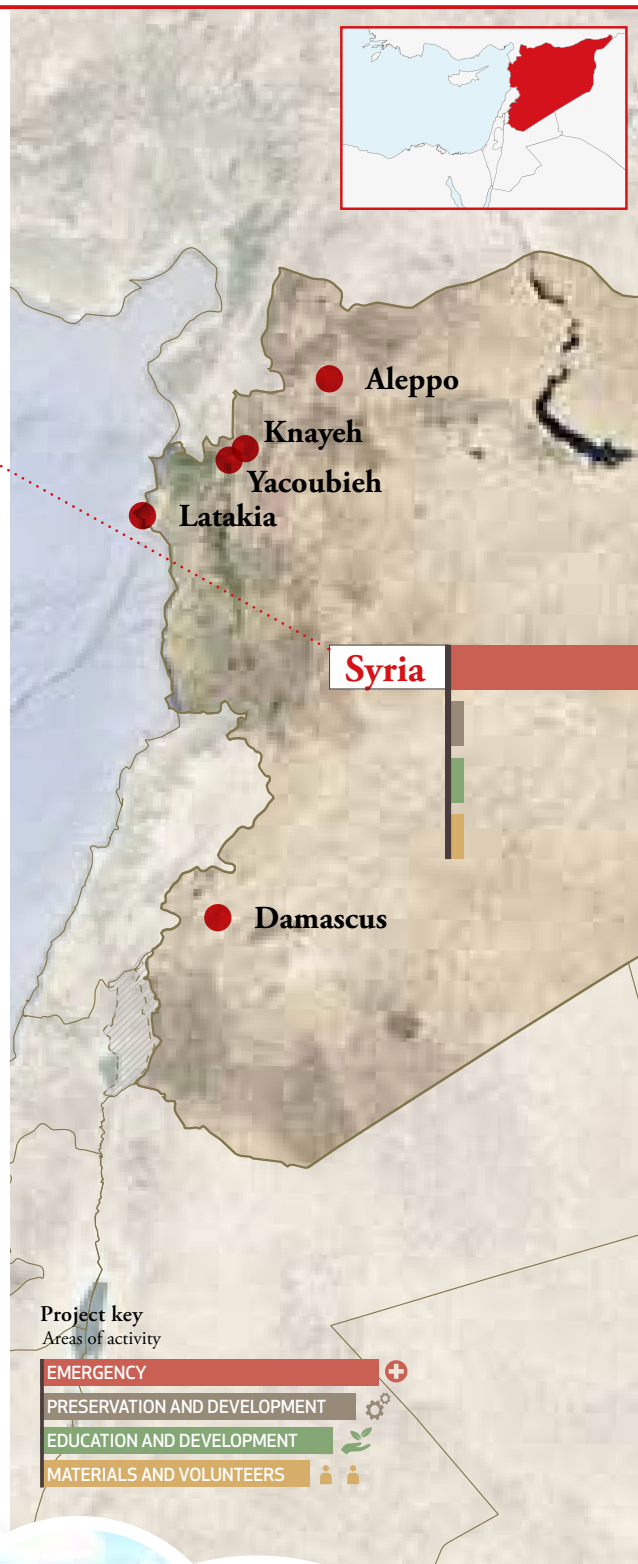
- ≈ 100,000 people received food and essential goods over the year. 30% of them were Latin rite Christians, 40% Orthodox, 25% Muslims and 5% Protestants
- ≈ 4,000 people were welcomed for several weeks during the year in emergency centers
- ≈ 3,000 families were aided through the distribution of medicines
- 225 families were helped to find new houses

## People helped via wells/water:

- ≈ 70,000 people obtained drinking water

## People helped at the hospital in Aleppo:

- ≈ 10,000 people received assistance during the year at the Hope Hospital in Aleppo, thanks to the purchase of large medical equipment, medicines, coverage of costs for operations and medical staff



Places and Beneficiaries

# Rhodes, Kos and Cyprus

HOSPITALITY, FOOD AND SHELTER

- Food and shelter offered to ≈ 500 families. Most of the refugees are from Syria and Iraq

