

ACTIVITY REPORT 2019



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

SOVRANO MILITARE ORDINE OSPEDALIERO
DI SAN GIOVANNI DI GERUSALEMME DI RODI E DI MALTA

ORDRE SOUVERAIN MILITAIRE HOSPITALIER
DE SAINT-JEAN DE JÉRUSALEM DE RHODES ET DE MALTE

SOBERANA ORDEN MILITAR Y HOSPITALARIA
DE SAN JUAN DE JERUSALÉN DE RODAS Y DE MALTA



The 80th Grand Master
of the Sovereign Order of Malta

***Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre
del Tempio di Sanguinetto***

elected 2 May 2018

A message from the Grand Master

Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto

80th Grand Master
of the Sovereign Order of Malta

As Grand Masters down the centuries before me have done, I now have the great responsibility of leading our Order in its continuing mission of *tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum* (to care for those in need, inspired by our Christian principles) – which is in its almost one thousandth year. From the care for pilgrims and the sick in Jerusalem carried out so long ago by our Founder Blessed Gérard and his congregation, to the care we give today to those in need, the Order has extended its reach but maintained its same inspiration. Our tradition is that of care and of a spiritual motivation. We have travelled through eras that have at times been difficult, but the Order has always stayed the course and kept its focus on the most important matters – our care for those who need us, with Christian love of our fellow man.

The care we provide ranges over many kinds of support, and one of the most involving at the moment is that of assisting the many thousands of refugees and migrants at all stages of their search for stability and a better life. We help them in their countries of origin, on the routes they take to escape the crisis situations they leave behind and in the host countries. Recognising the importance of integration in their



Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre joins guests at the 7th Italian Summer Camp for Young Disabled in Padua



new communities, we have established integration programmes in many of these societies – from language courses, to school tuition, to professional programmes in the host’s language. All these are constructive ways of aiding integration, both into the nation where they are living and also with refugees and migrants from other countries. To combat the scourge of human trafficking, we recently appointed two Ambassadors, one in Geneva, the other in Lagos, whose task is to raise awareness of this evil and the need to protect its victims. We care, too, for the needs of the local communities, who often require extra support in adapting to the new arrivals. In this publication we have focussed on the plight of those on the move, understanding and responding to their needs, and to the needs of the host societies.

In addition to this special category of help, I do not forget our thousands of members, volunteers and staff who, all over the world, are giving of their all for those who need them. These are not one-time activities, they are the ongoing, every day commitments of care. These are our unsung heroes whom we appreciate deeply and always, who look ceaselessly to the poor, the disadvantaged, the handicapped, the elderly lonely, to children who need nourishment or education or love – or all three. They are always there to help.

In the pages of this publication you will find the latest information on all these works. I am proud of all that this world family, this force for good, does to alleviate suffering in the world.

On a State visit to Cameroon, the Grand Master meets religious leaders in a refugee camp

A photograph of a refugee camp. In the foreground, there is a dirt path littered with trash, including plastic bottles and crumpled paper. In the middle ground, two men are standing and talking. In the background, there are several tents and a white building. The overall scene is one of a makeshift settlement in a desolate area.

EMERGENCY AID

The problem of care for refugees continues to grow. Millions are on the move, risking everything in search of a better life, fleeing wars, famine, persecution, poverty, natural catastrophe. Meeting their most urgent needs, the Order provides emergency care for migrants and refugees, as well as reconstruction programmes in devastated areas.





Maltez



SOCIAL SUPPORT

Everywhere in the world there are problems of old age, loneliness, poverty, homelessness. The Order, with its members, medical personnel and dedicated young volunteers, together organise care and support for people in great need.

A photograph of an elderly male doctor with glasses, wearing blue scrubs and a stethoscope, sitting on a stool and examining a young girl. The girl is wearing purple glasses and a yellow patterned shirt. The doctor is smiling and looking at the girl. The background shows a hospital room with a bed and patterned curtains.

HEALTH CARE

Continuing its age-old tradition of hospital care, in Order hospitals, clinics, mobile units and medical campaigns everywhere, the doors are always open to patients of every background, every age, every religion.

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A new start: integrating into host countries

With the arrival of thousands of refugees and migrants, fleeing violence, persecution, famine or poverty in their countries of origin, the challenge for the developed world is to integrate them into host countries so that all can benefit.

Integrating refugees and IDPs

1. The challenge: to be welcoming and protective

An inclusive vision of ecology and integral human development, of 'life in its fullness'

An interview with

Cardinal Peter Turkson

Prefect of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development



You have spoken movingly of the interconnected concerns of caring for human life and protecting the environment - concerns set out in *Laudato Si* - on care for our common home. How can we take these concerns further?

Yes, everything is interconnected, as Pope Francis teaches us; and everything is also inter-dependent! In that sense, a way of carrying these concerns further is to revisit the central teaching of the Encyclical Letter, *Laudato si*, which is "integral ecology". Under "integral ecology", Pope Francis pulls together all that his predecessors have had to say on the subject of "ecology": from "natural ecology" of Pope Paul VI to "natural and human ecology" of Pope John Paul II to "natural, human, social and ecology of peace" of Pope Benedict XVI and finally to "integral ecology" of Pope Francis. The expansion of the sense of "ecology" in the writings of the Popes invites us to consider the widening sense of what it takes to promote an inclusive vision of ecology and integral human development. It may well be the sense of "having life in its fullness" of the Gospel (Jn. 10:10).

The Bible tells us to welcome the stranger. You have spoken strongly against these waves of migration. How can we reconcile the two positions?

Indeed, the Bible does not only tell us to welcome the stranger, it makes the experience of being a migrant an important theological motif. That experience of being a migrant is used by God for his salvific purposes. Such was the case of Abraham, the Sons of Jacob, Jeroboam, Ruth, etc. In their migrant and uprooted conditions, they serve God's purpose. Besides, God enjoins on the Hebrews to consider the stranger as a member of the community, because they themselves were strangers in the land of Egypt. Furthermore, the Covenant law demands of the Hebrew community that it protects and integrates the strangers who live in their midst, respecting their lives, their families and even their belongings.

In the New Testament too, it is significant that the early Christians were referred to in similar terms. They were resident aliens (paroikoi 1Pt.1:1-2); and the Letter of Diognetus speaks of them in the following words: "Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers" [Chapter V]. Jesus refers to our treatment of strangers in his presentation of the judgement scene.

I am aware of all this and very many more! But this biblical charge and solicitude for the migrant and stranger does not mandate us to provoke migration with our wars and poor geo-political policies. Natural disasters are beyond the control of everyone; but not surrogate wars and prejudices about governments and peoples' access to land, and unfounded economic prosperities outside one's country. It is unethical that we provoke situations that disturb the peace and tranquillity of people, dislodging them from their land and throwing them on the road as migrants.



African countries are seeing many thousands leaving, especially the young. As you have said, the tap needs to be turned off and the economies of the countries of origin need to be strengthened, especially via access to world markets. How soon could changes be made, realistically? Whose responsibility is this?

You know, when Pope Benedict XVI visited Benin and addressed Government Officials and members of the Diplomatic Corps, he advised them not to “rob their people of hope”, because “hope generates energy, which stimulates the intellect and gives the will all its dynamism.” This is how I want to answer your question. Hope for the realisation that making Africa mere producers of raw material to keep the industries of Europe and elsewhere running will lead always to such flows of economic migrants. We need to change our development model, not concentrating production only in certain places. So, how soon? As soon as African governments begin to understand governance as the exercise of power (service) for the common good of their people. As soon as they attract back home the talents of their citizens from the diaspora for local growth; and as soon as good governance begins to prevail for the fair distribution of national resources.

Whose responsibility is this? It is the responsibility, first and foremost of the governments of African countries, then of the rest of the world, that must recognise the need to show solidarity, because inclusive growth is preferable to exclusive growth, and makes the world a far better place.

For those who arrive in host countries - often unaccompanied minors - what do you see as the most practical support for them?

The Migrants and Refugees Section of our Dicastery that is dedicated to the issue has written quite a lot on this, and we’ll take something from what the Holy Father has said. These have been elaborated in a 20 Points application package.

“Child Migrants, the Vulnerable and the Voiceless” was the Holy Father’s Message for the 2017 World Day of Migrants and Refugees. “Among migrants, children constitute

Refugees migrating north along the Balkan route face severe conditions and are in need of food, water and shelter

the most vulnerable group, because as they face the life ahead of them, they are invisible and voiceless: their precarious situation deprives them of documentation, hiding them from the world's eyes; the absence of adults to accompany them prevents their voices from being raised and heard. In this way, migrant children easily end up at the lowest levels of human degradation, where illegality and violence destroy the future of too many innocents, while the network of child abuse is difficult to break up." So it is always crucial to act in the best interests of minors, no matter their migratory status. If unaccompanied children are separated from their family, they should be provided with foster care or guardianship ... and never never be wilfully separated from their family! On the contrary, States should promote family reunification and provide visas to make this as easy as possible. Finally, it is absolutely imperative to ban the detention of minors.

You also warn that the migration phenomenon is a world problem. How should world communities react?

"Migration" is a human phenomenon and an experience. In itself, it is not a problem, and may not a priori be characterised as a human problem. It is a response to a human movement from whatever threatens a people's or a person's life or existence. Accordingly, the history of our human family has known several periods in the past of such movements of people from life-threatening situations and experiences. Pope Francis has recently done a 90 seconds video showing such recurrent experiences in the past.

The consideration of "migration" as a problem can be from three points of view: First point of view is that of the people who make an experience of life-threatening situations, before which there is no choice, but to flee: to move away, to migrate from life-threatening to peaceful or life-assuring situations of places. In this case, the reaction of the communities of the world is to help remove the source of the life-threatening danger, whatever it may be. If it is war, as in the case of the present migration, then the reaction of the world is to quench the fires of war. A cessation of hostilities

Malteser Germany runs integration programmes in a range of facilities





and alternative forms of conflict-resolution must be sought. If it is the government and political rivalry, as in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, or Venezuela, diplomacy is not without means. Everyone has a friend whom he listens to! The second point of view is the situation of people who are impoverished by such moving away of part of its population. In this case, aid and other gestures of solidarity that help ensure the people's survival are necessary.

The third point of view is that of the destination of those who are on the move, who may feel threatened by the new arrival of hitherto unknown and strange people. This is to a large experience the sense in which the present migration is seen as a problem. What is referred to as a "problem" is a mixture of several reactions to the arrival of the new-comers. "Fear" is common reaction; and "fear" is the common reaction to a situation of threat. So, in places of very low birth rate, is the arrival in sizable numbers the source of threat? The numbers may be in the thousands; but they have not yet reached the millions in any receiving country. Is the fear due to the "strangeness" and "difference" of the arriving people and a challenge to diversification? This is the situation of some countries in Europe and even the Middle East. In this case, the challenge or reaction is to education, learning to discover the wealth of diversity and difference. Otherwise, let us discover, in the name of the universal fraternity of the human family, Pope Francis' invitation to be welcoming and protective, to help develop their resources and to help the newcomers integrate in their new home. For, on this earth, all of us are migrants. The real host is one, and He is God!

The Order of Malta cares for refugees and migrants, in their countries of origin, en route, and in the host countries. Do you have a message of encouragement?

The members of the Sovereign Order of Malta are in the forefront, almost on the emergency line, and this derives from the history and the foundation of the Order. Once offering help and protection to pilgrims it now welcomes and accompanies migrants. More than encouragement, I pray that a sense of memory of what the Order used to do continues to inspire and sustain this new form and area of ministry.

Language classes are a key integration factor

2. One humanity - ensuring safety and dignity for migrants

The need for multiple strategies to address the issues

Jamilah Mahmood, IFRC

is a Malaysian doctor. Since January 2016, she has served as Under Secretary General for Partnerships at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Before that, Dr. Mahmood was Chief of the World Humanitarian Summit secretariat at the United Nations



In recent years, the large-scale movements of migrants, including refugees, have dramatically highlighted the potential risks facing them, particularly those in an irregular situation. Whilst vulnerability is often the cause for people to flee their homes, what we have seen is that there are vulnerabilities associated with the whole journey of a migrant. These vulnerabilities pose challenges to all those stakeholders involved in the process of responding to the needs of migrants and supporting individual resilience building.

Some of these challenges manifest themselves in the increasing risks of tensions with local communities. In many countries, migrants face suspicion, hostility and xenophobia. While evidence shows migrants' potential to contribute to economic growth, structural inequalities in host societies may lead to uneven distribution of positive contributions at the community level. Where pressures are experienced due to large-scale population movements, those affected will often be those already most marginalised within the host society. This can ultimately lead to tensions and acts of violence between communities.

Our work as IFRC (International Red Cross and Red Crescent)¹ has led us to understand that upholding the dignity of migrants is a dynamic two-way process of "mutual accommodation and respect by all migrants and residents". Multiple strategies are needed to address this. Social inclusion and integration efforts should accordingly focus on establishing a process of mutual understanding, respect and connection between communities, including ensuring support for migrants to adapt to a new home, as well as dialogue with and support to host communities to be inclusive and welcoming. Such efforts whilst also addressing deeper domestic structural inequalities that create a breeding ground for tensions, could also be instrumental in countering xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination so that migrants are shown as being positive contributors to society.

Agents of development

Based on the experiences of our National Societies engaged in social inclusion and migration programmes at the local and national level, we are firmly of the belief that migrants should be considered as 'agents of development' rather than passive recipients of humanitarian aid. When migrants gain access to education and labour markets, they can build their skills and become self-reliant, contributing to local economies and supporting the development of the communities hosting them. Studies demonstrate the positive contribution migrants have been able to make in many contexts despite significant constraints, suggesting potential for even vaster contributions if wider opportunities were provided.

So, what are some of the lessons that we have learned in our work with migrants and refugees?

We as collective stakeholders in society need to establish a clear and coherent position and strategy to address migrant stigmatisation and prejudice along the whole migratory trail. This includes messaging in multiple formats, on multiple outlets, to multiple audiences. It also includes 'myth busting' within 48 hours of anti-migrant coverage. The IFRC and National Societies (NS) by their footprint in communities can play a large and significant role in this campaign, but it is one narrative that has to be fuelled by everyone.

Real connections between communities and migrants -and the importance of youth

From research done through our National Societies in Australia, Denmark the United Kingdom and across Europe, we have found that very often host communities are divided between those 'for' and those 'against' migration. There is further a group called the 'Anxious Middle' who are those who are not strongly against migration or racist, but have many concerns about the effect of migration on their society. These concerns are often genuine, but many feel unclear and fear 'political correctness' and think they cannot speak about their concerns. Facts, figures and moral messaging are not enough to make an impact on those who are 'against' or 'anxious'. What has been found to be useful and complementary to these campaigns are programmes that emphasise and support a real connection between communities. In this sense, Red Cross and Red Crescent local branches and volunteers are well placed to bridge those communities and more volunteering programmes need to be encouraged which allow real connections to be made between the host community and migrants. There is a need for a greater humanisation of the migrants and though campaigns are a start they are just part of a wider programme of engagement and outreach. It is also important to recognise that youth are a vital constituency. Multiple studies from the Varkey Foundation² to the World Economic Forum have shown that the current generation of young people is passionate about being involved in social justice issues especially like that of migration. They care and want to do something about it. This needs to be understood and exploited better.

The role of migrants as volunteers

Members of affected communities should also be encouraged to become part of the solution, as volunteers of National Societies and other community groups. Having a more diverse volunteer staff base is helpful to providing sensitive and informed services. National Societies in resettlement countries have made efforts to include people with migration experience as staff volunteers, which has been very helpful in supporting migrants. This does of course require a change in the paradigm of thinking of many National Societies and host communities about the role of migrants especially as volunteers.

Humanising migrants: a shared humanity

Ultimately it is about humanising migrants. Our narratives and projects need to generate empathy and prevent the dehumanisation of migrants in mainstream narratives. Stories of individuals, emphasising commonalities (as opposed to celebrating diversity), can help address this issue. We need to look at connections between host communities and migrants that promote understanding and respect such as volunteering. Ultimately the message of a Shared Humanity is one that should resonate with everyone relying on empathy and reciprocity. They contribute to advocate for the basic minimum standards of human dignity that must be afforded to all migrants, irrespective of status, irrespective of whether you believe there should be more or less migration.



Encouraging micro-finance programmes helps local farmers to grow their own crops, for market as well as for home

1. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is made up of 190 individual National Societies dedicated to the Fundamental Principles of Humanity, Neutrality, Impartiality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality.

2. The Varkey Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation established to improve the standards of education for underprivileged children throughout the world.

Integrating minorities

1. On migration: the issues and measures in Germany

'Facts instead of sentiment'

Karl Löwenstein

*Former Director of Germany's
Malteser Hilfsdienst*



In October 2017, the Order of Malta in Germany, under its Director Karl Löwenstein, published a seminal report on migrants in Germany – the Malteser Migration Report.¹

The Report describes migrants' reasons for coming, the reactions of the State, the actions and programmes of the Order of Malta to integrate them into the community. The Report, subtitled 'Facts instead of sentiment', emphasises that while emotions may often inspire works of mercy, they can also be destructive. Thus, an assessment of the facts is essential. The Report reminds that migration and flight are not new phenomena of today – migration is almost a historical constant. At the time of publication, 2,800 full time and voluntary staff of the Order of Malta in Germany were working in the refugee service in about 100 locations, caring for more than 25,000 people every day.

The focus now is integration – integrating migrants into local communities. The key for success is the labour market. Refugees have a high motivation to work and need to be sure as soon as possible after arrival of their prospects of remaining in Germany. The Integration Law of August 2016 aimed at providing easier access to the labour market for asylum applicants and recognised asylum seekers. Learning the language is also vital – and 25% of those who arrived in 2015-16 now have employment. Another consideration is the relationship between migration and crime, but analysis shows that transgressors are mainly those asylum seekers who have a low perspective for remaining - those with a lack of prospects and isolation are an incentive for conflict and violence.

The main reasons for the high number of refugees in Germany are humanitarian crises and unstable political and economic conditions in many countries. In 2015 and 2016 over 1.2 million refugees came to Germany, the largest group being from Syria, then Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran, then Eritrea. Asylum applications: 70% under 30 years of age, 30% from minors, two out of three migrants are male, two thirds are ethnic Arabs and 75% are Muslim. [In a population comparison, in Germany only one third are under 30, and 20% are over 65.] The refugees who came to Germany in 2015 and 2016 came mainly from countries to which they will not be returning in the near future. They need to be integrated into the labour market. By April 2017 their employment rate was below the average for the foreign population. In June 2017 192,000 were unemployed. Barriers included poor language skills and low levels of qualifications.