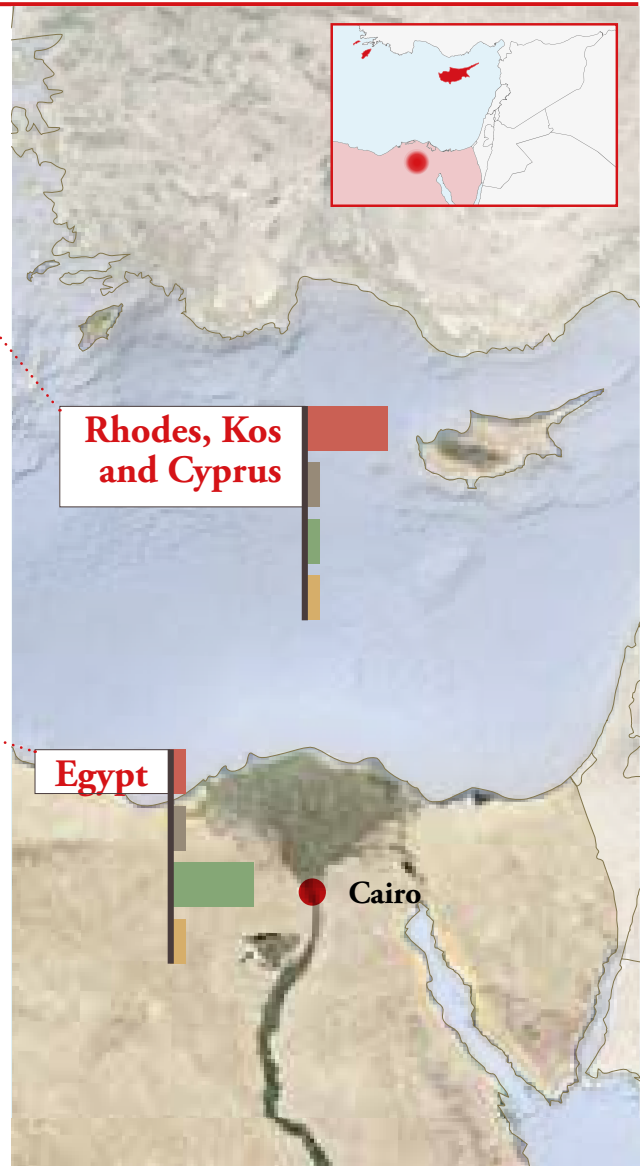
# Egypt

Population of the Muski Quarter (Cairo) ≈ 30.000

EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE TO THE POPULATION

**Daily support to:**

- 40 poor children welcomed in the kindergarten
- 25 poor families



Project key  
Areas of activity

- EMERGENCY 
- PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT 
- EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT 
- MATERIALS AND VOLUNTEERS 



# Israel and Palestine



The activities of Association pro Terra Sancta in the main places of worship and archaeological interest contribute to the improvement of tourist services, and indirectly to the growth of tourism, which has been sorely tested in the past few years.

## In 2015:

- The total number of tourists was 2,892,900. 980,000 were Christian pilgrims
- Around 600,000 tourists visit the West Bank and, principally, Bethlehem
- The number of pilgrims who celebrated in the Holy Places of the Custody totaled around 300,000 (this total does not include individual visitors and groups who arrived without reservation)
- Tourists who arrive to Israel-Palestine enter into Israel by air (94%) or by cruise ship (6%)

**2,892,900 TOURISTS**

of whom:  
**980,000 CHRISTIANS**

## Tourism trend:

YEAR 2013: **3,539,730**

YEAR 2014: **3,251,095**

YEAR 2015: **2,892,900**

## Change:

2013/2015 **-18%** ↓

2014/2015 **-11%** ↓

# GALILEE

## Acre

Local population: 46,000,  
of whom 30% are Christians

EDUCATION AND SUPPORT FOR  
CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Support for school activities and  
sports for:

- 530 students
- Cultural exhibitions for Christians, Jews and Muslims

## Capernaum and Tabgha

PRESERVATION OF THE SITE THROUGH  
VOLUNTARY WORK AND MATERIALS

- ≈ 490,000 visitors/pilgrims to the site of Capernaum
- ≈ 28,500 visitors/pilgrims to the site of Tabgha

## Mount Tabor

PRESERVATION OF THE SITE THROUGH  
VOLUNTARY WORK AND MATERIALS

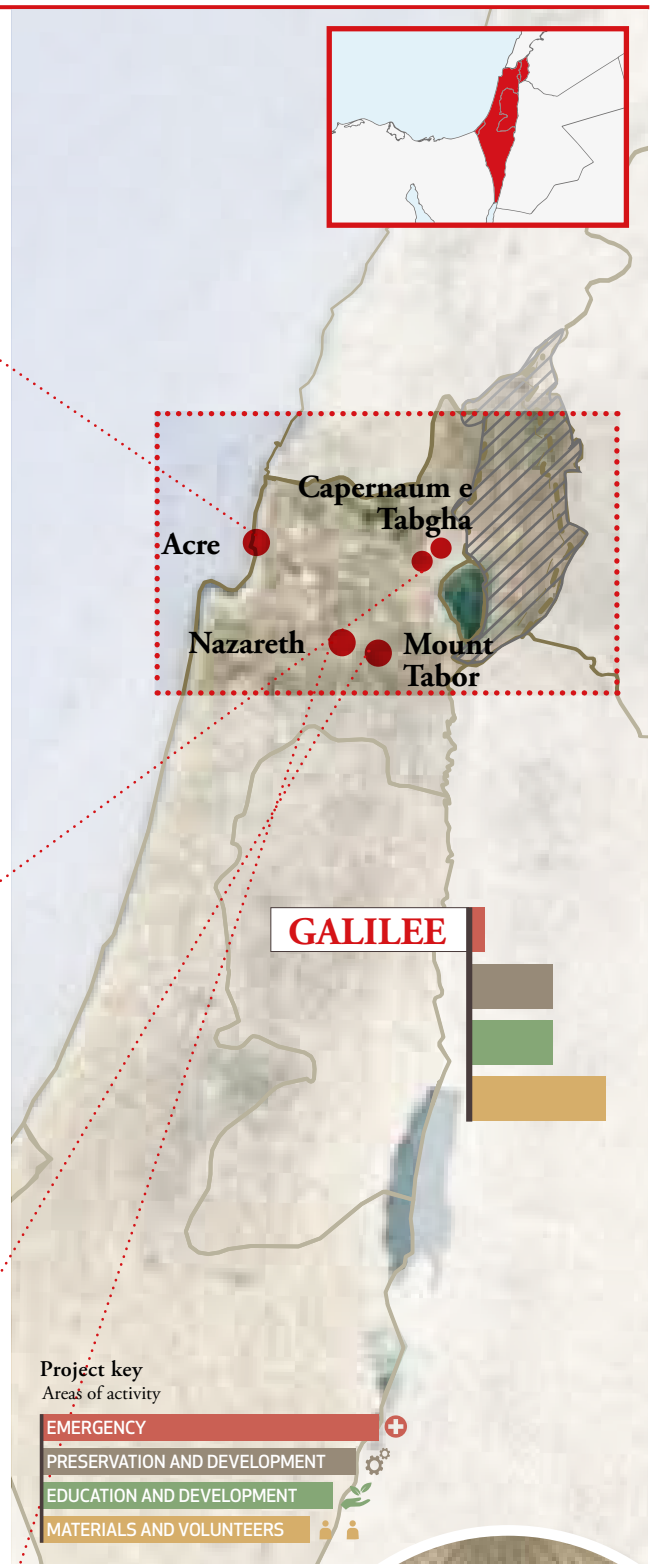
- ≈ 61,000 visitors/pilgrims to the site