Migrants have in principle a right to be treated with dignity, in line with their human rights and the rule of law. For their reception and integration from a Christian-ethical point of view, it is the application of the Christian commandment to love thy neighbour. Economic refugees are accepted on the basis of economic and political criteria.



As newcomers arrive at the Order's refugee centres they are provided with warm clothing and shoes for the cold winter

Committing to the integration of refugees

The initial care stage is now complete and the focus has moved to sustainable integration into the labour market. This next stage is supported by a group set up in 2016, the 'Wir zusammen Foundation' (Us Together Foundation) where employees of various SMEs and corporations offer numerous training and further education programmes, and act as mentors to refugees. The support network continues to grow and it is also clear that migration brings changes that benefit the German economy. As the head of the Job Centre in Muenster says: 'There is an interplay between integration into work and into society.' He notes that many refugees are very motivated and eager to work, and that the most effective method for language acquisition is in providing opportunities for practice as well. Integration courses which address the participants' own characteristics are also offered by local states and municipalities, employment agencies and many charitable institutions. Vocational training is also a priority – only 19% of the refugees had vocational training or had completed a course of study. There is a need to simplify social legislation, to make it comprehensible to the migrant applicants. The federal government's total asylum-related expenditure in 2016 was estimated to be 21.7 billion euros, recognising that the labour market integration of refugees is essential for long term sustainability.

1. Malteser Migration Report – Facts instead of sentiment:
<https://www.malteser.de/migration-fluechtlingshilfe.html> Cologne, October 2017

The Order of Malta in Germany: refugee focus - integration

The Order of Malta in Germany has been working in refugee aid and migration for over 20 years. The challenge in 2015-16 was exceptional. Since the acute need for emergency accommodation and care has passed, the emphasis is now on integration into local communities.

The first assessment resulted in 3,000 volunteers organising accommodation to be ready in less than 48 hours, in 160 facilities with 700-1,000 beds and 54,000 people cared for daily during the influx. Asylum applications in 2016 totalled 745,545. From September 2016 the flow declined significantly and care demands are now for 30,000 refugees in 100 facilities. Every fourth refugee in Germany has been assisted by an Order of Malta volunteer on at least one occasion. Integration programmes include language courses and acculturation.

In July 2016, in an exceptional concert, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Hamburg Symphony Orchestra and the Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach choir, rang out in one of the over a hundred refugee camps the Order of Malta runs in Germany. Sponsored by the Order of Malta in Germany, the Minister of State in the Federal Chancellery and the Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration, the emphasis was on joy and community: 'Eines Freundes Freund zu sein' (to be a friend's friend). A small child in a German town was asked recently: 'In your kindergarten do you have foreigners?' The reply came back at once: 'In my kindergarten we have only children.'

2. The Roma: creating dignity, building futures

A human rights issue

Ambassador Franz Salm

is the first holder of the recently created role of the Sovereign Order of Malta's Ambassador for the Roma



In September 2013 Franz Salm was appointed the Sovereign Order of Malta's Ambassador for the Roma. It was a challenge that arrived at the right time, he says. He had just retired from thirty years of corporate life and did not see himself 'just sitting around... I wanted to do something to help people who needed help. This is the essence of the Order and my own perspective, too.'

The background to his brief: well before 2013 there were already activities to help Roma communities carried out by relief organisations of the Order of Malta, but with an Ambassador at the helm, the work would acquire much higher coordination. The Order's work recognises that with Roma and travellers - there are approximately 12 million of them, the largest and most vulnerable minority in Europe - they are not only a social, but also a severe political challenge. The Ambassador cites the World Bank survey of February 2015, emphasising its central points - that we need to address the deep inequalities surrounding the Roma, that this is a human rights issue as well as smart economics - with young Roma constituting 10-20% of new labour market entrants.¹ The Order, he notes, with 108 embassies worldwide, has an effective network for activities in this field.

In the first years in his new post, the Ambassador fundraised 1m euro for 11 projects, and fundraising from both public and private sources continues apace.

He explains: 'It is a 600-year old drama for the Roma - but things really work if you give them dignity. Social workers are needed 24/7 - you have to stay with them, you can't leave them without attention. These are not our guests! They have dignity. You need a balance between social thinking and the needs of civil society.'

Below poverty there is misery

As he discusses the needs of the Roma - he has travelled extensively in Eastern and Central Europe on fact-finding missions - he warns 'Below poverty there is misery.' And he cautions that Eastern Slovakia will face the greatest challenges in the coming years: gypsies are 20% of the population. Of that 20%, 30% speak Romani, not Slovak.

The Order's projects for the Roma focus on seven areas of need in Roma community centres:

- hygiene and health facilities
- medical checks
- kindergarten and playground
- tutoring school children
- counselling for the mothers
- apprenticeships, and
- music, school and other activities leading to local assimilation.



The key to social integration is education

The most effective way to engage young Roma to learn, explains the Ambassador - the key, in fact - is to encourage the mothers to send their children to school. 'We counsel the mothers. And we train the girls to weave, the boys to do carpentry. We also educate the young in social behaviour, to build their self-confidence - we teach them to greet people and look them in the eye. When the children behave normally, people lose their mistrust of them, social prejudice disappears. A Jesuit who has looked after children in Sibiu, Romania, for years described them: 'These are all my children. Now, some are going to university.'

The Ambassador organised a pilgrimage to Rome last year for 220 Roma from six countries. They had an audience with Pope Francis. 'An unforgettable experience for everyone.'

Order of Malta projects are now underway in Albania, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. Ambassador Salm is engaged in unifying the programmes in each country, to review successes and share best practices. Progress is already evident, heartening for the organisations and encouraging for the communities themselves, as they begin to see they really do have a future, too.

Young Roma are encouraged to join in their local community in Transylvania through riding lessons and after school teaching. As a result, their academic progress has advanced significantly

1. World Bank/Region/Europe and Central Asia/Overview, February 24, 2015

The impact of integration: the eyewitness

1. Syria and Turkey: the longing for the homeland

Developing support programmes, making a living in a foreign country

Janine Lietmeyer

*Malteser International's Desk Officer
for Syria*

From a pre-war population in Syria of 22 million in 2011, 5.5 million have left, but a larger number are internally displaced. All borders are now tightly closed by the neighbouring countries, which carry the largest burden of hosting Syrian refugees. Since November 2017, there have been pounding air strikes and bombardments in Idlib. "The creation of the so-called de-escalation zones has led to a reduction in violence," says Janine Lietmeyer. "But Idlib with 1.5 million inhabitants and a million displaced persons has seen a massive increase in air strikes. More than 100,000 people have sought refuge near the Turkish border, where living conditions are miserable as the civil war enters its seventh year."

Currently it is extremely problematic for humanitarian organisations to work in Syria, so since 2013 Malteser International has been working from Turkey in partnership with local Syrian organisations to provide medical care for the displaced.

What does being 'displaced' mean in Syria?

Civilian and public infrastructure, under constant bombardments from Syrian and Russian Air Forces, are destroyed. A huge number of internally displaced people are in camps near the Turkish border, where the Air Forces could not fly attacks. The camps are on ungravelled ground and families live in tents – in muddy conditions in the very cold, wet winters, in dust in the extremely hot summers.

What is daily life like for displaced people?

People not only suffer from violence and personal loss (over 400,000 dead so far),





Syria's economy is shattered. The security situation means families in rural areas cannot cultivate their land, trade and business income have dried up, everyone struggles. The displaced turn to negative coping mechanisms - reduced food intake, child labour, early marriage to alleviate the responsibility of caring for female children. IDPs are even more vulnerable because of the harsh living conditions in the camps. Lack of access to health care poses risks to the whole population, due to absence of any state authority responsible for public services, destruction of health facilities and scarcity of qualified health staff.

How do cross border medical aid projects work?

With restricted access for international organisations, especially after the abduction and killing of international aid workers by the so-called Islamic State, we rely on a Syrian partner organisation inside Syria. Initially, it was a group of doctors from Aleppo needing technical and financial support to work as emergency responders (none had this expertise), so Malteser International experts teamed up with them. We share an office in the Turkish border town of Kilis and jointly have a hospital and four primary health care clinics in the IDP camps on the Syrian side. All supplies come in from Turkey. The Turkish Government and the Turkish Red Crescent are facilitating the border crossing of material and staff for the partner organisations.

What dangers are the humanitarian partners exposed to, for example, in Aleppo?

Until December 2016 when Aleppo was recaptured by Syrian government forces, Malteser International helped our Syrian partner to run a children's hospital in the opposition-held part of the city. After it was destroyed, the improvised clinic run by our partner had to be relocated three times, due to shelling and barrel bombs. The last fully-qualified paediatrician, Dr. Muhammad Waseem Maaz, was killed during the shelling of the Al Quds hospital on 27 April 2016.

At the border crossing between Syria and Turkey, the Order's international relief agency, Malteser International, provides medical and social care

Despite this, and the threat of siege, the hospital staff refused to leave, being the only specialised services for an estimated 60,000 children in eastern Aleppo. During the siege, July to December 2016, the children's hospital moved to the building's basement for protection. The building took two direct hits in November. By then, medical supplies, fuel and food stocks had been depleted and no-one could bring in relief goods. The children's hospital had to stop in December because front lines were closing in and the medical staff were among the 35,000 evacuees to the remaining opposition-held areas in Idlib and Azaz.

With 3.1 million registered refugees, Turkey is the largest host of refugees in the world. In Kilis, around 250,000 Syrians are hosted in 23 camps. The rest, plus many refugees of other nationalities, live outside the camps in very challenging circumstances.

Despite the enormous efforts of the Turkish government, local authorities and host communities, there are still gaps in support, especially for vulnerable refugee groups.

The rehabilitation hospital in Kilis

Although the border is officially closed, the Turkish authorities have always facilitated the cross-border medical evacuation of severely wounded patients to the State hospital in Kilis. The patient load during the first conflict years was overwhelming and there was an urgent need to support the Turkish structures. So Malteser International set up a post-operative hospital in Kilis for Syrian patients needing longer-term rehabilitation. Many in the 48-bed facility had multiple injuries; many will live with permanent disabilities. Everyone in the medical team is a Syrian health professional who comes from the refugee community in Kilis.

What is the psycho-social damage?

As well as medical care in the rehabilitation hospital, psychologists and social workers have developed a support programme for patients and their families. Patients come from a cultural background where psychological pathologies are stigmatised, so it is challenging to encourage them to express negative feelings. Making a living in a foreign country while surviving in very crowded housing situations is sometimes more stressful than the experience of violence and harsh conditions during the flight from Syria.



Young refugee students at the Order's school in Kilis, Turkey, integrating into the host country



How does Malteser International help the refugees?

Community centres next to the rehabilitation hospital serve the refugees' needs. The centres – Malteser International supports one in Kilis, another in Istanbul – offer courses in Turkish, and practical skills such as computer applications or vocational training. Speaking the language is key for integration and there is high demand in the centres.

How do you help the children?

With no imminent solution to the conflict in Syria, the refugee children are encouraged to integrate in their host community. They are entitled to free education in Turkish schools, but need support to adapt to the system and the language. For example, our Istanbul training centre offers courses to highschoolers, to prepare them for the entry exam for Turkish universities.

Close to the Turkish border, Malteser International supports two organisations for Syrian children with special needs - an orphanage in Reyhanli for 60 unaccompanied Syrian children and a project in Kilis for young disabled.

Do the refugees seek to return home or to start a new life abroad?

I believe you never lose the emotion of longing for your homeland. Syrians feel very strongly about their country. They say that the instant peace is restored every Syrian will go home immediately. But the realities - a protracted conflict situation, massive infrastructure destruction and little hope of a comprehensive political solution – mean many Syrians in Turkey seek integration for the sake of their children. The first group of refugee children born in Turkey will enter school this year without any documentation as Syrian citizens.

The challenge of being forced to start a new life abroad is not unique to Syrians: it is shared by millions of refugees worldwide.

A positive academic experience for Syrian children in Turkey

2. Albania: On being a foreigner in one's own country

The problems facing returnees

Maranaj Marku

Director of Malteser Albania



Albania has a population of three million and a difficult history – five centuries of Ottoman rule, and then 50 years, 1945-1992, under a severe Communist regime. The fall of the Berlin wall was followed by the fall of the Albanian regime, and the country is still in a transition period. The Albanian state cannot yet guarantee a life with dignity for all its citizens: incomes are low and do not cover basic needs, social support is minimal, the health system is non-functional and the education system needs to be more efficient.

Thus, many Albanians left the country because of the economic situation, or to escape misery, or because they saw no perspective in Albania, or to seek opportunities abroad.

Who left and why?

In post-Communist Albania there have been three waves of emigration: after the fall of Communism, in 1991-92, after the financial and political crisis of '97, and during the last three years as the economic and political situation deteriorated. The first wave was mainly young people, but now there are families too. Most are from the north, which is less developed than the rest of the country.

Where did they go and for how long?

Most preferred Germany as their destination because it could offer very good social protection and employment possibilities. However, some families emigrated to benefit from the good health system there. Other European countries - France, Belgium, and the Netherlands - were also recent targets. The emigrants stayed abroad from some years to a few months, depending on the processing speed of their immigration application in the host country. In general Albanians are well integrated in Germany and in the other host countries, the children go to school, the adults seek jobs and many succeed.

Why did they come back to Albania?

Those returning did so only after the immigration services refused their applications, or the law enforcement structures of the host country did so. To extend their stay, there are many cases of Albanian families changing their address in the host country after refusal of their immigration request. But often the law enforcers found the new location and forced families back to Albania, with not even the time to gather up their documents. One can imagine the conditions of these families, the psychological situation of their children at the Albanian cross border points, after waiting hours, without documents, distressed, confused...

How many left and how many have returned?

During the last three years over 100,000 people left Albania. In 2015, around 55,000 Albanians officially requested refugee status in Germany, with many others living in Germany without officially declaring their address.

There is no official register, but from contacts with returned families we know that the number of returnees is growing. In Germany refugee and immigration services are in general refusing their applications for refugee status. From 34,000 processed applications in 2016 only 10 Albanians received asylum status.

Most returnees have nowhere to return to, because they sold their houses before leaving, and even those who did not, sold all their possessions. Depending on the time spent abroad, many no longer have contacts in Albania. The longer the time as a refugee, the better integrated into the host country, but the possibilities to return voluntarily are fewer and fewer and acceptance of the 'new' situation in Albania more and more difficult.

What conditions did they find on return?

The conditions they find on return are worse than those they left: accommodation is scarce, there are difficulties finding a job because of the general situation in Albania, and lack of training and inefficient social services are but the first obstacles. Three months after a family leaves Albania, social services stop, children are de-registered from schools and kindergartens and the families lose health insurance. Thus, many consider going back to Germany or another European country where they can stay in a refugee camp, benefit from social services, earn more money than working 10 hours a day in Albania and their children are settled in kindergartens and schools.

How does Malteser Albania help?

Two years ago Malteser Albania started a new programme – aid for the reintegration of returnees in north Albania.

Our psychological and medical teams first meet needy returnees. We are often told about special cases from the border police.

We offer psychological support, provide medicines, hygiene kits and food. If needed, we offer transport to their home or if they have nowhere to go, we mediate with governmental and/or nongovernmental services to find them temporary housing. If we do not succeed, we pay a hotel for some weeks until we find decent accommodation. In cases where family members need medical aid, our team contacts the medical services in Germany or host countries where the patient had received medical treatment, to have their medical notes transferred to the health services in Albania.

Another team, a legal assistant and a social worker, advises on enrolment in the state benefits scheme and health insurance and helps the family register the children in kindergarten and school. In between times, they can attend the Malteser kindergarten, after school programmes, or the medical and health services offered by Malteser Albania, thanks to the financial support of our donors. Malteser Albania offers returnees mediation and assistance for vocational training and employment possibilities.

We believe that being near our returnees at a time when they feel they are foreigners in their own country, with our staff and volunteers caring for them professionally, is fuelling our energies in support of their reintegration into Albanian society.



Conditions for many in Albania are very precarious. The Order is providing support to the most needy in the north of the country

3. France: A specialised programme – the ‘Migrant Hub’ Helping Middle Eastern refugees to integrate

Clotilde Giner

*Deputy Director Migrant Hub –
Ordre de Malte France*

Benjamin Serven

*Refugees Relief Activities
Coordinator, Ordre de Malte France*

Ordre de Malte France has been running a specialised programme since summer 2014, to aid persecuted populations in the Middle East who have fled from conflict or violence, and who are claiming asylum in France. By the end of 2017, 564 persons had benefited from the programme, including 198 children.

In its ‘Migrant Hub’, the Order has set up three areas of assistance: immediate support for refugees; help in integrating families; legal support in the administrative detention centres. The Hub’s experts regularly speak at national and local conferences and work with State Ministries, parliamentary committees, magistrates and law courts.

Maintaining the human dignity of the refugees and assisting them to become independent is paramount. Principal areas of support are the provision of material help, offering good living conditions to arriving families and collecting and distributing basic necessities, food and furniture. Since summer of 2014, 356 persons were able to have access to public housing, giving them the opportunity to settle in their new country.

Practical help includes support for asylum seekers in the administrative and legal procedures the State requires: assistance in filling out the asylum application, advice on interviews with the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA), and how to apply for social benefits. Since this activity started three years ago, 335 applicants obtained legal protection as refugees. Creating a social bond is very important in developing these activities, so that the refugees can start a new life in France. Ordre de Malte France organises referrals to health practitioners,





links to schools, offers language orientation, researches sponsorships for students and assists in job search.

By promoting the learning of the language of their new country, refugees are helped to integrate. In 2016, the municipality of Paris, recognising this important step in the process of integration, called for projects to learn French for asylum seekers in residential centres. The Order, together with the municipality, has set up courses, which are given by Order volunteers. Two modules, each of three months, are offered. Their aim is to give the refugee newcomers the means to be autonomous in France, to acquire the keys to express themselves, and in this way to promote their integration into the community.