## Nazareth

Local population: 74,400,  
of whom 30% are Christians

PRESERVATION OF THE SITE THROUGH  
VOLUNTARY WORK AND MATERIALS;  
ASSISTANCE TO DISABLED PEOPLE AND  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

- ≈ 400,000 visitors/pilgrims to the Basilica of the Annunciation and the Sanctuary of Saint Joseph



# SAMARIA

## Sabastiya, Nisf Jubeil

Local population Sabastiya: 3,000

Local population Nisf Jubeil: 300

PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
ACTIVITIES, EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE

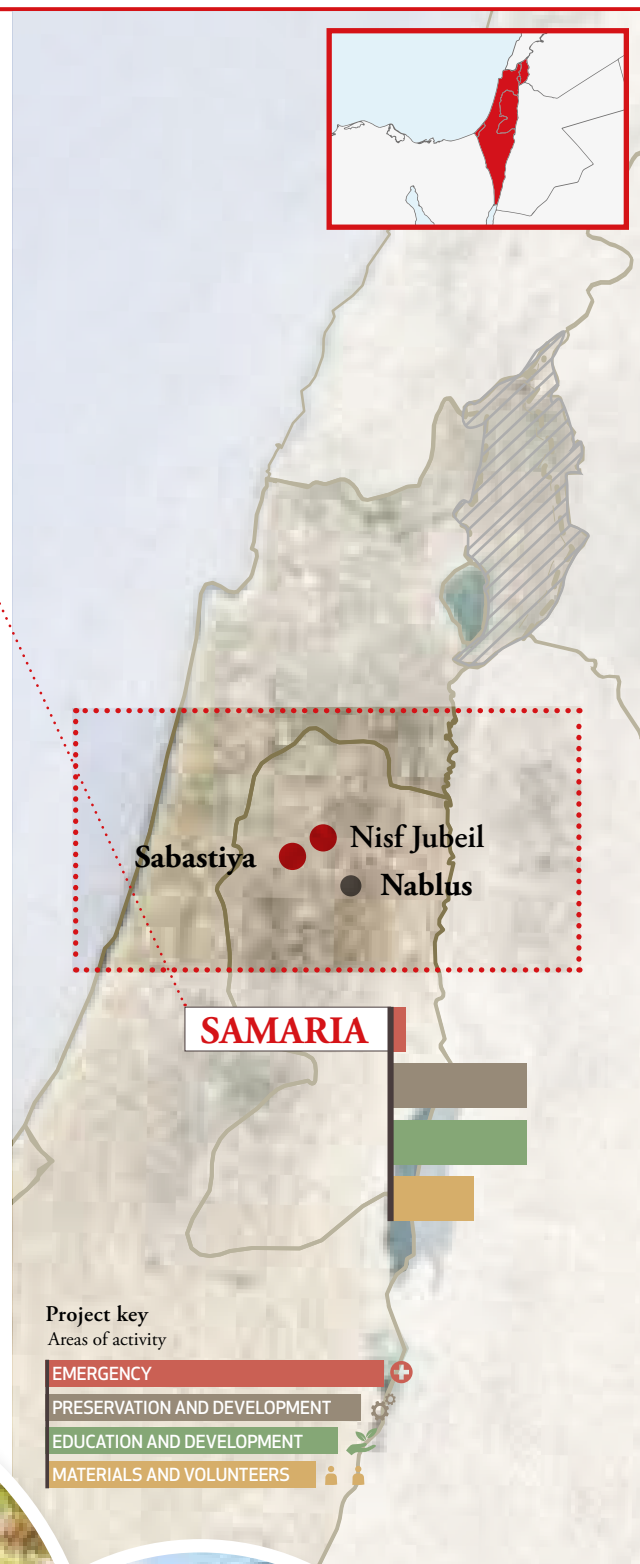
- ≈ 2,500 visitors to the tomb of John the Baptist and the village who have made use of catering services

### Work and training offered to:

- 15 restorers
- 8 cultural workers
- 50 workers
- 19 craftswomen
- 4 disabled

### MOSAIC GUEST HOUSE

- 165 guests with an average stay of 1,5 night



# JUDEA

## Jerusalem

Local population: 760,800,  
of which ≈ 2% are Christians

### Old City

Residents in the Old City 36,000,  
of which 32% are Christians

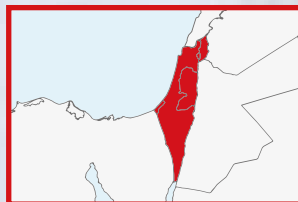
*CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE,  
ST. SAVIOUR AND FLAGELLATION MONASTE-  
RIES, AND THE CHRISTIAN QUARTER*

**Work and training for:**

- 8 restorers
- 50 workers employed

**Maintenance interventions for:**

- 11 buildings
- 21 apartments
- 90 families benefiting from renovation/  
maintenance interventions
- 250 locals involved in cultural events
- 3,000 ancient and modern books  
catalogued



Jerusalem - Old City

### Mount of Olives, At-Tur

*GETHSEMANE, DOMINUS FLEVIT, ASCENSION*

**Work and training for:**

- 8 restorers
- 10 workers employed

**Guided visits to the sanctuaries for:**

- 800 students
- 300 mothers

**Project key**

Areas of activity

- EMERGENCY
- PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
- EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT
- MATERIALS AND VOLUNTEERS

## Ain Karem

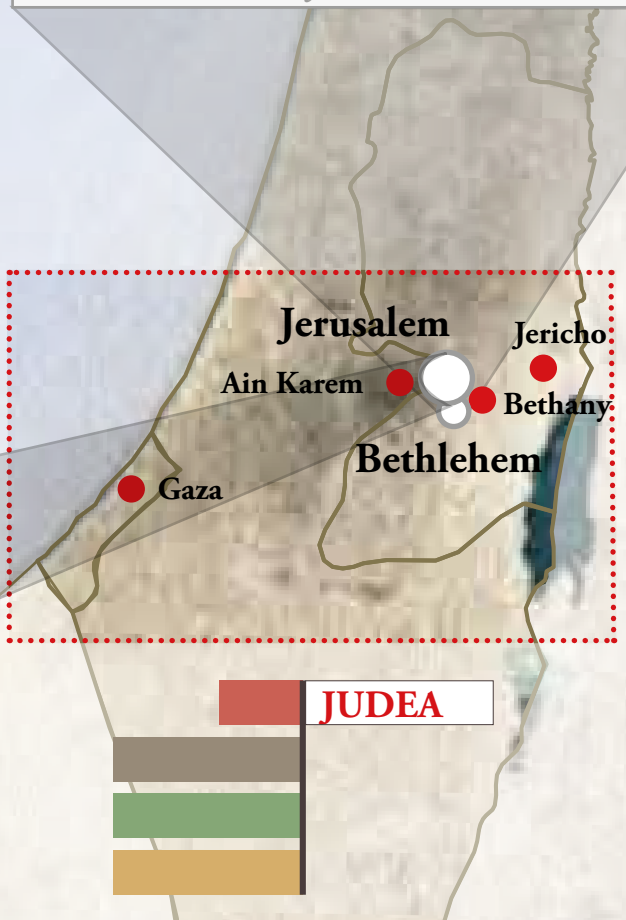
*VISITATION AND BIRTH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST*

ACTIVITIES: PRESERVATION,  
DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION





Bethlehem - Old City



## Bethlehem

Local population:  $\approx$  30,000,  
of which around 10% are Christians

$\approx$  600,000 tourists/pilgrims, of which more than 150,000 visiting the Holy Places or have benefited of the Custody of the Holy Land services

### Scholarships for:

- 450 students

### Training for:

- 50 teachers, 8 social workers

### Medical care for:

- 750 children, 490 families and 630 elderly

### Water provided to:

- 40 families

### Ongoing support to:

- 5 social works and charities

### BABY JESUS GUEST HOUSE

- 151 guests with an average stay of 3.5 nights

## Jericho

Local population: 22,609,  
of which about 2% are Christians

### Work and training offered to:

- 20 restorers
- 4 cultural workers
- 25 workers

### Training for:

- 40 local youth

## Bethany

Local population: 20,000,  
of which around 4% are Christians

$\approx$  600 pilgrims welcomed

- Cultural visits and encounter with the local community

### Work and training offered to:

- 10 restorers
- 50 workers
- 25 university students
- 120 craftswomen
- 12 local crafts merchants

## Gaza

Local population of the Strip: 1,819,982,  
 $\approx$  1,000 Christians, of which 250 Catholics

### HELPING THE LOCAL POPULATION

#### Assistance to:

- 45 people with disabilities in partnership with religious congregations and local volunteers







# Organization

*“God has hidden these things from the wise  
and learned, and revealed them to little children”*

(Mt 11:25)

---

# Organization

Association pro Terra Sancta is able to operate effectively thanks to a staff of collaborators and consultants as well as numerous volunteers, divided among Jerusalem, Bethlehem and a number of Italian and European cities.

Association pro Terra Sancta makes use of local collaborators involved in carrying out the various projects throughout the territory (for numbers, see the section Places and Beneficiaries).

## The international staff consists of:

### COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

5 FULL-TIME COLLABORATORS  
5 PART-TIME COLLABORATORS

### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES IN THE RELEVANT COUNTRIES

8 FULL-TIME COLLABORATORS  
5 YOUNG INTERNS

Also relevant is the impact of long-term volunteers (minimum 1 month, average 3.5 month stay) who, for various reasons, offer their professional skills to help carry out the projects.

They are mostly university graduates, in some cases with very specific professional skills, and often with ties to university/academic environments.

## LONG TERM VOLUNTEERS:

More than 40 PROFESSIONALS  
including archaeologists, architects, restorers, teachers, translators

Average age: 30 YEARS

Average length of stay in Holy Land: 3.5 MONTHS



## Association Romano Gelmini VOLUNTEERS OF THE HOLY LAND

*Thanks to the friendship with one of our collaborators in Jerusalem, the Association Romano Gelmini, created in 2005 and subsequently recognized as a nonprofit organization, is now assisting the Custody of the Holy Land and other Christian entities.*

*The volunteers, on average ten per group, go to the Holy Land eight/nine times per year to provide their energy and skills to deal directly with specific needs as they arise.*