Benjamin Serven, Refugees Relief Activities Coordinator, on the Migrant Hub: 'To be suddenly uprooted in a few hours or days is to leave behind some part of oneself, to separate oneself from one's family, but also to separate from the cultural and professional codes... It really is an inner heartache. In addition to the administrative and material support we provide for refugees, what matters is creating a benevolent atmosphere so that they feel surrounded by support and warmth. However, they are the ones who have the resources to start anew, and it is indeed edifying to observe the energy they can deploy in creating their new lives!'

In France, the Order aids the integration of migrants into the society, offering a range of special programmes, consultations and skills training



Spotlight on special projects

Over 130,000 members, volunteers and employees work in 120 countries around the world. From hospice, to hospital, from clinic to soup kitchen, their only aim is to help. They see the need, and they create ways to support those who need supporting.

Creating an aid organisation

1. Hungary: ‘We put together what was needed. It has all been worth it’

How a nationwide organisation was born

Fr. Imre Kozma

Founder member of the Order of Malta's Hungarian Charity Service (Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat) and a 2016 winner of the European Citizen's Prize



In the summer of 1989 an extraordinary sight in a church garden in north Budapest was attracting great media attention, with national and international television crews and scores of press teams collecting at its gates – on some days, 62 crews. The garden was full of tents, from the fence to the church door. And 1,200 beds.

What had brought this about? Fr. Imre Kozma explains. He was the parish priest there. It was the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall. 30,000 East Germans suddenly poured into Hungary – families, grandmothers, children, pregnant women – most aiming to travel on to Austria. Some on foot, some in battered caravans, some in dilapidated Trabants – all were looking for shelter and some direction. Alerted by the West German consul, whose office was overrun, Fr. Kozma immediately mobilised his local volunteers – 160 of them – and before the day was out, tents had been erected in the garden, the beds made up, a field kitchen and a field hospital established, and a warm welcome was being extended to the refugees. ‘We put together what was needed. We ordered food from the city’s hotels. No-one ever asked us to pay!’ Two of the most efficient helpers turned out to be the Communist chairman of the local party secretariat and the party secretary.

As the days went by, word got around and more and more refugees arrived. The Hungarian Prime Minister, Miklós Németh, came. The East German consul came. The West German Ambassador came. The West German Foreign Minister came. Chancellor Helmut Kohl came.

At one stage, with the tents full, the overflow (4,000-5,000) slept in the church – in all, 48,600 people were accommodated that summer. The gesture was not without danger – Fr. Kozma was aware that informers were watching him and also taking notes on his volunteers and on the locals who had generously turned their gardens into temporary shelters for the exodus. Looking back at those chaotic times, Fr. Kozma shakes his head: ‘It was all worth it.’

The boy who had grown up in the Budapest parish of Zugliget had learned from his grandfather: ‘Our life is not ours, it belongs to others. We have to gift it.’ At school, his headmaster approved free tuition for him, ‘because the effort is worth it.’ Academically, he was proved right. Then, offered a football contract – he was a talented mid fielder – he turned it down to study for the priesthood – a courageous decision in those times. He had seen priests in his childhood – many were hidden in his village and met weekly at the local church – and admired their bravery. This was the Communist era and to be a priest could mean imprisonment or worse.

By the time he was consecrated, there was only one priest in Hungary who was not in prison. Fr. Kozma knew informers were everywhere and they ‘knew everything about everyone.’ At that time he decided to dedicate his life to caring for the poor. His duties included teaching catechism in school. On the first day he had just one stu-



dent. By the end of two months, there were eighty. The next year, 117. Over a thousand adults were coming to Sunday Mass. To reinforce the sense of community, he greeted everyone he passed in the street. After six months they were all greeting him – and it took ages to get to the church!

His next move, in Budapest, found him offering weekly religious talks to university students. Quite soon, 1,500 students turned up. The informers were there too! He heard thousands of confessions, after which many of the students were expelled. But they still say: 'It was worth it.' During this time Fr. Kozma was aware that he was always followed, and he was regularly interrogated. Nevertheless, he started up a 'Family therapy programme', building up to 2,800 couples. But because of this, he was forced to leave.

From acorns oak trees grow: Starting up the Hungarian Charity Service

However, he managed to return to his childhood parish and set up a small group of parishioners. He stayed there twenty years by which time 3,000 people were coming to Sunday Mass. Surveillance was always present, however, and it was known that the car number plates of all who drove to Mass were noted. He set up a social care system, starting with 800 student volunteers: this was the start of the Hungarian Charity Service of the Order (MMSz) which gradually expanded between 1977 and 1987. Another inspiring supporter turned up at that time: Csilla Boeselager. Together with Fr. Kozma, they expanded the service and by February 1989 it was officially registered. They called it 'love service', not 'help service', because the emphasis was on personal care for those who needed it.

Aware that the Hungarian community in Romania was very poor, every weekend they took a train to Romania, laden with parcels of aid. In December Romania exploded. The newly formed MMSz prepared trucks loaded with food, medicines, blankets, and set out. The aid trucks stopped en route in Budapest – 960 of them – and Fr. Kozma organised where the aid should go in the different, suffering towns in Romania. Be-

From its beginnings in 1988, the Hungarian Charity Service of the Order now runs 25% of the nation's support services

The Charity Service gives succour to refugees on the Serbo / Hungarian border with food, clothing and medical aid

tween 1989 and 1990, responding to these great crises, he organised 40,000 volunteers. The network expanded across the whole of Hungary and a number of concepts emerged:

- 1) The importance of the presence of the volunteers in the local environment: 'People should not be parachuted in to a location.'
- 2) The acceptance of others, being open to others: 'Our real home is in the heart of other people.'
- 3) Accompaniment – to accompany people in their moments of need.

Fr. Kozma observes: 'The political world uses these expressions now.' The efforts, undeniably, have been worth it.

What does Fr. Kozma see as his legacy?

'That I did not live in vain. Human life, as a form of art, is a drama. You either love until you die, or you do not live, because we express our love through our spirit of sacrifice. I am only related to a person for whom I have made a sacrifice. Everyone else is a stranger, if we do not have this relationship.' Why is it important to help, to do good? 'By doing good, we become better. You can only become good by doing good. We all need this experience – I can be better, I can do good. The Hungarian word for 'society' includes the idea of 'partner'. It implies that I can form a society only with people with whom I have a partnership.'

Although being busy in his parish, and with the growing charity service of the Order of Malta, people still came to see him. They came and they stayed. 'Today I cannot tell a young person who is searching 'come and celebrate' because what he or she sees would be completely foreign to him or her. S/he has no value system! I ask, what is a healthy soul? There are two qualities: 1) the soul allows itself to be value-oriented towards universal values; 2) it has a conscience, which is responsibility towards another person. Today we see that there is a moral crisis, that is, no universally accepted values; and there is no sense of conscience because there is no feeling of responsibility towards other people.'





Fr. Kozma sees being a chaplain of the Order of Malta as a particular manifestation of his Christianity. 'Christianity is a religion of signs, so if I think of mission, this is especially valid. When you live your life in a parish, the most you can aim for is to build a living community. Through the activities of the Order of Malta this circle widens. For my personal spiritual life the message is that one sees God in wider circles. To illustrate: the main groups here who need our help are the homeless. They are not loved. The gypsies (Roma) are not loved either. With the MMSz we think and act without discrimination. For example, in 1992 we welcomed thousands of Russian Jews who had arrived in Budapest, who were homeless. The MMSz is responsible for the homeless in Budapest – we are the only organisation in Hungary working in an integrated way.' He reflects: 'As a priest I meet a lot of people who are about to die. Most ask themselves: 'Did my life have a meaning?' What gives meaning to our lives is what we have done for others, whether one is a believer or not.'

The Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta

Founded officially in 1989, the Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta has 3,000 regular and 10,000 occasional volunteers. Led by Father Imre Kozma, it is now the major welfare organisation in the country and a trusted partner of Hungarian institutions. It has 350 branches, 130 local volunteer groups, 220 institutes and 2,200 employees. It also works in the civil defence area with its own teams to assist victims of natural disasters both in Hungary and abroad.

The Charity Service regularly distributes much needed food parcels for poor families

2. South Africa: a work that shapes lives and saves lives

A holistic care system with cultural sensitivity

Fr. Gerard Lagleder, O.S.B.

Founder and President of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard in Mandeni, South Africa, a relief organisation of the Order of Malta



The mission of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard centre is to provide a holistic care system (caring for the whole person), with projects in healthcare, child care and relief and social care. Fr. Gerard Lagleder, who has run these wide-ranging programmes since the Centre's start, explains: 'I had attended a dying lady in a local township who told me she could not afford to see a doctor, nor go to hospital. Shocked, I took her to be treated. The doctor attending her said very many of the local people were dying of malnutrition or total neglect at home. 'Can't we do something?' he pleaded. From this, our organisation began.' Fr. Gerard's aim was to found an organisation of South Africans, based locally, and working with local people.

Fr. Gerard grew up in Regensburg, Germany. He worked with the Order of Malta in Germany for over 30 years, and valued the need for good organisation, before moving as a missionary to South Africa, the fulfilment of a childhood dream. He was appointed parish priest of Mandeni in 1991. Together with a team of volunteers in the parish led by Mrs Clare Kalkwarf, within three months needy families in Zululand had received food and clothes, the children were encouraged to return to school and the men to get jobs. The work that would shape his life had begun.

Speak Zulu? 'I had no choice!'

Fr. Gerard speaks Zulu fluently: 'I had no choice,' he says and recounts that in the early days he was the only priest (and 'pale face') in a huge parish of 28 congregations, spread over 1,000 square kilometres, connected by unpaved roads.

Today, the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard is almost exclusively funded by private donations and some corporate donors - there is no compulsory health insurance in South Africa. The Centre has 82 staff and over 1,100 volunteers. 'We are overrun with volunteers,' says Fr. Gerard. 'It is considered a very prestigious activity.'

But Mandeni still has severe poverty, an unemployment rate of 52%, and 76% in Mandeni are HIV-positive. The Centre's HIV patients are mostly in their twenties and thirties and were infected in their teens, as the disease takes up to ten years to develop. There are many child-headed 'families' because a large percentage of the parents, that is, the young population who have succumbed to AIDS and where granny has died, means that the older siblings have to take on the parental role.

The Centre also treats patients suffering from deep decubital ulcers who have been neglected at home or by public hospitals. The staff receive many calls for help and often have to search to locate the patient's home. They ask for directions: 'It is here emaBhananeni (= at the bananas)! Go to ekuJulukeni (=placename meaning "in the sweat"), carry on to the Bumba river, cross it at the low level bridge and carry on until you get to a rusty scrap tractor next to the road in a ditch. Turn right there up the hill where the banana plants are. I will wait for you there.' When the ambulance crew fi-

nally arrives, they may have to drive for another half hour, on a pedestrian track, until they find the patient in a dilapidated clay hut with a thatched roof.

The Child and Youth Care Centre: not just an orphanage

A part of the Blessed Gérard Centre is its Child and Youth Care Centre. The fate of many children in the wider Mandeni area, who are neglected, abandoned, abused or orphaned (especially because of their parents dying from AIDS), prompted the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard to start the project. It is a home for children who otherwise would have no future. It is not just an orphanage. 'We provide a cosy home, love, security and medical treatment to abandoned, previously neglected, physically, mentally and sexually abused, HIV-positive and sick, handicapped and orphaned children between birth and adulthood. We raise them as well as we can.'

For the Hospice Fr. Gerard explains: 'We somehow have redefined the aim of 'hospice' from purely palliative end-of-life-care to providing optimal care and treatment.' The now well established HAART treatment for AIDS (Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy) is effective. Without treatment, life expectancy is plus or minus twelve months and sufferers are socially marginalised. With the treatment, AIDS will not shorten life and Fr. Gerard advises patients: 'Choose treatment – choose life!' He is proud that thousands have been reintegrated into their local communities.

In mid 2017, the Centre set up an 'assisted living and occupation' facility for young adults who have been wards of Blessed Gérard's Children's Home and attended special schools. 'We experienced that they have hardly any chance to live independently and to get any form of employment so we continue to help them,' he explains.

Future plans: Fr. Gerard dreams of establishing a nursing school to provide professional training for enrolled nursing assistants in a one-year-course.

What has working with the patients taught him? Fr. Gerard doesn't hesitate: 'Patience with the patients ("Europeans have a watch, Africans have time") and with myself ("One step at a time!"); respect for their beliefs, traditions, customs and culture and the necessity of cultural sensitivity in our approach; trust in God as the only absolutely reliable anchor and rescue vessel in an ocean of misery; admiration of their resilience, their thankfulness even for small things, their musical talent, their spirit.'

To feel needed and useful is a privilege

What inspires him? That he feels needed and useful, that he is privileged to follow the great examples of Blessed Gérard, founder of the Order, of St John Baptist, of St Benedict of Norcia, of St Teresa of Calcutta, all of whom were dedicated to caring for the sick and the poor. He is inspired, too, by the knowledge that the work of the Brotherhood gives value to the lives of the patients they care for, to the lives and dignity of the volunteers, to the efforts at finding jobs for those they have supported – and thus creating a tremendous impact on the society.

At the Centre's 25th anniversary celebrations in November 2017 Fr. Gerard paid tribute to the wonderful African volunteers he works with: 'You are the smiles that our patients get, you are the hugs that our children so dearly need.'

The Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

Founded in 1992 at Mandeni, the relief organisation of the Order of Malta in South Africa, through its Care Centre for the poor and needy and people living with HIV/AIDS, runs health care projects: AIDS care and hospice; child care-pre-primary school, a children's home, malnutrition clinic; relief and social care projects, including a first aid and emergency service and disaster relief.

For more information: www.bsg.org.za



The Care Centre and hospice comfort the sick and the dying who would otherwise suffer alone and untreated

Creating a supply organisation

Switzerland: a specialised recycling operation

Creating a network of care across the world

Colonel Guido Stöckli

*Founder and Director of the
'Aide et Assistance' Foundation*



For over twenty years, the Swiss Association of the Order of Malta has been collecting relief goods – second hand materials in good condition, such as hospital beds, school desks and chairs, blankets, clothing, bicycles - and sending them to those in need in other countries. This network stretches across the world, from Asia, to Africa, to Eastern Europe, to South America. Now established as the Aid and Assistance Foundation since 2013, the work continues unabated.

How it all began

The project was started in 1994 by Guido Stöckli, who had retired early from professional military service – and promptly took on another very large task. He had observed that, with the Swiss Army about to reduce its size, there were considerable stocks of never used hospital material, and medical and surgical equipment no longer needed and likely to be thrown away. Liaising between the army and the Order of Malta Swiss Hospitaller Service, the recycling project got underway.

Stöckli organised a network of volunteers, many of whom were former colleagues. It is a network which has grown exponentially over the years and with the invaluable help, things literally took off. The logistics required at startup were demanding: to create more networks - 1) of contacts who wished to donate well-kept disused or older equipment. These were, and are, mainly hospitals and clinics all over Switzerland, as well as companies producing medical equipment; 2) to set up a warehouse to store the donated goods (located in Flamatt); 3) to establish a database of institutions in countries needing these supplies.

Still today, the practicalities mean that all large items, such as hospital beds, must be flat packed as much as possible to save container space for shipping. Transport to the various countries must be organised. Sponsors must be found to pay for the transport, which is by truck and/or ship. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has generously provided financial support for the shipping and the Swiss Army gives practical support for transports inside Switzerland. In the packing preparations, all indications of price have to be deleted, otherwise the customs authorities of the importing country might consider the goods as commercial and request duty.

All the action is carefully planned and all the work is done by volunteers

At the receiving end, other vital contacts are organised, working with the Order's Ambassadors to make sure all custom papers are prepared in advance, to avoid import duties on the materials. The receiving institution organises local delivery and officially notifies the Foundation of the shipment's arrival. M. Stöckli explains: 'The action is planned very carefully by diplomatic representations in Switzerland or representa-



tives of the Sovereign Order of Malta locally. The sovereign status and the tradition of the Order are recognised in about 80 % of all countries. During the planning phase we consider carefully the nature of the goods to be shipped and the necessary manpower to prepare the shipment. All the work is voluntary.

Following delivery of the goods, many touching thank you letters arrive at the Foundation. For example, from the religious director of a residential home in eastern Slovakia: 'Thanks to the Aide et Assistance donation, the living quality of our seniors has significantly improved'; from the parish priest assigned to a seniors home in Chile: 'Without a doubt, the acquisitions that I detail below will greatly improve the quality of life of our residents and will allow active and healthy ageing: we received 12 clinical beds, 4 wheelchairs, 6 walking frames, 8 padded chairs, 5 table lamps and several boxes of small extras – pencils, paper and so on.'

New in 2017 was a cooperation arrangement with the Swiss Red Cross for projects in Bosnia and Kyrgyzstan, and a 2% increase in the volume of transported goods. With two transports every week, 129 semi-trailers carried goods covering 9,000 cubic metres, including 2,760 electric beds and 800 school desks. The estimated commercial value was 18 million Swiss francs.

As M. Stöckli emphasises: 'Such help is only possible through the work of all the many voluntary helpers from our sections and our volunteers in the warehouse.'

A network of institutions across Switzerland aids in donating equipment and non-perishable goods for Aide et Assistance

Sending aid around the world

Since 1994: over 1,230 semi-trailers and maritime containers have transported goods with a total volume of 105,000 cubic metres, weighing over 46,000 tons, to the value of 420 million Swiss francs. The benefitting countries in Europe are: Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine; in South America: Chile, Guyana, Venezuela; in Africa: Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius.

For more information: www.aidass.ch

Coordinating an international programme

1. Lebanon: a holiday respite which brings hope and joy to disabled guests

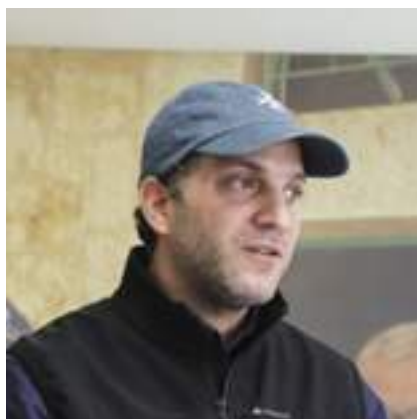
Individual care and attention changes lives

Patrick Jabre

Project Manager, Chabrouh camps

Oumayma Farah

Lebanese Association communications



The aim of the Al Fadi Centre in Chabrouh, a little north east of Beirut, is to bring love, joy, comfort and friendship into the hard lives of disabled people in Lebanon. The Centre, established in the 1980s and developed by young volunteers from the Order of Malta in the late 1990s, is now a permanent holiday destination offering love and care to its disabled guests.