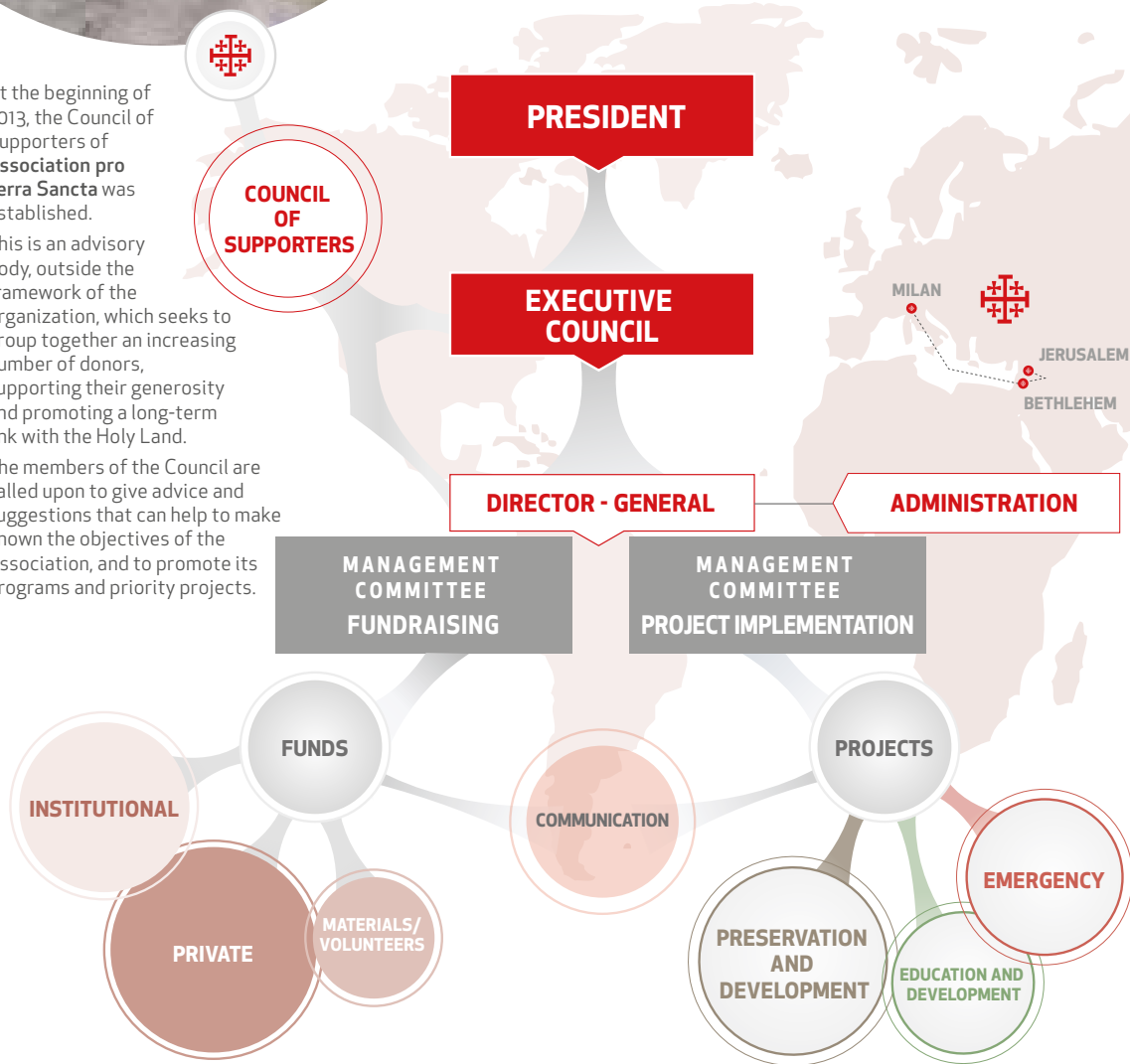


# Organization Chart

At the beginning of 2013, the Council of Supporters of Association pro Terra Sancta was established.

This is an advisory body, outside the framework of the organization, which seeks to group together an increasing number of donors, supporting their generosity and promoting a long-term link with the Holy Land.

The members of the Council are called upon to give advice and suggestions that can help to make known the objectives of the Association, and to promote its programs and priority projects.



## By Statute the organs of Association pro Terra Sancta are:

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY** deliberates on the program and activities of the Association, appoints the members of the various corporate bodies, and takes decision on the issues to be brought to the attention of the President and Executive Council.

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL** responsible for administration of the Association, and formulates views and proposals concerning the activities.

**PRESIDENT** pro tempore is the Custos of the Holy Land – directs and coordinates the work of the General Assembly and Executive Council, has the task of implementing the objectives of the Association and ensuring that they are met.

**DIRECTOR GENERAL** in charge of operational and financial activities

**SECRETARY GENERAL** assists the President and ensures the functioning of the organs of the Association, draws up and signs the minutes.

**AUDITOR** oversees the administrative and financial management.



General Assembly

# Scientific and operational partners

## Studium Biblicum Franciscanum

[www.sbf.custodia.org](http://www.sbf.custodia.org)

This is an academic institution for research and teaching of the Holy Scriptures and biblical archaeology. In 1901 the Custody of the Holy Land began planning such a center, and the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum has been in operation continuously since 1924. Since 1960 it has been part of the Pontifical University Antonianum of Rome. In 2001 it became the Faculty of Biblical Sciences and Archaeology. The Studium Biblicum Franciscanum maintains a specialist library containing approximately 56,000 volumes and 420 journals. The principal sectors are: archaeology, biblical studies, patristic, Judaism, ancient Near East, and accounts of travelers to the Holy Land.