The issue of disability is a problem in Lebanon – families often feel shame at having a disabled child, the government does not offer support for people with disabilities, and consequently the result is to put the child into an institution. With the institutions very overworked and reliant on non-government funds, their charges tend to miss out on one-to-one affection. This is why each disabled guest at Chabrouh is paired with a volunteer for complete care and attention. The motto at Chabrouh: “Our guests are our lords, and we are here to serve them.”

Teaching how to love

Melkite Father Romanos Bou Assi, Director of the Centre, explains that for the volunteers ‘The camp experience encourages them to think deeply about the meaning of their own lives.’ The President of the Order’s Lebanese Association, Marwan Sehnaoui, who follows the Centre’s work very closely, adds: ‘As we look at the world around us, and its problems, it is clear that something is missing. Which is why we decided that the spirituality of this house is to teach how to love. Because a world without love cannot work.’

The first volunteer team of 26 young people from Germany arrived in Chabrouh in the summer of 1998 to start up the first camp, and offer a holiday to disabled children. By 2003, the project could operate for two months with two teams running six camps. And in 2005, the Lebanese Association of the Order of Malta organised the first winter Christmas camp. After a two year interval due to the war in Lebanon, the service was able to offer three camps in 2008. A year later, the Order of Malta founded the CAR-AVAN programme (see BOX).

From year to year, the Chabrouh project has developed, continuing to attract young Order of Malta volunteers from many parts of the world. By 2012, there were 15 camps, in 2016, 18 camps and 12 national delegations. Now, there are 26 camps, including those run exclusively by the Order’s Lebanese Youth Group. For both guests and volunteers, the numbers continue to grow, and the camps are now open all year. The 620 recent guests included underprivileged children, the disabled and the elderly with, for the first time, child cancer survivors – all cared for with love by the current crop of 930 volunteers from nine national delegations: Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Lebanon, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

The day always starts with a group prayer, Mass is offered most days, and a range of

Order of Malta's Caravan programme for the young – a meaningful and exciting gap year

“A questioning, challenging and beautiful adventure”

Marie-Liane, Volunteer

The Order of Malta CARAVAN project enables young adults older than 18 years to spend ten months in Lebanon and have the experience of getting to know different people, different cultures, different religions.

The mission

To serve the sick and the poor and make their life more colourful.

To show young western Christians the charisma of the Order of Malta and enable them to become future ambassadors of the Order's cause of peace and reconciliation in the Middle East, in their home country.

To strengthen mutual trust and understanding between young people of different religions.

What does the name CARAVAN symbolise?

It originates from when young men wanting to join the Order of Malta spent two preparation years, called Caravans, in Malta. It was a time of training in the Order's most important duties - caring for the sick and the military defence of Malta. The candidates had to serve in the Order's hospitals on the island.

What the CARAVAN programme offers

- Service for mentally retarded and physically disabled people
- Arabic language course; university courses: Middle East religion and culture
- Ten months of fun, broadening horizons and making new friends
- Field trips, overwhelming Lebanese hospitality and dazzling Beirut.

The course is scored at 16 ECTS points and is taught by professors at the Université Saint Joseph. Language is English.

Where Caravan's services operate

Work takes place in three care homes for the severely disabled. The duty of the 'Caravanistas': set up a programme of activities, conduct basic simple physiotherapy, give time and love to those who need it. Their main task is to reduce the loneliness and unhappiness of the disabled in their normal course of life.

Nationalities who have attended: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Netherlands, Singapore, Switzerland, United States.

Benedicta Solf

Project Management Assistant, Caravan Alumni

For more information about the Alumni-Circle of Caravan – <http://orderofmalta-caravan.squarespace.com/volunteers/>

activities, from hiking, to olive picking, to theatre plays, 'Olympic' games and an outing to the beach are all up for guests to enjoy.

Every guest is received with the highest regard and the volunteers focus on making their time at Chabrouh as joyful as possible. These, the Order's youth from many countries, give intense service in Chabrouh and at the same time form strong international friendships with their fellow volunteers.

The Chabrouh Centre hopes that its contribution will transform doubt into love, that peace will one day reign across the Middle East, that Lebanese Christians will feel they are not alone, and that they can trust in the future of Christianity in Lebanon and the region.



The Order runs summer camps in Lebanon for disabled youngsters as well as for young adults

2. Cuba: Reaching out to people in need in Latin America and the Caribbean

A vital medical and social support

José Joaquín Centurion

Hospitaller, Cuban Association



The Cuban Association's energetic hospitaller describes their recent activities

The hospitaller for the Order's Cuban Association, Dr. D. José Joaquín Centurión y López-Oña, looks back on a very busy year during which the Association's works gave continuing support to people in need in Cuba, Miami, Haiti, Columbia and Dominican Republic. He records: 'These activities represent more than the (very appreciated) donations of money and time. They are carried out by members of our Association, and benefactors and friends of the Association. We also acknowledge the significant collaboration of the Dominican Association of the Sovereign Order of Malta who assist us in our missions in Santiago de los Caballeros, as well as the assistance given by the Colombian Association of the Order of Malta in the Duni Project, Sierra Nevada.'

Support in Cuba

The Association continues its sponsorship of projects in 69 Cuban parishes, including four dispensaries of the Siervas de Maria, a centre for children with Down syndrome and a housing project for retired priests in Havana. A new office, set up in Vedado in 2016, is proving very effective in coordinating a range of projects on the island. These include serving more than 700,000 meals every year to 13,000 elderly and needy, in 62 'comedores populares' (soup kitchens) in the parishes. The centres report back every four months on number of meals served, number of recipients, number of volunteers and how many weeks in the year the service operated. JJ Centurion describes some examples: 'In the Cathedral of Santiago de Cuba, 181 people are helped every day – 121 of them are lonely elderly or have disabilities. The Centre serves around 4,525 meals a month. At the Santísima Trinidad church, 130 beneficiaries receive 3,120 meals monthly – 50 at the church's Centre, 80 delivered to homes.'

The Dominican Republic mission

From September 2016 through February 2018, four medical missions, led by Drs Jorge Echenique and JJ Centurion brought 88 doctors and nurses to the ILAC Centre (Institute for Latin American Concern) in Santiago, Dominican Republic, to offer their skills to local patients free of charge. Each mission lasted four days, with around 1,000 patients treated, many seeing more than one specialist in the time. The wide range of care includes cardiology, internal medicine, paediatrics, general surgery, dentistry and radiology. The teams also brought with them donated quantities of medications, with a value of USD\$ 750,000, plus surgical equipment. They were accompanied by Fr. Ernesto Travieso who offered spiritual guidance, daily Mass and spiritual exercises.

These missions have been carried out for years, and are organised with the local communities' 'Cooperadores de Salud' who assist in the health project across 160 communities around the Cibao Valley region.

With all the volunteers, physicians, nurses, pharmacists and translators donating their time and each paying their own expenses, the missions are performed at no cost to the Cuban Association. In addition, members of the Dominican Association offer assistance with facilitating the medications through Customs.

Completion of a medical centre in Colombia: the 'Duni project'

The Cuban Association, in partnership with the Order's Colombian Association and Malteser International, has recently completed a medical assistance centre, a clean water system and solar panels, in Bunkwimake, in the isolated mountain area of the Columbian Sierra Nevada forest. 'Duni' means 'thank you' in the local Arhuaco language. The aim is to improve the health of the 3,000 essentially marginalised people from the Arhuaco and Kogi tribes who live in these remote villages and to coordinate efforts with the government health authorities. A project for the possibilities of telemedicine is underway, as well as funding for students to study medical arts at the University of Magdalena, in the city of Santa Marta, Magdalena.

Education in Haiti

In northern Haiti, the Cuban Association has been concentrating on medical education, arranging for nurses to be trained in basic life support by the American Heart Association. The nurses are now the educators who can teach local nurses and leaders how to perform cardio-respiratory resuscitation in emergency situations.

Emergency support after Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico

Hurricane Maria, the tenth most intense Atlantic hurricane on record, caused destruction and death across the arc of islands in the Caribbean and the Antilles. It hit Puerto Rico in late September 2017, creating catastrophic damage. For weeks in Maria's wake, most of the island's population suffered from flooding and lack of resources. Total losses were estimated at USD\$ 9 billion, mostly in Puerto Rico. The Cuban Association's Puerto Rico Delegation swung into action and since early October 2017 has been giving emergency assistance and funding at two key centres: one at Punta Santiago, Humacao in the south east, the other in Guaynabo, providing 20,700 hot meals, distributing over 22,000 bottles of water, 8,575 packages of non-perishable food items. 206 patients were attended by the Delegation's doctors. Assistance is ongoing.

The 'Casa de Malta' in Miami

A service centre, the 'Casa de Malta', offering healthcare, social support and humanitarian aid to the poor in the San Juan Bosco parish in Miami has been running since 2008. A range of classes, including English language tuition, health and hygiene, are provided by 30 regular volunteers.

In 2017 the San Juan Bosco Clinic celebrated 25 years of service to the community of documented and non-documented poor in Miami. Members of the Cuban Association continue to volunteer their time and over 800 patients are seen every year and, where necessary, are referred to specialists who provide over 2,800 annual visits free of charge.



Volunteer medical missions in the Dominican Republic treat locals free of charge, attending to thousands of patients each year

3. North America: Restoration, reconciliation, rehabilitation

Prison ministry is a key Order mission

Gail Berardino

Hospitaller, American Association



The prison population in the United States is currently around 2.2 million. This statistic has doubled over the last 35 years. There are many reasons why – poverty, unemployment, lack of re-entry services. This population is among society’s most neglected and in great need of support. Recidivism rates are around 60%.

The four Order of Malta Associations in North America - the American, Canadian, Federal and Western - have a joint mission, launched with their prison ministry conference in 2014. Local activities operate under each Association. Their recognition was that prison ministry is a Christian response to the great need of people suffering in prisons and the need to focus on initiatives to help their re-entry into society. The outreach mission has 2,500 members and volunteers around the country.

The mission involves visiting county jails, state and federal prisons (minimum, medium and maximum security) and death row, producing a quarterly newsletter (55,000 are distributed), distributing bibles in English and in Spanish, and running a pen pal programme to maintain contact with inmates.

The impact of being a pen pal

The ‘Pen Pal Program’ involves over 150 Order of Malta members and volunteers who correspond six times a year with inmates who have agreed to participate. There must be no special favours asked, only first names are used, and the return mailing address is to the Order of Malta office. The aim is to provide information on current events which interest the inmate: it helps instil a positive attitude and demonstrates that someone cares. The organisation notes that studies show that those in prison who correspond with those outside are less likely to return to prison. An inmate’s response: ‘Your words of encouragement lifted my spirits and were helpful during stressful times.’ And another: ‘I want to thank you for always thinking of me and praying for me. I love the postcards. They put a smile on my face.’ An inmate on death row: ‘I can truthfully thank God for all that has happened to me – both good and bad. Looking back, it’s sort of interesting that the bad things actually resulted in me getting on the path towards salvation.’

Another activity is the Malta Justice Initiative, started in 2000 to educate and inform the public about the failings of the criminal justice system and the need for reform. It provides assistance for the formerly incarcerated and their families, encourages service providers and employers to assist the formerly incarcerated, and participates in public speaking events to create awareness and to educate the general public about the criminal justice system. It is also engaged in encouraging the setting up of vocational training and skill building, both before and after release.



Prison life is not easy and many inmates need support, both spiritual and practical. The Order's prison ministry, now rolled out nationwide, seeks to show them that they are not forgotten

Support programmes before and after release

In 2014 the Federal Association established its Prison Ministry Committee. Today it is active in 19 regions and has set up a range of programmes to help the incarcerated and their families. A recent initiative is the Committee's Restorative Justice Programme which has been set up to help the inmate to understand his situation, to cope with his life inside and his life afterwards on release. The programme runs over three days and centres around discussions of the crime and its impact on the prisoner, then concentrates on the impact on the community and finally the impact on the victim. Most inmates rarely or never see any family members while they are in prison, so these discussions are very supportive. The Order members and volunteers have also prepared guides for those recently released, which give practical advice and current information on public and private resources related to food, shelter, clothing, medical support, licences.

The mission affirms: The incarcerated can see by our words and our actions that someone cares about them and that they have worth as human beings.

* www.forbes.com (statistic, 1 July 2016)

Prison ministry, Portugal: The importance of trust

For almost twenty years, as part of a prison ministry programme, Fra' Ruy Villas Boas has been providing support and encouragement to inmates of a high security prison in Portugal

'I have been working in prisons since 2000 and it is a commitment that with the years turns into an addiction. In my case I volunteer in a High Security Prison so you are with the same people for many years and they have chosen to attend our regular meetings. From 740 inmates we have 150 who are Catholic. The Prison has two distinct areas according to crime categories, and we visit two days a week – one for each area, with an average of a little over 60 inmates attending per meeting.

We always begin with Mass and afterwards we talk to those who want to discuss their problems. We act as a bridge between them and their educators (ie, psychologists).

Before becoming a part of the prison ministry programme, one has to attend training sessions. It is also advised that we should take care not to describe our own lives, for our own security. However helpful the training, I would say that we always go on learning.

Trust is the most important objective – both with the prison hierarchy and with the inmate.'

Global Fund for Forgotten People

Building capacity for work of the Order throughout the world

Lisa Simpson

Chief Executive, Global Fund



The Global Fund for Forgotten People leverages the resources and global capabilities of the Order of Malta to:

- encourage, seed and support new initiatives of the Order to help the most vulnerable
- share best practices to extend the highest level of care to those we serve
- support the growth and expansion of existing proven projects
- help nascent projects increase capacity and achieve sustainability by providing resources, and support skills in fundraising and grant application.

The Global Fund for Forgotten People achieves this by partnering with individuals, foundations and organisations that wish to bring their resources to bear in serving the most forgotten and marginalised through the Order of Malta.

Many of the initiatives of the Order of Malta are encouraged and amplified through the financial support and expertise provided by the Order's Global Fund for Forgotten People. Since its inception, in 2011, the Fund has focussed on raising money for a range of Order of Malta projects which reach out directly to people who would otherwise be forgotten.

The Fund has made over 300 grants to 60 bodies of the Order in 72 countries since its inception. It is seeking new partners to further extend this work.

The Fund is registered as two legal entities – in England and Wales it is a registered charity (1148427) and in the United States it has 501(c)(3) status. The fund has received generous support from donors all over the world, and aims to provide a tax efficient and direct channel for donors to fulfil their global philanthropic objectives supporting the inspiring work of the Order from malnourished families in Korea, to expanding elderly care facilities in Cuba and neonatal care in Bethlehem.

Through its two legal entities the Fund raises awareness of and support for particular issues which have fallen under the radar, and which struggle to get public attention. The Fund is moving into a next development phase, to incubate and encourage the growth of exciting new projects across the Order world, and thus grants for new and fledgling projects now take centre stage. The Fund believes that this early encouragement is the incentive some ideas need to get off the ground, and as it moves into this next funding period, the call-up for its services has never been more popular. In addition, the Fund is adding capacity building to its range of support – developing and strengthening the skills and resources needed for projects to thrive.

The Global Fund relies on the generosity of its donors to fund the bi-annual grant pro-



programme and works hard to ensure all the funds are directed to where they have the most impact in support of the forgotten. The Fund has become a vital fundraising resource for the work of the Order worldwide, both through direct fundraising and grant giving activities and through fundraising collaborations with national Associations.

www.forgottenpeople.org

The Global Fund supports projects for disadvantaged children in many countries

306 grants awarded

Projects in 72 countries supported

Among recent grants:

- **For the Lebanese Association**, the Fund has helped support the Socio-Medical Centre, Roum that provides services for 1,800 patients including the local population, Syrian refugees and those in need from over 85 surrounding villages.
- **For the Order's Russian Relief Service**, the Fund has helped the Mother and Child programme. Established in 2016, the programme 'Mother and Child' provides provisional shelter and care for more than 50 families with young children. Social workers organise daily support for the mothers and their babies, including medical visits and nutritional advice. The project has been expanded, on the request of the Russian government, and participated in a one-off campaign for emergency food assistance, providing for 125 families.
- **For the Djougou Hospital in Benin, run by the Order's French Association since 1971**, the Fund is supporting a programme for Improving Care of Pregnant Women, an outreach programme from the hospital. This includes the treatment of women with obstetrical fistulas, a leading cause of maternal mortality.



The heart of the Sovereign Order of Malta

With its seat of government in Rome since 1834, the Grand Master of the Sovereign Order, together with the Sovereign Council, its senior governing body, oversees the extensive activities and projects of the Order worldwide.

State and Official visits



His Holiness Pope Francis greets the Grand Master for the annual audience, Vatican

2018

MONTENEGRO, 8 OCTOBER 2018

Milo Đukanović, President of the Republic of Montenegro is received by Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre at the Magistral Palace. Discussions included the protection and restoration of the icon of Our Lady of Philermos, in Cetinje, Montenegro. During the meeting President Đukanović thanked the Order of Malta for enabling Montenegrin cardiologists to participate in seminars on cardiovascular techniques in Naples.

1. Paul Biya, Cameroon
2. Vasilica Viorica Dancila, Romania
3. Sigmar Gabriel, Germany
4. Serzh Sargsyan, Armenia
5. Alexander Van der Bellen, Austria

CAMEROON, 16 JULY 2018

On his State Visit to Cameroon, 16-19 July, Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre is received by the President of the Republic of Cameroon, Paul Biya, and visits the projects of the Order in the country.

CAPE VERDE, 2 JULY 2018

Jorge Carlos Fonseca, President of the Republic of Cape Verde, is received by Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto in the Magistral Villa.

HOLY SEE, 22 JUNE 2018

Pope Francis receives Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre for the annual audience to mark the feast day of St John Baptist. In describing the Order's many works to the pontiff, Pope Francis tells him: 'Go ahead with courage, you express spirituality through your works.'

BENIN, 18 MAY 2018

Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre, receives the President of the Republic of Benin, Patrice Talon, in the Magistral Palace. The



Order of Malta has been present in the French-speaking African country for over 40 years.

ROMANIA, 11 MAY 2018

The Prime Minister of Romania, Vasiliuca Viorica Dancila, pays an Official Visit to Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre at the Magistral Palace. During the meeting, a Cooperation Agreement is signed between Romania – Ambassador Liviu-Petru Zapârțan – and for the Sovereign Order of Malta, Ambassador Stefano Ronca, Secretary General for Foreign Affairs.

GERMANY, 26 APRIL 2018

The Federal Republic of Germany's first ambassador to the Sovereign Order of Malta, Annette Schavan, is received in the Magistral Palace by the Lieutenant of the Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre to present her credentials.

ARMENIA, 5 APRIL 2018

At the Magistral Villa, the Lieutenant of the Grand Master, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto receives the President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, on his official visit, which also celebrates 20 years of diplomatic relations. A 10-Year Cooperation Agreement, with the objective of expanding the Order of Malta's health and social

activities in the country is signed.

PALESTINE, 16 FEBRUARY 2018

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Palestine, Riad El Malki, is received at the Grand Magistry by the General Secretary of the Foreign Affairs department, Ambassador Stefano Ronca. Many issues related to the current living conditions of the Palestinian communities were discussed.

CZECH REPUBLIC, 25 JANUARY 2018

A meeting between the Czech Deputy Foreign Minister, Ivo Sramek, and the Grand Hospitaller of the Order of Malta, Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel takes place in Prague. During his visit the Grand Hospitaller had talks with the Czech Republic's Minister of Health and with the Deputy Minister for Social Affairs.

LIECHTENSTEIN, 18 JANUARY 2018

The Foreign Minister of the Principality of Liechtenstein, Aurelia Frick, is received by the Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta Albrecht Boeselager. The focus of the meeting covers the development of projects for integrating migrants and refugees.

2017

RUSSIA, 22 DECEMBER 2017

The Order of Malta's Grand Hospitaller Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel visits Moscow for a series of talks with representatives of Russian authorities. Bilateral cooperation in health, social and humanitarian services between the Russian Federation and the Sovereign Order of Malta was the focus of the meetings.

AUSTRIA, 16 NOVEMBER 2017

The Lieutenant of the Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre receives the President of Austria, Alexander Van der Bellen in the Magistral Villa, Rome. The talks focussed on the excellent relations between the Austrian Republic and the Sovereign Order of Malta - a partnership of over two and a half centuries. The Cooperation Agreement signed in 2006 between the Order of Malta and the Austrian Foreign Ministry remains active.

GERMANY, 15 NOVEMBER 2017

Official visit of the German Foreign Minister, Sigmar Gabriel, for the opening of diplomatic relations between Germany and the Order of Malta. The German Foreign Minister is received by





The Order's flag flies over the Quirinal Palace, seat of the President of the Italian Republic

the Order's Grand Chancellor, Albrecht Boeselager in the Magistral Villa.

LEBANON, 19 OCTOBER 2017

The President of Lebanon, Michel Naim Aoun, receives the Lieutenant of the Grand Master, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre at Baabda Palace, Beirut. Talks centred on the key role the Order contributes, carrying out humanitarian and social projects within the country, with 10 medical and health centres as well as mobile medical units, which provide health services to both Lebanese and displaced Syrians.

ROME, 5 OCTOBER 2017

Twenty ambassadors and chargés d'affaires of European Union countries meet Albrecht Boeselager, Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta, in Rome. Topics discussed ranged from the migratory crisis scenarios to the role of the two ambassadors 'at-large' recently appointed by the Order of Malta to combat the scourge of human trafficking as well as its interventions in the crisis zones. Also discussed were the Order's cooperation with developing countries – mainly in the Middle East and Africa – and its commitment to helping the most disadvantaged in several European countries.

1. Michel Naim Aoun, Lebanon
2. Dalia Grybauskaitė, Lithuania
3. Manuel A. Gonzalez Sanz, Costa Rica
4. Aleksey Y. Meshkov, Russia
5. Zlatibor Loncar, Serbia

LITHUANIA, 5 SEPTEMBER 2017

The President of the Republic of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė, meets with the Grand Chancellor Albrecht Boeselager and Grand Hospitaller Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel to discuss cooperation between Lithuania and the Order in providing social and humanitarian support. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and the Sovereign Order of Malta. The Prime Minister of Lithuania Saulius Skvernelis and the Grand Chancellor signed a bilateral Cooperation Agreement.

COSTA RICA, 5 JULY 2017

The Lieutenant of the Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto receives the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, Manuel A. Gonzalez Sanz. The Minister and Grand Chancellor Albrecht Boeselager sign a Cooperation Agreement.

HOLY SEE, 23 JUNE 2017

Pope Francis receives in the Vatican the Lieutenant of the Grand Master. This was the first audience with the Pope since Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto was elected on April 29. At the end of the audience the Pope received the Order's Sovereign



Council. Afterwards, the delegation was received by the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

RUSSIA, 5 JUNE 2017

The Order of Malta's Grand Chancellor Albrecht Boeselager receives the Russian Federation's Deputy Foreign Minister, Aleksey Y. Meshkov in Palazzo Orsini. The situation in the Middle East was discussed, with particular reference to the humanitarian situation in Syria, the Libyan crisis and the peace process prospects as well as the migration flows towards Europe, humanitarian aid and persecution of the Christian community in the world.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION, 4 APRIL 2017

William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (OIM), is received at the Magistral Palace by the Grand Chancellor, Albrecht Boeselager. One of the key elements of the meeting was the difficult situation in Libya and the prospects and efforts of IOM and the Order of Malta to reduce migrant smuggling in the country.

2016

SERBIA, 8 DECEMBER 2016

Grand Hospitaller of the Order of Malta, Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel, pays an official visit to the Republic of Serbia, in response to the invitation of Zlatibor Lončar, Minister of Health of the Republic of Serbia. During the discussions, Minister Zlatibor Lončar expressed the Government's gratitude for the important humanitarian and social activities undertaken in recent years in Serbia by the Embassy of the Order of Malta, with particular reference to the successful project "Make a WISH to the Sovereign Order of Malta" which involved granting hundreds of disadvantaged children and adolescents their wishes in 2015 and 2016. The project continues in 2017/18 and going forward.

UNHCR, 1 DECEMBER 2016

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, meets the Grand Chancellor of the Order of Malta, Albrecht Boeselager at the Magistral Palace in Rome. The main topics of the meeting: the great migration flows, the extremely serious humanitarian emergencies throughout the Middle East and central Africa, human trafficking along the main migration routes and

the odyssey of the survivors of the increasingly frequent shipwrecks in the Mediterranean.

GABON, 24 NOVEMBER 2016

At the Magistral Palace in Rome, Grand Chancellor Albrecht Boeselager receives the Minister Delegate of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Gabon, Calixte Nsie Edang. During the meeting a framework cooperation agreement is signed.

ALBANIA, 7 NOVEMBER 2016

The Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Fra' Matthew Festing receives the President of the Republic of Albania, Bujar Nishani, on an official visit. President Nishani expressed his gratitude for the health and social care projects that the Order of Malta, with whom Albania has enjoyed diplomatic relations for 22 years, is running in the country.

ITALY, 27 OCTOBER 2016

The Grand Master, Fra' Matthew Festing is received in the Quirinal Palace by the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella. The meeting focused on the Order's rescue operations and healthcare/psychological assistance in central Italy after the 24 August earthquake and on the delicate humanitarian situation in Libya and the ex-





Memorial plaque, Magistral Palace, Rome

tremely serious conflicts in the Middle East, with particular concern expressed for the Syrians and Iraqis.

ARMENIA, 24 OCTOBER 2016

From 22-26 October, Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing pays a State Visit to Armenia. He was received by the President of the Republic, Serzh Sargsyan in the capital, Yerevan, on 24 October. After full military honours in the courtyard of the Presidential Palace, the Grand Master and the President and their delegations engaged in extended discussions. On 24 October the Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Albrecht Boeselager, had discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Edward Nalbandian, centring in particular on the situation in the Middle East, the conflict in Syria and the drama of the refugees and migrants. On the same day, the Grand Hospitaller, Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel, was received by the Minister of Health, Levon Altunyan, and the possibility of cooperation, focussing on the improvement in the rate of infant mortality in the country, was discussed.

SLOVENIA, 17 OCTOBER 2016

The Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Fra' Matthew Festing receives the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor on an official visit, with both stressing their desire to strengthen cooperation in the health and social care sector. In this regard, the possibility of signing a bilateral agreement was discussed.

LITHUANIA, 13 SEPTEMBER 2016

From 9 to 12 September, the Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Albrecht Boeselager visits Lithuania for the 25th anniversary celebrations of the Lithuanian Relief Organisation of the Order of Malta. The Grand Chancellor also met with, and received thanks, from Lithuania's Prime Minister, Algirdas Butkevicius. He also met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Linas Linkevicius, to discuss cooperation prospects.

HOLY SEE, 23 JUNE 2016

Pope Francis receives in audience the Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Fra' Matthew Festing on the occasion of the feast day of St. John the Baptist, the Order of Malta's patron saint.

1. Filippo Grandi, UNHCR
2. Calixte Nsie Edang, Gabon
3. Vladimir Makei, Belarus
4. Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Ukraine
5. Salvador Sanchez Ceren, Salvador



COSTA RICA, 27 MAY 2016

The President of Costa Rica, Luis Guillermo Solís pays an official visit to the Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing. During a working meeting with the respective delegations in the Palazzo Magistrale it was agreed to further strengthen bilateral cooperation.

BELARUS, 28 APRIL 2016

The Grand Chancellor Albrecht Boeselager is received by the Prime Minister of Belarus, Andrei Kobyakov and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vladimir Mahei. A joint declaration for the implementation of new humanitarian projects was signed by the Grand Chancellor and the Prime Minister in Minsk.

UKRAINE, 5 APRIL 2016

The Grand Chancellor, Albrecht Boeselager, visits Kiev, Ukraine from 4th to 6th April. The possibility of developing new cooperation and humanitarian aid projects was a key topic of the meeting with Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk. During his visit, Albrecht Boeselager met Order volunteers and in Maidan Square paid homage to the victims of the revolution. At Kiev State University the Grand Chancellor participated in a conference on 'The Order of Malta and Ukraine – history, present and future'.

PANAMA, 24 FEBRUARY 2016

The President of the Republic of Panama, Juan Carlos Varela welcomes Fra' Matthew Festing to the Palacio de las Garzas. At the Santa Maria la Antigua Catholic University Fra' Matthew Festing met the board of directors, teaching staff and students in the auditorium of the Santa Maria Catholic University (USMA) on 25 February. During a ceremony the Grand Master was presented with an honorary doctorate in Religious and Human Science and delivered a Lectio Magistralis.

HONDURAS, 18 FEBRUARY 2016

The President of the Republic of Honduras, Juan Orlando Hernández, receives Fra' Matthew Festing in the Presidential Palace in Tegucigalpa. A mutual agreement was the need to further strengthen bilateral cooperation - healthcare, controlling natural disasters, and climate change effects. The Grand Master referred to the Cooperation Agreement signed with Honduras in 2015 and confirmed the Order of Malta's support through its Honduran Association and Malteser International to improve the health conditions of the Honduran population.

EL SALVADOR, 15 FEBRUARY 2016

The President of the Republic of El Salvador, Salvador Sanchez Ceren, receives Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing in the Presidential Palace on 15 February. He confirmed his government's intention to continue to strengthen its bonds of friendship and cooperation with the Sovereign Order of Malta, with whom bilateral diplomatic relations date back to 1951. The Legislative Assembly of El Salvador receive Fra' Matthew Festing in solemn audience, as part of the celebrations for the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations

EUROPEAN UNION, 9 FEBRUARY 2016

The Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Albrecht Boeselager, is in Brussels for a series of meetings with the European Union leaders, including the Vice President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, Kristalina Georgieva.



Diplomacy in action

1. Raising public awareness of problems and threats in the humanitarian field

‘Our diplomatic network is an integrated part of our activities’

Albrecht Boeselager

Grand Chancellor

The role of the Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order is wide ranging. As head of the Order’s executive branch, he is responsible for its foreign policy and diplomatic missions, and is responsible for Order organisations worldwide. Other responsibilities are the representation of the Order to third parties, the carrying out of policy and the internal administration of the Order, and the coordination of the activities of the Order’s government.

Albrecht von Boeselager has been Grand Chancellor since May 2014, and before that held the role of Grand Hospitaller for many years. His extensive experience in the life and works of the Order stands him in good stead for the onerous role he undertakes. ‘We have international challenges to tackle, and we have the chance to be heard, through the means of raising public awareness of problems and threats in the humanitarian field,’ he explains. ‘It is how institutions without economic or military power to influence decision makers can move politicians to take note, and to include these concerns in their political agendae.’

The Order’s direct concerns – those in its core competences of emergency aid, community support, care for the elderly, for the homeless, the disabled, abandoned children, the lonely, the sick – affect and inspire its work and are of great interest and concern to all humanity.





A combination of these initiatives, and the deep engagement of the Order in the recent and current refugee and migrant flows 'has drawn more public attention to our activities. We have many programmes to help them – in their countries of origin, along the way and in the host countries, where integration is a priority. That affects the political sphere too, as well as our diplomatic network, which is an integrated part of our activities in this field. Many countries have become aware of this, and of the impact of our support.'

What are the challenges for the future? The Grand Chancellor responds: 'There is a decreasing security situation in many parts of the world. There are the effects of climate change – which is often the reason for migration – as well as its unknowns. There are the continuing movements of peoples. There is the need always to reinforce human and Christian values – not only humanitarian ones, but also the dignity of life, the protection of the frail elderly, the respect for religious beliefs.'

In his many journeys to meet government representatives and to inspect activities of the Order all over the world, there are experiences of its dedicated workers – medical, social, administrative – that are not easy to forget. Sometimes it is the stories he hears, sometimes it is what he sees himself. For example, the Italian doctor on one of the Italian Guardia di Finanza rescue boats off Lampedusa who said: 'We leaned down to help refugees on a sinking rubber raft. It was night, and very dark. Everything happened very fast. There were five of them. In the time and the rolling seas I could only manage to reach one and pull him clear. Every night I see the eyes of the four who were lost.' And another medico, still on the boats: a terrified mother, in the water, holding her baby clear. 'I grabbed him. A wave crashed against the side of the boat and when it subsided, the mother was gone.' Or yet, a leper hiding behind a tree near his remote Cambodian hut, 'because he was afraid to be with people, to be touched, he was an outcast. We went to greet him and when we left, he followed us, before turning back to his isolation. We do what we do for "our lords, the sick", seeing in them the face of Christ. And he, too, represents Christ.'

With the President of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė, celebrating the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations

2. A global commitment to people in need

The Order's voice in the international humanitarian arena – a force for good

Dominique de La Rochefoucauld- Montbel

Grand Hospitaller



The Grand Hospitaller reviews his first four years

Since taking office four years ago, the Grand Hospitaller, Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel, has visited projects and programmes of the Order of Malta in 28 countries – some more than once – and another 12 in the two years before that. His responsibilities reach across five continents, and in these years he has seen important changes in the Order's mission.

La Rochefoucauld-Montbel particularly notes that the Order's voice in the international humanitarian arena – advocating human rights, advocating awareness of the dramatic consequences of unresolved human trafficking, advocating the involvement of faith-based institutions in humanitarian aid – is increasingly important in world affairs. 'We can now promote what we do and give our position as a Catholic institution in the field,' he says. 'We provide advocacy, solutions, assess and work with migrants' problems (which are different from those of refugees). We give opinions, solutions, advice – these activities, shared by us all, give us a voice. For example, I spoke recently at the Vatican's Conference on Global Health.'

And a new initiative, following the appeal of Pope Francis, is our annual observation of the World Day of the Poor each November, with special actions and awareness campaigns in our organisations worldwide – it is part of our global commitment to people in need. Just one example – we provided a special lunch for homeless children in Juba, South Sudan, on the day. How has this development come about? He explains: the Order currently has over 40,000 employees, in addition to its members and volunteers. Together, they make up a sizeable force.

A force for action. A force for good

'We have an army of over 140,000 people, who are skilled in a wide variety of ways – for example, from professors to analysts to logicians to managers of healthcare centres, to project builders. They all contribute at a very high level of expertise and experience. We work together to respond to the Order's commitment. There is great goodwill and cooperation between the entities of the Order to develop and maintain our projects, which now number over 2,000.

He reflects: Since the middle of the last century there has been an extraordinary development in Europe: the fortunes of the Order grew, then declined, then grew again – for example, Germany and Italy after the war, France after Biafra, from the 1980s and 1990s the expansion of the Order's care homes in Britain, the extending projects of Ordre de Malte France, the German organisation which works together with the church. Now, today, the young generation wants to get involved, as they can see there is commitment and there are projects they wish to get involved in.'

Responding to current needs has always been a strength of the Order. The Grand



Grand Hospitaller congratulates volunteer teams from the Order's Polish Relief Organisation who work in medical and social assistance projects around the country

Hospitaller says that right now, that response is particularly focussed on migrants and refugees. He notes that in Germany the Order has extensive experience of caring for these groups, since the events of 1989 – and this brings the know-how which promotes the sharing of advice and experience. And he observes that the needs of these groups are the same needs – the people come from different countries, but their needs are the same: for clean water, sanitation, hygiene, food, activities.

Because of the Dublin Agreement there is now a more consistent policy towards asylum seekers. [The Dublin Agreement is a European Union (EU) law that determines the EU Member State responsible for examining an application for asylum seekers seeking international protection under the Geneva Convention and the EU Qualification Directive, within the European Union.]. With the influx in Europe, the Order is integrating the policies of healthcare, facilities and training, and providing services through partnerships. For example, partnerships are very effective in Turkey and in north Lebanon. As well, the Order is known as a trustworthy partner for funding institutions and its national Associations can therefore help with facilities in countries of origin.

The refugee's burning question: when can I go back home?

For the refugee, the burning questions are always: 'when can I go back home? Or – where can I go?' In Lebanon, in the various camps, the Order is caring for about 120-150 families in each, providing food, water, healthcare. There are always long queues. Allocations to the camps are assigned monthly, so that they are of a 'human' size.