*The Studium Biblicum Franciscanum collaborates as scientific advisor on all the cultural heritage preservation projects initiated and implemented by Association pro Terra Sancta.*

## Technical Office of the Custody

This office carries out maintenance, restoration and construction projects of complex structures: monasteries, churches, and housing (particularly in the Old City of Jerusalem). It consists of a technical and operating staff.

The operating staff is made up of local workers, Christian and Muslim Arabs, many of them previously unemployed and coming from the West Bank, for whom a valid permit is required, thus offering them the possibility of work and training. Staff recruited for a fixed term are followed and supported by local and international expert staff in order to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills. Over the years, many of these workers have been employed on permanent contracts by the Custody of the Holy Land as well as by other companies in Israel and Palestine. The Technical Office is a section of the Bursar's Office, an administrative and management organ of the Custody of the Holy Land.

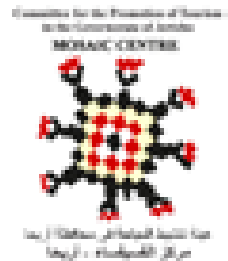
*The Technical Office of the Custody works closely with Association pro Terra Sancta in implementing preservation and development projects.*



## Mosaic Centre Jericho

[www.mosaiccentre-jericho.com](http://www.mosaiccentre-jericho.com)

A non-profit association that operates in Palestine, Jordan and Syria for the protection of cultural heritage and to increase its awareness among the local population. It carries out projects to restore mosaics and ancient buildings. It also organizes courses designed to prepare skilled craftsmen and restorers, and promotes cultural activities.



*Mosaic Centre works together regularly with Association pro Terra Sancta, in particular in carrying out training courses, cultural activities and implementing preservation and development projects in Jordan, Israel and Palestine.*

## Franciscan Social Services Office (FSSO)

The Franciscan Social Services Office is the office of Caritas of the Custody, which since 2008 has carried out charitable and social/cultural development activities in support of the most vulnerable elements of the Christian presence in Bethlehem. Motivated by the desire to give continuity to the service of support and care for the poor performed by the Franciscan friars for centuries in the Holy Land, the FSSO assists the local population in a very complex environment by focusing on the individual and seeking concrete answers to the ongoing medical and health emergencies, promoting networking with hospitals and social welfare and charitable centers in the area. The office also promotes the education of young people, by providing economic support for their education and promoting integration, and supports training and self-determination for women through their inclusion in the workforce.



*The Franciscan Social Services Office and Association pro Terra Sancta work together regularly in carrying out educational and support activities, on occasion involving other charitable organizations in Palestine.*





## The Popes and their bond with the Holy Land

The Roman pontiffs, throughout the course of history, have not only expressed their benevolence toward the Holy Land with spontaneous alms, but have also striven with all their might that such gestures be imitated throughout Christendom. Pope Urban IV, a former papal legate in the Holy Land, sought to have all the clergy in France leave a tenth of their property to the Church in Palestine, and Benedict XIV ordered all preachers to speak at least four times a year to the people about the Holy Land and urge them to “remember the Holy Places in their last will and testament, leaving them some alms or pious legacy”.

The popes also conceded plenary indulgences to all those who, in their wills, remembered the Holy Land. In recent times, the popes who have gone to the Holy Land on Pilgrimage – Paul VI in 1964, John Paul II in 2000, Benedict XVI in 2009 and Francis in 2014 – have all strongly emphasized the theme of support from the whole world for the Christian communities of the Holy Land. During his homily on Manger Square, Pope Benedict XVI directed these words to the Christians of Bethlehem: “Do not be afraid! Count on the prayers and solidarity of your brothers and sisters in the Universal Church, and work, with concrete initiatives, to consolidate your presence and to offer new possibilities to those tempted to leave.”

A dramatic landscape photograph featuring a large, dark, stormy cloud formation in the sky, illuminated from below by a bright light source, likely the sun. The sun is positioned low on the horizon, creating a bright, golden glow that reflects on the water below. The water is dark and calm, with some ripples visible. The overall scene is atmospheric and moody, with a mix of dark blues, greys, and bright yellows and oranges.

# Resources

# Annual sheet December 31, 2015

## Balance sheet

Assets	2015	2014	Liabilities	2015	2014
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			<b>NET EQUITY</b>		
<b>Tangible assets</b>			<b>Endowment fund</b>	43.919	43.919
Furniture and equipment	272	544	<b>Changes in capital and reserves</b>		
<b>Financial assets</b>			Result of the year	478.600	105.317
Investments	1.725	1.725	Reserves brought forward from earlier years	565.938	460.621
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	<b>1.997</b>	<b>2.269</b>	<b>Total Net equity</b>	<b>1.088.457</b>	<b>609.857</b>
<b>RECEIVABLES</b>			<b>EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION INDEMNITY</b>	3.946	1.043
<b>Credits</b>			<b>PAYABLES</b>		
From treasury	326	5.591	Payables to banks	2.137	2.012
<b>Total credits</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>5.591</b>	Payables to suppliers	5.515	12.688
<b>Cash and bank deposits</b>			Payables to tax authorities	7.244	6.441
Bank and post office deposits*	1.571.184	620.948	Payables to social security agencies	4.304	1.682
Cash and values in hand	5.739	4.917	<b>Total payables</b>	<b>19.200</b>	<b>22.823</b>
<b>Total cash and deposits</b>	<b>1.576.923</b>	<b>625.865</b>	<b>DEFERRED INCOME</b>		
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1.579.246</b>	<b>633.724</b>	<b>Total deferred income</b>	<b>467.642</b>	
			<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1.579.246</b>	<b>633.724</b>