La Rochefoucauld pauses to explain the significance of the Cooperation Agreements the Sovereign Order signs with other States, clarifying why they are important, and how they help facilitate the development of projects for those in need: 'A Cooperation Agreement is linked to our sovereignty and our diplomatic network works at the country's most senior levels. We have different partnerships in different countries, working with governments, creating a link of trust. That link involves us via our Foreign Affairs department and my Hospitaller department and the care we provide centres on medico-social assistance. For example, in Russia our two entities operate under Russian law. In Palestine, this diplomatic network helped facilitate the relations of our Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem with the government. And when I opened the 80-bed hospital we support in Ivory Coast, which is run by Ordre de Malte France, guests included representatives of the government as well as the Church.' In all of this, he sums up: 'The common threads are trust, our sovereignty, our presence.' As he dashes off to his next commitment, he pauses to mention the impact of personal memories in all these endeavours: 'It is the smiles of the children. Always that. Recently I visited a nutrition programme we are running in Cambodia for undernourished youngsters, and it was their shy smiles that stayed with me. But it could have been any of the projects where we care for children who in many different ways are disadvantaged.'

3. The Sovereign Order as a unique Observer entity at the United Nations

Enhancing our presence in global concerns

Oscar R. de Rojas

*Sovereign Order's Ambassador
to the United Nations in New York*



Since 1994 the Sovereign Order of Malta has maintained official Observer status at the United Nations, facilitating not only its multilateral diplomatic activities, but also its bilateral ones. Because the Order has diplomatic relations with 108 countries, all of which are represented at the United Nations, the UN is a fundamental arena for pursuing an active presence of the Order, as a unique observer entity. The UN provides a stage where the Order can show its work and contribute with its rich expertise to global deliberations on a wide array of relevant issues, ranging from development to human rights, from humanitarian assistance to international law. The fundamental purpose of the Order's Mission to the UN is thus to help enhance our presence and participation in global concerns and cooperation efforts – at the international, national and regional levels – and promote fields of potential effective collaboration in areas such as humanitarian aid and emergency relief.

In this light, in March 2017, during the 61st Commission on the Status of Women, devoted to the theme of 'Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work', the Mission delivered a statement which highlighted the Order of Malta's work in empowering and educating women, mentioning, among other examples, the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, where respectful and dignified care is given to women and children regardless of religion, race or ethnicity, and the three-year project 'Save a child from AIDS' in Mexico, which helps HIV positive mothers to protect their newborns from HIV infection. The Mission also helped organise several relevant side events. With Malteser International Americas, we co-sponsored an interactive panel discussion entitled, 'Women caught in the global refugee crises: offering hope and opportunity in despair'. The Mission also contributed to a panel discussion hosted by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See, entitled: 'Economically empowering trafficking survivors to stay permanently off the streets'.

On 27-28 September and 2 October 2017 the Mission actively participated in the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on the Appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, with a delegation headed by H.E. Ambassador Michel Veuthey, Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. On that occasion, the UN General Assembly adopted a 'Political declaration on the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons'. The Declaration stresses how human trafficking impacts the weakest and most vulnerable and is often linked with gender, racial and other forms of discrimination, and points to the priority need to counter these crimes and their perpetrators, and to establish a stable and strong common framework, together with government agencies and civil society, to fight to put and end to this atrocity.



In 32 African countries, the Order is working to provide medical programmes and micro finance projects to alleviate disease and poverty

The opportunity of the high-level meeting also served to hold many bilateral meetings and to participate in interactive panel discussions and other side events, where Member States, Observer organisations and civil society entities appraised the human trafficking situation worldwide and vowed to coordinate efforts at various levels to combat it, while at the same time continuing to provide help and assistance to victims and survivors, especially women and children.

In this same vein, the Mission of the Order made statements in the Second (Economic and Financial) and Third (Social, Humanitarian & Cultural), Committees of the General Assembly, regarding the topics of, respectively, eradication of poverty and the protection of the rights of children.

The Grand Hospitaller of the Sovereign Order of Malta, H.E. Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel, participated in the 71st UN General Assembly session in New York and spoke at a high-level meeting on 'Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants'. He accentuated the urgent need for enduring development programmes, to help prevent human suffering worldwide. During his stay, the Grand Hospitaller also participated in a round table on addressing the vulnerability of refugees and migrants, organised by the Mission of the Holy See.

One of the most important topics recently considered at the UN is that of refugees and migrants. The Permanent Missions of the Order, both in New York and Geneva, closely followed the processes of the 'Global Compact for a Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration'. The agreements, as well as that on Refugees, constitute important milestones for international cooperation on migration and refugee-related issues and challenges, including facilitating the positive contributions that migrants and refugees can make to strengthening national harmony and international solidarity.

The Order has thus reiterated that it is of priority importance to ensure assistance to migrants, refugees, victims and survivors, to promote equality, countering discrimination and ensuring respect for human rights as keys to achieving lasting solutions and peace, and to endorse sustainable development.

4. Through its humanitarian diplomacy the Sovereign Order has a special role

The strengths of faith-based organisations to deliver critical services

Marie-Therese Pictet-Althann

Sovereign Order's Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva



A special role is played by faith-based actors in today's international humanitarian architecture. However, it can be further improved with better usage of the unique strengths of religious institutions and faith-based organisations (FBOs). *'Faith leaders and FBOs in humanitarian contexts are not only able to deliver critical services during crisis but to do so with a unique wisdom of compassion and reconciliation.'* (Cardinal Antonio Tagle, President, Caritas International).

In May 2016 the first World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) was held in Istanbul, convened by the then United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. It was a call to action to reduce suffering and deliver aid more effectively to people caught in humanitarian crises. The 9,000 participants - 180 member States and hundreds of civil society and non-governmental organisations - committed to the Secretary-General's *Agenda for Humanity*, with its five core responsibilities: prevent and end conflict; respect rules of law; leave no one behind; work differently to end need; invest in humanity.

The Order of Malta, fully committed through its Permanent Observer Missions to the UN in New York and Geneva, under the guidance of the Grand Magistry of the Order, organised on 27 May 2015, together with the UN Secretariat of the WHS, a symposium at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. The topic, *'Religions together for humanitarian action - Reaching out to victims of armed conflicts: the special role of faith-based actors,'* brought together 400 participants from Member States, UN agencies, international governmental and non-governmental organisations, academia and religious institutions to deliberate the issue. The result was practical and concrete ideas as to how the faith-based community can enhance the international humanitarian system, including:

- establishing new approaches for cooperation between faith-based actors,
- empowering local communities,
- creating a coherent approach and action between FBOs/institutions and humanitarian aid.

In September 2016, following on from the WHS, within the UN General Assembly, Heads of State discussed migration and refugees issues. The outcome was the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and a process which culminated in the planned adoption in 2018 of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.



Further opportunities to illustrate the Order of Malta's commitment to its two principles *obsequium pauperum* and *tuitio fidei* are events organised by the United Nations and Member States on various occasions. Since its first edition in 2016, the Permanent Mission is invited to speak at the annual Interfaith Dialogue held during UN World Interfaith Harmony Week.

At a special event in November 2017, organised by the Permanent Observer Missions of the Holy See, the Order of Malta, and the International Catholic Migration Commission and the International Organisation for Migration, the Order of Malta's Permanent Observer shared good practices, in particular from the Order's migration projects in Germany in the fields of integration, as well as medical and spiritual assistance.

The Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue regularly invites the Order of Malta to participate in its panel discussions on Islam and Christianity at the Palais des Nations. Invited to join the Sponsoring Committee, the Order of Malta was a keynote speaker on the recent panel: 'The case-study of migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons'.

These examples provide an insight into the Order of Malta's world-wide engagement in promoting the role of FBOs and religious institutions through its multilateral humanitarian diplomacy.

The Order of Malta, through its Permanent Observer Mission in Geneva, addresses key international meetings on humanitarian issues

Expanding health and social care activities

Recent Cooperation Agreements

GEORGIA

22 October 2018

In the prime minister's residence in Tbilisi, a Memorandum of Cooperation is signed between the government of Georgia, represented by the Head of the Georgia Emergency Management Service, Shalva Khutsishvili, and for the Sovereign Order of Malta, Ambassador Marcello Celestini. The Memorandum covers natural disaster prevention, organisation and response, and emergency medical aid. The Sovereign Order has had diplomatic relations with Georgia for twenty years.

ROMANIA

11 May 2018

The Prime Minister of Romania, Vasilica Viorica Dancila, pays an Official Visit to Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre at the Magistral Palace. During the meeting, a Cooperation Agreement is signed between Romania – Ambassador Liviu-Petru Zapîrtan, and for the Sovereign Order of Malta, Ambassador Stefano Ronca, Secretary General for Foreign Affairs.



At right:

Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel signs a Cooperation Agreement between the Order and the Rome Bambino Gesù Hospital's President, Mariella Enoc

Page 65:

Signing the Cooperation Agreement with Romania



ARMENIA

5 April 2018

During the Official Visit of the President of the Republic of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, and the Order's Lieutenant of the Grand Master, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre, a 10-year Cooperation Agreement with the objective of expanding the Order of Malta's health and social activities in the country is signed.

LITHUANIA

5 September 2017

Lithuania: Prime Minister of Lithuania, Saulius Skvernelis, and the Grand Chancellor, signed a bilateral cooperation agreement providing social and humanitarian support.

COSTA RICA

5 July 2017

Costa Rica: Minister Gonzalez Sanz and Grand Chancellor Albrecht Boeselager signed a Cooperation Agreement, setting out the general framework and strategy for promoting the humanitarian and healthcare actions of the Order in Costa Rica.

INDIAN OCEAN COMMISSION

4 July 2017

IOC (Indian Ocean Commission): Cooperation Agreement signed by IOC's Secretary General Hamadi Madi and the Grand Hospitaller Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel in the field of health and medical assistance.

GABON

24 November 2016

Cooperation Agreement between the Order of Malta and Gabon is signed in the Magistral Palace, a framework Agreement for humanitarian purposes. Grand Chancellor Albrecht Boeselager receives the Minister Delegate of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Gabon, Calixte Nsie Edang.

HOLY SEE

14 September 2016

Grand Hospitaller Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel and Mariella Enoc, president of the Bambino Gesù Hospital, sign the Agreement, which states that the Hospital of the Holy See will provide vocational support to the

staff of the Holy Family Hospital, the referral centre for maternity in Palestine. Under the accord, doctors and nurses in the Bethlehem hospital will participate in training courses under the aegis of the missions organised by the Bambino Gesù hospital in this city.

ALBANIA

15 June 2016

The Sovereign Order of Malta and the Republic of Albania sign in Tirana a Cooperation Agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to strengthen and promote the hospitaller, health care, education and disaster risk reductions projects of the Order of Malta in the country. The agreement was signed by the Albanian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Odeta Barbulluschi and by the Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to Albania, Stefano Palumbo.

International reviews strengthen activities

Recent conferences

Communicators Forum, Rome, Italy 5-6 October, 2018

Bi-annual meeting of Order communicators from around the world to review best practices and communications tools.

2nd Migration and Refugees conference, European organisational managers, Rome, Italy 11-12 April 2018

Operational managers of the Order of Malta's projects in Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary and Malteser International, the Order of Malta's international relief agency, discuss challenges and best practice for long-term interventions for migrants and refugees including managing migrant assistance, reception and integration projects.

Meeting of the Francophone Ambassadors of the Order, Rome, Italy 24 March 2018

An annual meeting to review the works and strategies of the Order in French speaking countries.

26th Hospitallers meeting, Budapest, Hungary 22-25 March 2018

The President of the Order's Hungarian Association, Kristof de Szasbadhegy and the Hungarian Hospitaller, Loránd Eross, host, welcome 75 participants. The meeting was chaired by the Grand Hospitaller of the Order, Dominique de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel, for the Order's leaders of charitable activities around the world. Participants represented 32 Order organisations worldwide and as many nationalities.



At right:
Seventh Asia Pacific Conference,
Singapore, 2017
Page 67:
International Strategic Seminar, Rome,
2018



International strategic seminar on constitutional reform of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Rome, Italy

8-11 February 2018

140 members from the five continents meet, together with the Sovereign Council members, the leaders of the more than 50 territorial entities around the world, and the participants of the 10 international working groups who elaborated the proposals for reform. The reform aims to renew the forms of the Order founded on the same principles that inspired its creation and actions almost a thousand years ago.

7th Asia Pacific Conference, Singapore

9-12 November 2017

Refugees and Migrants: international meeting of operations managers in Munich, Germany

5-6 June 2017

The meeting includes delegates of the agencies working in France, Austria, Czech Republic, Italy and Germany, as well as representatives of the Order of Malta's government.

Conference to raise awareness of child victims of armed conflicts, Rome, Italy

1 June 2017

The Sovereign Order of Malta and the Embassy of the Czech Republic organise a conference in the Magistral Villa, Rome, for raising awareness on the drama of children who are victims of armed conflicts.

Meeting to address the challenges of migration in Libya and to promote political cooperation and national reconciliation, Rome

24 March 2017

Order of Malta hosts a meeting on the humanitarian situation in Libya with Ambassadors and Representatives of International Agencies

25th Hospitallers meeting, Paris, France

15-17 March 2017

A meeting of the Order's leaders of charitable activities around the world represented 32 Order organisations and as many nationalities.

Conference for journalists and members of the press, Rome, Italy

15 March 2017

Debriefing on latest Order activities around the world

Meeting of the Ambassadors of the Order, Vienna, Austria

13-16 March 2017

A meeting to examine practices and strategies of the diplomatic humanitarian network of the Order.

Communicators Forum, Rome, Italy

25-26 November 2016

Meeting of the Orders of St John Alliance, Rome, Italy

6-8 October 2016

6th Asia Pacific Conference, Seoul, South Korea

22-25 September 2016

24th Hospitallers meeting, Valletta, Malta

10-11 March, 2016

Humanitarian programmes and strategies review.

GOVERNMENT OF THE SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

SOVEREIGN COUNCIL

The Sovereign Council assists the Grand Master in the government of the Order. It is composed of the Grand Master, four State Ministers and six Council members. The Sovereign Council is called by the Grand Master and meets at the seat of the Order of Malta at least six times a year and whenever special circumstances require it.

Prince and 80th Grand Master

HMEH Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto

HE Fra' Ruy Gonçalo do Valle Peixoto de Villas Boas
Grand Commander

HE Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager
Grand Chancellor

HE Dominique Prince de La Rochefoucauld-Montbel
Grand Hospitaller

HE János Count Esterházy de Galántha
Receiver of the Common Treasure

SOVEREIGN COUNCIL MEMBERS

HE Fra' John T. Dunlap
HE Fra' Emmanuel Rousseau
HE Fra' Gottfried von Kühnelt-Leddihn
HE Fra' Roberto Viazzo
HE Winfried Graf Henckel von Donnersmarck
HE Mauro Bertero Gutiérrez

GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

Peter de Szabadhegy de Csallöközmegeyerics
Olivier Freiherr von Loudon-Vorst-Gudenau
Francis Joseph McCarthy
Patrick Jabre
Lady Celestria Hales
José Maria Coello de Portugal

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Dominicus Freiherr von und zu Mentzingen
Councillors
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Alternate Councillors
Guy-Antoine de La Rochefoucauld, Duc de La Roche-Guyon
Luca Brondelli, dei Conti di Brondello

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Amb. Stefano Ronca

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Vice-President
Prof. Damiano Nocilla
Secretary General
Prof. Avv. Paolo Papanti Pelletier de Berminy
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Prof. Avv. Leonardo Perrone

MAGISTRAL COURT OF APPEAL

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Prof. Avv. Arturo Maresca
Judges
Prof. Avv. Leonardo Perrone
Avv. Massimo Massella Ducci Teri
Prof. Francesco d'Ayala Valva

MAGISTRAL COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE

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Prof. Avv. Paolo Papanti Pelletier de Berminy
Judges
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Prof. Avv. Venerando Marano
Prof. Avv. Paolo Morozzo Della Rocca
Prof. Avv. Arnaldo Morace Pinelli
Chancellor of the Magistral Courts
Col. Alessandro Bianchi

COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NAMES AND EMBLEMS

President
Fra' John T. Dunlap

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS OF THE SOVEREIGN ORDER OF MALTA WORLDWIDE

THE SOVEREIGN ORDER OF MALTA HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH 108 COUNTRIES:

EUROPE

Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Holy See, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia (Federation of)*, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine.

THE AMERICAS

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela.

ASIA PACIFIC

Afghanistan, Armenia, Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Lebanon, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Philippines, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan.

AFRICA

Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Congo (Republic of), Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo.

* Relations with the Russian Federation are maintained through a diplomatic special mission.

THE ORDER OF MALTA HAS OFFICIAL RELATIONS WITH:

- Belgium
- France
- Switzerland
- Canada
- Luxembourg

THE ORDER OF MALTA HAS RELATIONS AT AMBASSADOR LEVEL WITH:

- Palestine

MULTILATERAL RELATIONS

THE ORDER OF MALTA HAS RELATIONS AT AMBASSADOR LEVEL WITH:

- European Union

THE ORDER OF MALTA HAS PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS SPECIALISED AGENCIES:

United Nations - New York

United Nations - Geneva

United Nations - Vienna

ESCAP - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok)

FAO - Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (Rome)

IAEA - International Atomic Energy Agency (Vienna)

IFAD - International Fund for Agricultural Development (Rome)

UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme (Nairobi)

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Paris)

UNHCHR - United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Geneva)

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Geneva)

UNIDO - United Nations Industrial Development Organization (Vienna)

UNODC - UN Office for Drugs and Crime (Vienna)

WFP - World Food Programme of the United Nations (Rome)

WHO - World Health Organization (Geneva)

THE ORDER OF MALTA HAS DELEGATIONS OR REPRESENTATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:

AU - African Union (Addis Ababa)

COE - Council of Europe (Strasbourg)

CPLP - Community of Portuguese Language Countries (Lisbon)

CTBTO - Preparatory Commission for the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban Treaty Organization (Vienna)

ICCROM - International Centre for the study of the preservation and restoration of cultural property (Rome)

ICMM - International Committee of Military

Medicine (Brussels)

ICRC - International Committee of the Red Cross (Geneva)

IDB - Inter-American Development Bank (Washington D.C.)

IIHL - International Institute of Humanitarian Law (Sanremo, Geneva)

IFRC - International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Geneva)

IOF - International Organization of La Francophonie (Paris)

IOM - International Organization for Migration (Geneva)

PAM - Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (Malta)

SICA - Central American Integration System (San Salvador)

UNIDROIT - International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (Rome)

UNILAT - Latin Union (Santo Domingo, Paris)



The inspiration and the commitment

What the commitment means
is unceasing care for those who are
most vulnerable.

The Christian meaning of volunteer work

The key: self sacrifice and concern for the wellbeing of others

An interview with

Mons. Jean Laffitte

Prelate of the Order of Malta



'Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'
(Mt 25:40)

The essential core that enlivens and inspires our engagement within the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta is our service to men and women in need, and especially to the sick and the poor. In other words, our work as Christian volunteers.

What is Christian volunteer work?

First, we need to examine what, in human nature, is inherent to every voluntary action, and then to deepen the specific nature of Christian volunteer work.

The relational nature of man

Within each person, there is a desire to communicate, to develop different forms of relations with others in exchanges at various levels. An interpersonal relationship must exclude exploitation of one's fellow man and seek to ban all forms of manipulation. A harmonious relationship between two human beings is characterised by a one-to-one approach which is always greater than the relationship itself, due to a quality inherent within every human being: his irreducible dignity. In our works, the Order's tradition encourages us always to accompany our action with the utmost respect for those we serve, and with gestures of attentiveness that personalise our relationship with them. It is the moment that allows us to recognise our neighbour in the other person. By contrast, how can we fail to recall the answer of Cain to God Who was questioning him: 'Am I my brother's keeper?'

To acknowledge one's neighbour in the other person means to accept a certain responsibility towards him or her, *whether or not one is able to do something concrete for the other person*. In Lourdes, for example, or anywhere else, indeed, we are well aware of the importance of small gestures that personalise the care given to people who are suffering. We also know very well the joy of some of our guests, the Malades, when, from one year to the next, they realise that we remember them, and they feel welcomed as friends.

Who is our neighbour?

It is he or she to whom we feel close, and whom we acknowledge as being close to us. This closeness is about acknowledging familiarity, a community of nature. All volunteer work rests upon the conviction of the value and dignity of mankind, and of the willingness to help those who are in need of help – it is altruism, it is self sacrifice and concern for the wellbeing of others.



The meaning of Christian volunteer work

The Gospel shows how love for His neighbour inspired and provoked each and every one of Jesus' actions during the course of His public ministry: the attention paid towards the sick, the encounter with those who were on the fringes of society, and those who were possessed by evil spirits. In the person of Christ, compassion (*vis-à-vis* material poverty) and mercy (*vis-à-vis* of spiritual poverty – that is, sin) converge. Christian volunteers have the power to care for others, and to care lovingly as Jesus did. They are aware that the sick and the poor also have spiritual expectations beyond those material needs they try to relieve – expectations that are not always expressed openly.

At the heart of Christian volunteer work, service is also an encounter with the suffering Christ. The word of Jesus praising the offering of a simple glass of water made in His name is truly inspiring: even the smallest act that provides solace to the poor does not remain hidden before God.

For the Christian volunteer, serving the poor and the sick is a service to Jesus Himself. The tradition in our Order of referring to them as our lords the sick reveals the immense respect that all generations of Knights and Dames have felt for their brothers in need.

The acts of solidarity and service accomplished by Christians within actions of volunteer work have another name: charity. By serving his brothers the poor, the sick and the suffering with love, the volunteer becomes a true disciple of Christ.

The stirring spirit of young Order volunteers – International Summer Camp, Salzburg, 2017



*A legacy
that will
never die*

Charity is the driving force behind every
Order initiative in the medical field.

Medical advances in Malta: the contribution of the Order

A heritage of significance

Fra' John E. Critien

*Member of the Sovereign Council
(2014 - 2019) and curator
of the art collections
of the Order of Malta*



As curator of the art collections of the Sovereign Order of Malta, it has been an interesting exercise to review the medical history of Malta under the knights. The theme has been prompted by the question: what would medical care in Malta have been like had the Order not settled here?

The contribution of the Order to medicine in Malta

The Order's contribution to Malta in the history of medicine dates from its arrival in 1530. The St. Francis Hospital, later known as Santo Spirito, had already been in existence in Malta by 1347, while three other similar institutions were functioning in the next century. The arrival of the Order brought about winds of change and in 1533, at the first Chapter General held on the island, in the Chapter Hall at Fort St. Angelo, it was established that doctors were to visit patients in their homes free of charge: failure to do so would result in the doctors being fined four times as much as the amount requested or received.

As soon as the knights established themselves in Birgu they started to build a hospital from which they could serve their mission as Hospitallers. The hospital, known as the Sacra Infermeria, was completed in 1533 but already in 1538, due to the high demand for its services, another level was added to the structure. Patients were provided with the best care possible and, as well as treating the sick, the hospital also took in unwanted babies or foundlings and catered for their upbringing and well being. In contrast to the indifference towards infant life that prevailed in other European countries until the 18th century, provision for the future welfare and education of these children was made by the Order's Chapter General of 1555. The hospital in Birgu was closed down in 1575 since the knights moved to the new city of Valletta, and a Sacra Infermeria was constructed there in 1574 during the Grand Mastership of de La Cassiere. The building achieved fame as one of the foremost hospitals of the period in Europe and could accommodate around 900 patients in an emergency. Its largest ward, an impressive 155 metres (508 feet) in length, was one of the largest in Europe at the time. Food was served by the knights themselves on silver plates but of such plain workmanship as sufficiently proves that the magnificence was adopted for a motive of cleanliness and to prevent the spread of bacteria, and not as an object of luxury. This state of affairs at the Sacra Infermeria lasted throughout the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

First school of anatomy and surgery

Attempts at introducing formal medical education in the Maltese islands can be dated to the establishment, at the Grand Master's expense, of the first School of Anatomy and Surgery in Malta by Grand Master Nicolas Cotoner in 1676. Instruction in the-



The Sacra Infermeria, Malta

oretical anatomy and surgery was given to the barber-surgeons of the Sacra Infermeria and to all other youths who aspired to join the surgical profession, provided that they could read and write. Other disciplines such as the surgical aspects of physiology, pathology, hygiene and therapeutics were added later to the curriculum and by 1682 the course in surgery lasted ten years. The foundation of the Collegio Medico in 1771 by Grand Master Pinto in his newly established Pubblica Università di Studi Generali further strengthened medical training in Malta. The Maltese Joseph Barth cannot be omitted from the list of illustrious sons of the School of Anatomy and Surgery at the Sacra Infermeria in Valletta. He was to take the Chair of Ophthalmology at the University of Vienna in 1774. The people of Malta have reason to be proud that their university, founded by the knights, is the oldest in the Commonwealth outside the United Kingdom.

Modern social welfare

From the socio-medical point of view the Order introduced into Malta what may be considered an introduction to our modern Social Welfare. Alms givers, *pitanziere*, were women employees who visited indigent or bed-ridden women to whom they distributed bread, medicines and financial relief. Elderly men in need, on the other hand, were provided with financial assistance and the so-called perpetual beds, *letti perpetui*, at the Sacra Infermeria. All this took place while the Holy Infirmary was also dispensing bread and soup to the poor and infirm of the city, and a monthly allowance of money to the blind, the lame and the leprous. Street beggars were also cared for by a special committee called the *Congregazione dei poveri mendicanti* providing them with financial relief and accommodation.

This brief survey of the Order's legacy on the island of Malta in the fields of medical and social services reveals an important fact - that charity is the driving force behind every initiative. It is the mission of the Order of Malta: *Obsequium pauperum* then and now and, God willing, in the future.

The author acknowledges with gratitude the writings of Dr. Paul Cassar, Prof. Mario Buhagiar, and H.E. Ambassador George Buttigieg.



Ducalis

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ATLANTICUM

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MARE CARIBAEUM

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Johannes S. Laurentius & Co

*Care that
reaches
around
the world*

The Order of Malta, together with its members, volunteers and professional staff, cares for those in need in 120 countries, from continent to continent, from nation to nation.

AFRICA

Africa has long suffered under threats of disease, natural disasters, war. The Order of Malta has a widespread and long-standing presence on the continent, working in medical, health and social care and supporting those displaced by violence in their countries. The Sovereign Order of Malta has bilateral diplomatic relations with 32 African States.



BENIN, REPUBLIC OF

Ordre de Malte France has run the 107-bed general Hospital of St John of Malta in Djougou, Benin, for 40 years. With 191 staff, it is the only hospital with an operating block and ante rooms. In 2017, the hospital enlarged its premises on an adjacent site.

The Order also supports 10 health centres, all situated in poor areas, and for the most part focussing on mother and child health care.

BURKINA FASO

Ordre de Malte France has a range of support activities in Burkina Faso. Its health centre, St. John of Malta, Ouagadougou, sees 28,000 consultations per year, ranging from general medicine, to dental care, ophthalmology and optics. A partnership created in 2015 together with the Occitane Foundation and the Ministry of Health provides screening for vision problems in the population. In 2016, the Order con-

solidated five ambulance posts – in Ouagadougou, Bobo Dioulasso, Djibo, Banfora et Fada N’Gourma, the most important being Bobo Dioulasso with 50 ambulance drivers and first aiders. In 2017, the centre at Djibo was transferred to Tengokoro, in the south east. Across the country, the Order supports 13 health centres and provides free medicines and medical equipment.

BURUNDI

In Burundi, one of the poorest countries in the world, around 65 percent of the population live in poverty. Political unrest and conflicts in the region mean a large number of people have experienced violence and are urgently in need of psychological care. From the start of 2018, together with local partners Malteser International has been providing support in the areas of mental health, cholera prevention and child protection. As more refugees continue to return to Burundi, returnees and residents too are supported with psychological and psychiatric care in the provinces of Rutana, Makamba, and Muyinga.

Particular victims of the crisis are the increasing numbers of street children. They have a daily struggle for survival in the big cities and are usually entirely at the mercy of violent and arbitrary be-



▲ The Order has teams of ambulance drivers and first-aiders in Burkina Faso, serving outlying areas with medical checkups and free medicines



▲ A mobile clinic in northern Congo brings care to local communities and indigenous peoples

haviour. In two homes of the Fondation Stamm, in Bujumbura and Ngozi, funded by Malteser International, the children receive both protection and comprehensive support and care.

CAMEROON

The activities of Ordre de Malte France in Cameroon cover a hospital and dispensary, and support for 10 health centres. The St John of Malta hospital is in Njombé and specialises in maternal and child protection and care for sufferers of neglected tropical diseases. The hospital, established in 1994 and one of the best equipped in the region, added a training centre for first aiders at the end of 2016. At Mokolo, in the far north of the country the Order has been running a leprosarium; it now adds general care and care of patients with motor disabilities.

Ordre de Malte France also supports the GFAOP (Franco-African Group of Paediatric Oncology) which, together with the Chantal BIYA Foundation, provides treatment for African children with cancer.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Ordre de Malte France has been present in the Central African Republic for over 30 years, supporting health facilities in the country. It currently financially supports the running of the Bangui Centre of functional rehabilitation (CRHAM) and the missions of a specialist volunteer paediatric surgeon. Ordre de Malte France also supports 12 health centres, providing medical supplies.

CHAD

In N'Djamena, Chad, Ordre de Malte France manages two health centres – at Am'Toukoui, constructed in 1993 and Wallia, which the Order has been managing since 2005. Am'Toukoui has a well-equipped medical analysis laboratory and an ophthalmic technician with an efficient technical platform. Wallia, which also has a laboratory, offers care in paediatrics, pregnancy monitoring and maternal and child health care. Both clinics are developing outreach programmes in their catchment areas.

COMOROS, UNION OF

Ordre de Malte France has been providing aid in the Union of Comoros since 1978. Currently, four health centres are supported, with operating expenses and the supply of medicines and medical equipment: Moroni and M'Beni (in Grande Comores), Fomboni (in Mohéli) and Mutsumadu (in Anjouan). The health centre in Moroni provides 15,000 consultations a year, plus 3,000 in 10 rural centres. A burn centre was added two years ago. In Mohéli, almost all medicines are provided by Ordre de Malte France. The Order is also assessing a project to manage the M'rémami dispensary in the south of the island of Anjouan, which serves a population of 70,000.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

In Democratic Republic of Congo, the Order's French and Belgian Associations, Malta Belgium International Aid, and the Order's Embassy all provide support to those in need in the country. Ordre de Malte France supports two reception centres in Bukavu, South Kivu, providing care for children in difficult circumstances, offering training and support for their reintegration in their families.

Malteser International, the Order's international relief service, has been active in eastern provinces since 1996, with projects for water, sanitation, health and food security.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Since 2013, Ordre de Malte France has been running the St.Kisito healthcare centre, which focuses on prenatal and postnatal consultations and care. The Order also sends free medicines to three other health centres: Poto Poto in Brazzaville, Shalom Sembé in Ouesso and the Pastorale of Enyelle.

Malteser International, in the country since 1996, with projects for water, san-



▲ The Order focuses on care for leprosy sufferers, showing them how to look after themselves

itation, health and food security, now adds the largest Ebola programme in Africa.

EGYPT

The Order's Ambassador to Egypt inaugurated the Blessed Gérard diabetes clinic in Shoubra, Cairo, in 2017. Every month the facility sees 2,000 patients, who come from poor or disadvantaged backgrounds.

In October 2016 a dispensary dedicated to Blessed Gérard was inaugurated in Nazlet Ghattas (Governatorate of Minya), with the addition of sponsor donations.

This last project benefitted from the humanitarian cooperation between the Order and the Republic of China (Taiwan), and the acquisition of a colour ultrasound. This modern diagnostic tool is also equipped with an ecocardiogram probe. The Order also continues

to give support to the Abu Zaabal Leprosarium, north of Cairo.

ETHIOPIA

A project spearheaded by the Order's Embassy opens in 2018, creating a collaboration between the Order and the Mother and Child Clinic, Catholic University of Ethiopia, in Addis Abeba.

GABON

Ordre de Malte France has been in Gabon for over 10 years. The organisation supports a clinic, the White Cross, at Port Gentil and also a health centre in Makokou, in the north west, which since 2013 has been providing medicines to health outposts in pygmy villages, including Mekambo.

Aid is also given to the leper village of Ebeigne, ensuring that families receive

food and are integrated into the life of the town and the parish.

GUINEA-BISSAU

For over 12 years, the Order has had a fruitful cooperation with some local NGOs in health assistance, humanitarian aid, education, and has maintained relations with the ecclesiastical authorities of Guinea-Bissau, particularly in supporting the Franciscan Mission Cumura and the 'Military Brotherhood of Our Lady of Conception'.

GUINEA-CONAKRY

Since 1983, Ordre de Malte France has been active in the country, supporting 14 clinics which offer primary health-care services – free of charge to the very poor – and managing a health centre, Dr.Maladho Bah, in Pita.

The health centre is a logistical base for the implementation of national programmes for the fight against leprosy, tuberculosis and the tropical disease, Buruli ulcer, in central Guinea. In 2015, with additional support from Malteser International, the Order of Malta's international relief service, the health centre was the pivotal location for organising an awareness campaign for the Ebola virus and its prevention. A project set up in the north central towns of Pita and Sangaréah by Ordre de Malte France in 2017 is focussed on strengthening the local health system.

IVORY COAST

Inaugurated in 2015, the St. John Baptist 75-bed hospital in Bodo gradually opened its services – general medicine, radiology and emergency, during 2016. By the end of the year, 9,681 consultations had been held and staff numbers increased from 32 to 75 as demand grew. A Mother and Child Centre was launched in 2017. Ordre de Malte France supports 18 clinics around the country, with donations of medicines and medical equipment and financial grants. The Associ-

ation of Friends of the Order of Malta in Ivory Coast also supports many clinics.

KENYA

The Order, through its international relief organisation, Malteser International, has been running health programmes in Nairobi since 2001, focussing on tuberculosis among the disadvantaged living in the city's slums. Tuberculosis is curable, with carefully monitored treatment.

Malteser International has also set up drought relief programmes in the north, as both humans and animals are affected, with severe food shortage and resultant malnutrition. In Illeret, Marsabit district, the recent focus has been on supplying safe drinking water, securing food supply, reducing livestock and conserving grazing land, improving hygiene and sanitary conditions, and educating the local population in preparedness for the next drought. Training and awareness campaigns on climate change have also been introduced.

With its partner organisations, the Order is using the latest tablet computers and eBooks to help the semi nomadic

tribes in the north, the Gabra, Borana and Loiyangalani, to improve their literacy and thus their livelihood.

Responding to the plight of the communities in the little known drought-afflicted area of Changogo, Kilifi County, in early 2017, the Order's Embassy provided food and water to 1,600 people.

MADAGASCAR

In Madagascar, Ordre de Malte France supports programmes in two of the country's six provinces, with two health initiatives – the Sainte Fleur maternity pavilion in the Joseph Ravoahangy Andrianavalona hospital in Antananarivo and the Leprosarium of Marana in Fianarantsoa province. The Sainte Fleur has 58 beds, 3 operating theatres and 4 delivery rooms with 2 incubators, and a staff of 80. Inaugurated in 1999, it was entirely renovated in 2012 and has added two key projects: providing prenatal consultations in nine clinics in disadvantaged areas of the capital and, since 2016, detection and treatment of obstetric fistula.

Ordre de Malte France also supports the Manara Leprosy Centre, which cares for 90-100 patients and prepares them to re-enter their society after cure.

MALI

The Order's work in Mali is concerned with the fight against maternal and infant mortality, and in 2017, in partnership with the Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a maternity health centre was constructed in the district of Hamdalaye, Bamako. At the end of 2015, it re-opened an ambulance and first aid training centre in Bamako, staffed by three paramedics and 16 rescuers. Results were almost immediate: in 2016, a group of trainees gained their certificate, with some specialised in prevention and civic rescue training, and others trained in monitoring.

The Order supports 12 clinics around the country – at Kayes, Koulikoro,



▲ A home visit to a patient suffering from tuberculosis, Oloitokitok, Kenya



▲ In Mozambique, the Order works with leprosy victims, providing specialist care and training

Segou, Sikasso and Mopti and Bamako district, as well as a specialised centre for children with mental disabilities.

MAURITANIA

The presence of the Order in Mauritania is currently restricted to reconstructive surgery missions for patients with problems resulting from their leprosy. The work is carried out in partnership with the Mauritanian Ministry of Health, the AMPHL (Mauritanian Association of Promotion of People with Leprosy Disabilities), and the Raoul Follereau Foundation. A training project for paramedics is under consideration.