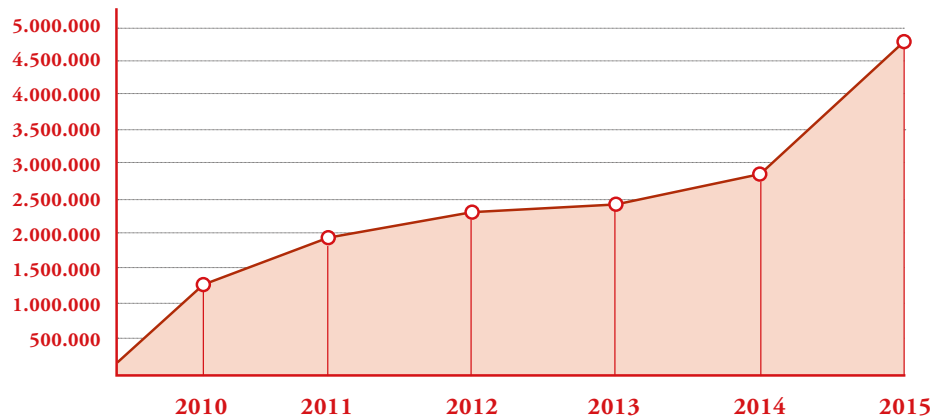
## Profit and loss

CONTRIBUTIONS	2015		2014	
from Private Donors	2.360.663	48,9%	1.372.042	50,8%
from Groups and Associations	256.419	5,3%	210.032	7,8%
from Private Institutions	1.292.574	26,8%	393.981	14,6%
from Public Institutions	39.434	0,8%	261.825	9,7%
from Italian Government (programme 5xmille)	66.998	1,4%	59.995	2,2%
from Socio-entrepreneurial activities	111.119	2,3%	134.859	5,0%
Enhancement of materials and volunteers	699.246	14,5%	270.454	10,0%
<b>TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>4.826.452</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>2.703.188</b>	<b>100,0%</b>
<b>RESOURCE ALLOCATION</b>				
<b>Projects implementation</b>				
Projects of Preservation and Development	1.579.469	36,3%	838.682	19,3%
Projects of Education and Development	613.672	14,1%	723.158	16,6%
Emergency in the Middle East	1.260.945	29,0%	395.758	9,1%
Social-entrepreneurial activities	101.470	2,3%	157.355	3,6%
Ordinary activity of projects promotion and implementation	523.438	12,0%	223.806	5,1%
<b>TOTAL PROJECTS IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>4.078.994</b>	<b>93,8%</b>	<b>2.338.759</b>	<b>90,0%</b>
<b>Staff and organization costs</b>				
Cost of staff	173.065	4,0%	146.383	3,4%
Cost for services	91.301	2,1%	75.439	1,7%
Cost for consumption material and goods	4.493	0,1%	37.290	0,9%
<b>TOTAL STAFF AND ORGANIZATION COSTS</b>	<b>268.859</b>	<b>6,2%</b>	<b>259.112</b>	<b>10,0%</b>
<b>TOTAL ALLOCATIONS</b>	<b>4.347.853</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2.597.871</b>	<b>100,0%</b>
<b>RESULT OF THE YEAR</b>	<b>478.599</b>		<b>105.317</b>	

\* The amount is mainly related to proceeds raised on the Terra Sancta Museum project in progress, and the ongoing emergency in Syria. The funds will be allocated, according to the intention of the supporters, to the planned activities for the year 2016.



## Contributions received during these years

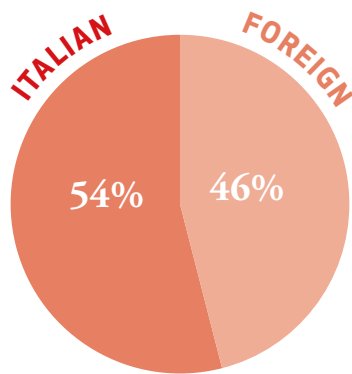


# 4.826.452 €

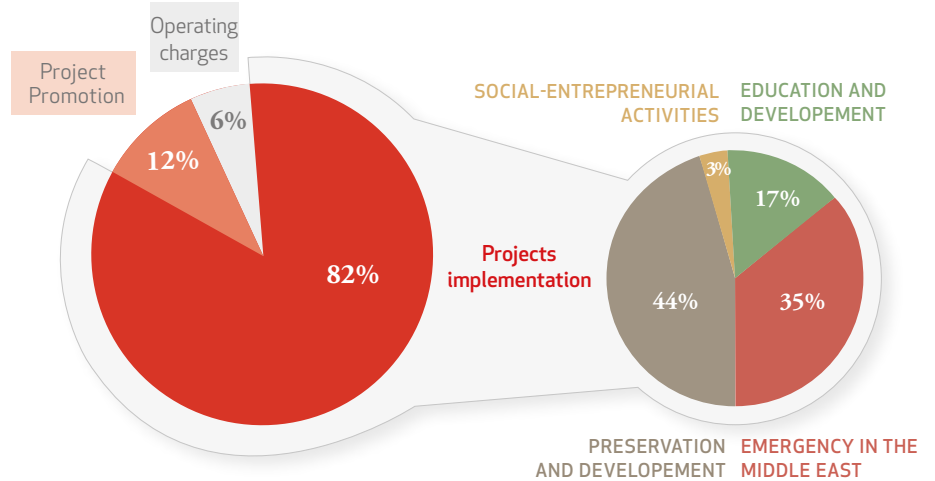
### Contributions received during 2015

The great increase in contributions has been determined by a positive trend, by some significant donations linked to the "Our home" projects (a fund which was set up to safeguard the Christian identity in the Old Cities of Bethlehem and Jerusalem), by the Terra Sancta Museum, and by the largely positive reaction to the Emergency aids to the Middle East.

## Foreign and Italian Contributions



## Resources use



# Thank you!

"Thank you! It seems so easy to say these words, but we know that it is not ... But it is important! These are not kind words to use with strangers, to show you are polite. You need to know how to say thank you in order to go forward together in a good way." Pope Francis

We too, as the Pope says, want to thank all of you for having shared this journey to this day. Let us go forward, and "Let us not resign ourselves to thinking of a Middle East without Christians, who have professed the name of Jesus for 2,000 years". We would be doing an injustice to them, our parents in the faith, and also to ourselves.



# Visit the Holy Land with us

We promote solidarity tourism in Israel and Palestine: to enhance the uniqueness and cultural, historical, religious and artistic riches of these places, and at the same time to foster the awareness of these by the local communities. By staying in a guest house managed by local youths, as in Bethlehem and Sabastiya, you can make a contribution to supporting the local economy.

Contact us to organize your trip with us: it will be a unique and unforgettable experience!

[www.visit.proterrasancta.org](http://www.visit.proterrasancta.org)

HERE ARE SOME OF OUR OFFERS:

## Jerusalem - Bethlehem

To discover the history, culture and social complexity between Israel and Palestine. A journey into the pulsating heart of the Holy Land, in two cities that are fundamental for all Christians throughout the world, and not only for Christians.

## Jerusalem - Sabastiya

A journey to discover the wonders of the Holy City together with the living reality of Sebastia, where St. John the Baptist was buried. Those who love seeing places and visiting the local community, must not miss it.

## Jerusalem - Jericho

A unique tour of two of the oldest cities in the world. Jerusalem and Jericho, with several thousand years of history behind them, provide the backdrop for a unique journey in Samaria, to discover the roots of a land at the base of our culture and religion.

In the year 2015

**309** PEOPLE

have made special visits, organized by us, to the Holy Places and our projects in the Holy Land, during a total of

**154** DAYS



# Middle East Community Program

This is an experience of great interest that we offer to university students and workers with a passion or curiosity to learn about the Middle East.

Three weeks of learning experiences in Israel and Palestine: trips, meetings and thematic analysis. The aim is to provide information about the cultural, political and social contrasts that characterize the region, and also to highlight the points of contact, the experiences of unity and sharing. The program is organized in partnership with local universities and institutions.

For information: [visit@proterrasancta.org](mailto:visit@proterrasancta.org)

# A Holy Land gift

To raise awareness, to remember, and to support the Holy Places we offer the possibility to order products made from olive wood and ceramics, as well as artistic giveaways, that communicate the beauty of these places, and which can be used for honoring friends and customers. Groups, parishes and companies can order in bulk for use as gifts or for charity sales to aid the Holy Land.

For special events such as baptisms, communions and weddings we offer to all friends and enthusiasts of the Holy Land bomboniere solidali (wedding favors whose purchase benefits a charitable cause), not only as a way of supporting the “living stones” of our history, but also as a means of reminding us of our origins at such important moments of life, while at the same time adding the beautiful value of solidarity to the festivity.

For information: [sostenitori@proterrasancta.org](mailto:sostenitori@proterrasancta.org)

# To live forever in the Holy Land

Because of the house of the Lord our God,  
I will seek thy good. (Psalm 122)

The Franciscan order of friars minor has been present in Jerusalem since the early days of the order itself, which was found by St. Francis in 1209.

Custodians of the Holy Places by the will and mandate of the Universal Church, the friars are also at the service of the poor, including the local Christian communities who live in difficult conditions in the Holy Land and in the countries of the Middle East.

Disposing a part of one's own legacy to the Franciscan friars of the Holy Land means imprinting an unfading mark on temporal Jerusalem, helping the preservation of the Holy Places and - at the same time- of the local communities living in hard conditions.

To get more information about **Association Pro Terra Sancta's** activities and about procedures to endow:  
Office of Legacies,  
tel. (+39) 02 6572453 – e-mail: [lasciti@proterrasancta.org](mailto:lasciti@proterrasancta.org)

**By making a legacy in favor  
of the Franciscan friars  
you will forever remain a  
custodian of the Holy Places.**



in support of the Custody of the Holy Land

JERUSALEM, 91001 | MILANO, 20121  
St.Saviour Monastery POB 186 | piazza Sant'Angelo, 2  
tel. +972 2 627 1165 | tel. +39 02 6572453

[www.proterrasancta.org](http://www.proterrasancta.org)  
[lascititestamentari.proterrasancta.org](http://lascititestamentari.proterrasancta.org)



CONSIGLIO  
NAZIONALE  
DEL  
NOTARIATO



## Association pro Terra Sancta

The Association pro Terra Sancta Ong/ Onlus in support of the Custody of the Holy Land, supports the mission of the Franciscan friars of the Custody of the Holy Land: to safeguard and preserve the Holy Places and to help the Christian communities in the Middle East.

If you visit the Holy Land, we will be waiting for you in our offices in Jerusalem, just a few meters from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. You can also visit us in Bethlehem, near the Church of the Nativity.

### Jerusalem

91001, St. Saviour Monastery POB 186  
Tel. +972 2 627 1165

### Bethlehem

90912, Al-Mahed Street 683  
Tel +972 02 2743372

### Milan

20121, Piazza Sant' Angelo, 2  
Tel +39 02 6572453

[www.proterrasancta.org](http://www.proterrasancta.org)  
[sostenitori@proterrasancta.org](mailto:sostenitori@proterrasancta.org)