MAURITIUS

Mauritius lies in the southwest of the Indian Ocean, 2,300 km from the east

coast of Africa and 870 km from Madagascar. Assessing the need for emergency response in the population of over 1.2 million, from 2015 the Order established first aid training and medical transport activities, setting up first aid stations on the island. The number is still growing.

MOROCCO

The humanitarian assistance of Ordre de Malte France began in Morocco in 1967, with financial support for two leprosy pavilions in Ain Chock hospital. Since then, the organisation has continued to send medicines to combat diabetes. Today, the focus is on the fight against avoidable blindness in Morocco, and the Order, through Ordre de Malte France, in a country with a population of 35 million, has set up a humanitarian project to treat ophthalmic

diseases in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. Now, hundreds of needy patients are operated on each year by the joint efforts of Ordre de Malte France and the medical teams of the Kingdom of Morocco.

MOZAMBIQUE

The care focus of the Order's Embassy in Mozambique is on leprosy and heart disease. The Embassy, jointly with Ordre de Malte France, supported the National Plan Against Leprosy of Mozambique's Ministry of Health. The project ran for four years, 2013-2017.

In Nampula province the Order is providing specialist drugs, support for purchasing special sandals for leprosy sufferers, and sponsorship of 5,000 vests for volunteers working in the field for the National Plan Against Leprosy. It is also initiating a medical mission to assess the local health situation for sufferers in Nampula and in Niassa.

The Embassy has launched a campaign for Self Care groups (GACs) – former lepers, those undergoing treatment and, increasingly, sufferers from other neglected diseases. They look after themselves, with daily care for foot ulcers and other health problems and receive micro credit to raise goats, cultivate manioc and sell soap and sugar given by the State. Leprosy is no longer stigmatised in Mozambique, thanks to groups like these.

NAMIBIA

Through the Order's Embassy in Namibia, support is provided for a kindergarten for 120 children, most of whom are orphans, in Rundu, Kavango. A soup kitchen offers 600 meals a day to the kindergarteners, to 200 other young students, aged 6-12 and to local infirm elderly. A tailoring enterprise gives work to 25 villagers. The Order also supports a boarding school (140 pupils, aged 7-12) at Mururani, 90km from Rundu.

In the capital, Windhoek, there are two newly constructed school rooms for 60 children. Future plans include creation of an orchard, and a project to provide a day care centre for the area, where the AIDS virus remains of major concern.

NIGER

The Order has been operating in Niger since 1974, with a focus on the distribution of medicines. A project now under consideration is support for healthcare training in a school for paramedics in Niamey.

NIGERIA

Despite the volatile security situation in the region, Malteser International's team have launched a transnational programme in Nigeria and Cameroon. In Nigeria, a comprehensive project for

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) is implemented in cooperation with a local partner, CIDAR (Centre for Integrated Development and Research). The aim is to improve the general hygiene and sanitary situation of internally displaced persons in Maiduguri, including the provision of hygiene sets, access to clean drinking water and construction of latrines.

SAO TOME E PRINCIPE

The Embassy in Sao Tome e Principe continues its collaboration with Portuguese NGO 'AMI - International Medical Assistance' in the S. Joao dos Angolares General Hospital.

SENEGAL

Ordre de Malte France runs the Centre Hospitalier de l'Ordre de Malte (CHOM),

Dakar, Senegal, and supports 13 clinics across the country. The hospital celebrated its 50th anniversary in December 2017. With 45 beds, and a two-room operating theatre built on European guidelines, a staff of 37, including 2 surgeons and 18 nurses, up to 15 operations are carried out each week. The Centre specialises in the treatment of leprosy, offering orthopaedic surgery, prosthetics for hip and knee, and non-traumatic hand and spine surgery. It is one of West Africa's centres of excellence.

Ordre de Malte France has also signed a cooperation agreement with the DAHW (Deutsche Lepra- und Tuberkulosehilfe e.V.) for detection of tuberculosis and leprosy including cases in remote villages. A second partnership has been signed with Hilfe für Senegal who donated medical equipment (wheelchairs, crutches, etc.) to the dispensary in Gorée.



▲ School pupils line up for hot, nourishing meals in South Sudan, provided by the Order's Malteser International

In Dakar the Association supports a centre (run by the Sisters of Charity) for the socio-professional and family reintegration of underprivileged girls. It also donates blankets, mattresses and sheets to the Centre de Santé Dominique in Pikine and has worked with a Catholic school (Ste Marie de Hann) which will help create a group of young Order of Malta volunteers.

Amongst the Association's activities: a group of volunteers who support the Maison d'Arrêt des Femmes de Liberté VI with materials and equipment, and 'L'Ecole à l'Hôpital' which organises courses for children in hospital and donates toys and clothes.

The Embassy supports the distribution of funds and medicines, and cooperates with SAMU, an organisation which collects and cares for children from the streets.

SEYCHELLES

In 2015 the Embassy of the Order to the Seychelles organised a very large donation of medical equipment from the recently dismantled Ospedale S. Orsola in Brescia. The equipment included defibrillators, special microscope, lab equipment, beds, wheelchairs and stretchers. The 258 items are now in use at Anse Royal, Praslin and La Digue hospitals, the Centre for the Elderly at North East Point, the lab at the Seychelles Hospital, and as additional equipment on ambulances.

SOUTH AFRICA

The Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard, the Order's relief organisation in South Africa founded 1992, proudly celebrated its 25th anniversary of activity for

HIV/AIDS sufferers in November 2017. Based in Mandeni, the organisation provides a comprehensive system of health care for HIV patients, child care projects, assistance to the poor, first aid and emergency relief. In its 25 years, it has treated thousands of AIDS patients. The specialist Treatment Programme (HAART-Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy) covers 712 patients on ongoing life-long treatment. The programme includes voluntary counselling and HIV testing and HAART readiness courses before starting treatment, as well as adherence monitoring (with 3,827 home visits in 2017), and encouraging support groups, motivation and income generation.

Hospice and palliative care: there is residential palliative care for terminally ill patients in the inpatient unit. It can accommodate up to 40 patients. In



▲ At the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard, South Africa, teachers work with young orphans

2017 there were 5,825 outpatient consultations, 434 new outpatients enrolled, 191 new inpatients admitted.

Home care: mobile home-nursing teams regularly assess the situation and provide medical care. In 2017, there were 1,178 home visits, 299 patients were cared for at home. 719 were transported by the BBG ambulances and 162 new home care patients were enrolled.

Child Care: Pre-Primary School and Crèche: BBG provides 'edu-care' and an early childhood development service for underprivileged pre-schoolers. In addition, the complex runs:

A children's home: BBG look after, counsel and give a home to 84 sick and healthy 'Orphans and Vulnerable Children'. A malnutrition Clinic: provides a health care service to the poor; malnourished children are treated and fed and their parents are taught baby care and nutrition. A Bursary Fund: 242 bursaries awarded in 2017.

SOUTH SUDAN

The Order's Malteser International has been in South Sudan since 1995. From 2017, it provides:

- hot meals for 2,000 school children at the Al Salam School in Lologo and 3,000 meals a day in IDP camps in Wau, and supports a food security project in Maridi.
- leprosy therapy: the Order has been supporting 2,000 people in the Rumbek area since 2010. There is also a project to control sleeping sickness.

The Rumbek training centre combines a lab technician school with a nursing school. The pupils receive food and lodging: 77 graduated between 2013 and 2016.

In a sustainable agriculture project established in 2015, the organisation is working with its local partner to improve nutritional agriculture in Maridi, Mambe and Ngamunde. Tools, plants and seeds plus cultivation instructions are distributed to 1,000 households where husbands died in the civil war.



▲ Work continues in Africa to train local farmers in agricultural nutrition and seed cultivation

In a programme to improve food quality and security, the organisation is helping 850 particularly needy families, and 5,000 people in 5 villages near the city of Wau, in the north-west, to make long-term improvements to the quality and security of their food; rehabilitation of irrigation systems and access roads with the cooperation of local families who receive farming land from the diocese of Wau; supply of water and hygiene items to around 18,000 people in IDP camps in the same area and providing help for street children and creating child-friendly spaces.

TOGO

In Togo, with a population of over seven million and where 60% of the population is under 20, Ordre de Malte France aids clinics and dispensaries and continues to fight neglected tropical diseases with detection and treatment programmes. Since 1978 it has run a private 68-bed hospital in the remote rural area of Elavagnon, with a staff of 83 providing general medicine, surgery,

paediatrics, obstetrics, a laboratory and pharmacy (around 10,650 consultations and 893 deliveries per year). The hospital's mother and child health and nutrition unit, Centre Marigot, currently cares for more than 500 children.

Ordre de Malte France also supports: 5 dispensaries: in Dapaong (2), Bafilo, Niamtougou and Aneho; 3 health centres in Mango, Sokode, Kpamile; a nursery in Lomé and a paediatric centre in Kante.

UGANDA

The Order's Malteser International has been working in Uganda since 1996. Currently, there is an international staff of 2 and a local staff of 15 for a total of 170,000 beneficiaries.

In the north a comprehensive programme for refugees is underway and an environmentally friendly high school for refugee children has been opened in the Rhino refugee camp. Malteser International is also providing services for drinking water and hygiene measures to the refugees.

THE AMERICAS

The Order of Malta has an active presence in 28 countries in the region, with facilities providing care and treatment in hospitals and homes for the elderly, programmes for street children, HIV-positive mothers and

infants, food aid centres for the homeless and for people with disabilities. In many countries the Order also runs dental clinics and paediatric centres. 2013 saw the opening by Malteser International, the Order's worldwide relief agency, of its American headquarters in Miami. With a relocation to New York City, the regional agency goes from strength to strength in its work throughout the Americas.



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Following the terrible hurricane Irma, category 5, which hit the Caribbean islands in September 2017, the Order's Embassy to Antigua and Barbuda, with Caritas Poland and Poland's Ministry of National Defence, organised the shipping of humanitarian aid, including galvanised metal sheeting for covering roofs, electric power generators, pressure washing equipment, vitamin products and long life food supplies.

ARGENTINA

In Argentina, the Order's Association supports many activities: the ongoing project at San Justo Paediatric Hospital in La Matanza, Buenos Aires, provides treatment for 350 babies per year, and makes 1,500 annual outpatient visits. The AMAPEL (Ayuda Maltesa Para Eliminar la Lepra) Project, started in 1995, aids victims of leprosy in rural hospitals where the disease is endemic

(Santa Fe, Rosario, Chaco, Formosa, Santiago del Estero, Misiones, Corrientes, Entre Ríos, Córdoba and Tucumán). Today, it has organised cooperative measures with the Baldomero Sommer Hospital, offering specialist courses to medical staff, and providing equipment to hospitals in Salta province.

The Association runs a programme for HIV positive mothers. Started in 2001, the AMAPES Programme (AIDS prevention between mothers and babies) – is active in the Alvarez, Argerich and Sardà hospitals in Buenos Aires, the Presidente Perón Hospital in Avellaneda and Iriarte Hospital in Quilmes (Buenos Aires Province).

The Hostel de Malta Programme, Buenos Aires, provides palliative care to cancer patients from poor families, seeing 30 outpatients a day, and making home visits to an average of 100 more. A soup kitchen '2 de Abril' in Buenos Aires province feeds 200 disadvantaged children a day, and also houses the SURSUM nursery school (ages 0-3) and a recreation centre for children aged 6-12. On a Buenos Aires street corner every Thursday evening since 2013 members and volunteers prepare and distribute food.

The Fundación 'Mateo 25', in Florencio



▲ Argentina - Activities and games participation help cheer disabled guests



▲ World Day Against Diabetes, Bolivia: the Order, in collaboration with the University of Santa Cruz de la Sierra

Varela, south of Buenos Aires, provides free dental and eye care to more than 100 underprivileged children daily. For complex cases it has a cooperation agreement with the University of La Plata.

The Association also manages a First Aid Post for the Order's annual pilgrimage to the Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Luján.

BAHAMAS

A donation from the Order's Embassy in the Bahamas supports the new Catholic orphanage on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and the Sacré Coeur Hospital, Milot, also in Haiti.

The Embassy continues to support the local Catholic Church in the Bahamas with gifts of up to US\$ 1 million per year.

BOLIVIA

The Order's activities in Bolivia centre around three cities - El Alto, La Paz and

Santa Cruz.

In El Alto, the Association cooperates with Renal Centre 'San Juan de Dios' and 'Casa Esperanza' for a hospice for the terminally ill, and since 2015, also offers social and spiritual support to young people in need.

In La Paz, the Association manages a day care centre for the elderly, 'Yolanda Pando'. It also supports two centres, 'Centre for Rehabilitation and Mental Health San Juan de Dios' with donations of medicines, and the elderly care centre 'Hermanitas de los Ancianos Desamparados Hogar San Ramón'.

In Santa Cruz de la Sierra the Order supports the 'Centre for Research and Prevention of Diabetes'; and provides medicines to the 'Siervas del Sagrado' centre in Montero.

Other support includes a 'Health Screening Programme for the Community' carried out by the Institute of Gastroenterology of La Paz, the Japanese Hospital of Santa Cruz and the Bolivian Society of Gastroenterology; and the 'Alfonso Gumucio Reyes' hospital in

Montero which provides free of charge care to low-income patients with highly complex diseases.

The Embassy supports community health programmes in La Paz, El Alto and Santa Cruz de la Sierra and, together with the Association, supports the Diabetes Centre in Santa Cruz and the San Juan mental health centre and the Centro de Tercera Edad in La Paz.

BRAZIL

The three Associations in Brazil: São Paulo (1957), Rio (1957) and Brasília (1984) all have their own projects, but together they support the fight against leprosy in 18 medical centres equipped for testing and minor surgery, and in some centres, with workshops for prosthetic limbs. The leprosy control programme run by CIOMAL in the Picos, Piauí and Fiorano regions has helped reduce the number of new cases significantly. It currently cares for 300 patients and their families.

The Association of São Paulo & South-



▲ Wide ranging projects in Colombia to aid refugee and indigenous groups in disadvantaged regions include educational activities for youngsters

ern Brazil: carries out activities in São Paulo through the Centro Asistencial Cruz de Malta, with members and 200 regular plus 200 occasional volunteers. Their health care projects aid nearly 60,000 people a year with medical care.

Education projects: support for training in nursery care, nutrition, psychology, social service and physical education, library, professional courses in carpentry, crafts, computer, sewing, cooking. The Association also supports a nursery for 220 children aged 0-6 and a youth centre for 150 teenagers.

In the State of Paraná, the Association supports a home for 65 elderly people and a crèche for 70 children aged 2 to 7. It also recently created a school for professional training for 150 pupils. In Macapá (State of Amapá) the Order has a boat, 'St. John the Baptist', which since 1989 has transported Fr. Raoul

Matte, a doctor, along the Amazon river to provide medical care to the isolated populations of the area. Fr. Raoul also tests for leprosy and carries patients to the San Camillo hospital in Macapá.

In Curitiba, the Association runs a crèche – caring for 1,600 children in its 20 years of activity; it has now added care for 40 elderly; a school for handicapped children, a reintegration centre for drug addicts and children from dysfunctional families. By 2017, 9,000 children had benefitted.

The Association of Rio de Janeiro runs the health centre 'San João Bautista', now in its fourth year. It provides basic medicine daily, offering paediatrics, geriatrics, vaccinations to about 150 patients (80 are children) gratis. There are 5 consultation rooms for adults and 10 for children, with each patient seen by a doctor and 3 students. The centre benefits 70,000 people in a 25 km.

catchment area.

The Association of Brasilia runs 10 crèches in Brasilia, caring for 1,150 children daily, a social centre in Belo Horizonte (extensions are planned) which assists 200 youngsters aged 6 to 14, and 100 aged 15 to 18. They also receive 100 elderly people in the afternoons, teaching many to read and write. A 90 year-old recently signed his name for the first time, to everyone's delight. The Association also supports a leprosy centre, founded by an Ambassador of the Order.

CANADA

The Canadian Association focuses on seven main care areas: people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; people with compromised mental health; the visually impaired; the homeless; pilgrims to the Notre-Dame-

du-Cap Sanctuary (First Aid); those in prison (chaplaincy); and health care professionals (education in bioethics). Activities around the country include: In Vancouver, since 2001, members of the Order have been supporting a weekly outreach eye glasses clinic for the handicapped and those on low income ('The Door is Open Clinic'). In Montreal, volunteers and members work in six homes for elderly, and the Order's Auxiliaries Corps assist pilgrims all year round at St. Joseph's Oratory and Notre Dame du Cap. A project in Quebec City helps severely handicapped children. Projects for a day clinic and a homeless shelter in Ottawa are currently being developed. The Association also supports a number of international works: Malteser International Americas; the Holy Family Hospital, Bethlehem; the Order of Malta's International Summer Camp; and the Order's hospital in Senegal (a nursing exchange).

The Association helps to organise and coordinate the International Association of Bioethics (IACB), a resource on Catholic bioethics, which considers emerging health care trends, provides statements on health topics and controversial issues. The focus of the 2018 Colloquium: healthcare of the frail elderly and those with cognitive impairments.

CHILE

In Chile, the Association's relief organisation, Fundación Auxilio Maltés, has been providing health assistance since 1996.

It continues to support four major hospitals in Santiago with care for oxygen-dependent patients: at the San José Hospital it supports 180 oxygen-dependent adults with transportation, medicines and oxygen tanks. In its own ward at the Dr. Exequiel González Cortés Hospital it supports 40 oxygen-dependent children.

The Fundación completely renews equipment for the bronco-pulmonary department at the Roberto del Rio Hospital and continues to provide transportation for 40 oxygen-dependent children from their homes to the hospital. At the San Borja Arriaran Hospital it has donated ventilator support devices which allow patients to be cared for at home.

The Fundación has three regional offices – in Loncoche (800 km south of Santiago, Liquiñe (on Indian territory close to the Argentine border) and La Serena (in the north). Volunteers visit and care for sick and abandoned people, offer paramedical care, distribute clothes, spectacles, medicines, supply medical equipment and assist terminal patients.

In Loncoche the Shelter Home 'Blessed Karl of Austria' hosts 30 elderly people and provides them with four meals a day. The 'Training Institute Auxilio Maltés', established in



▲ After recent bushfires in Chile, the Order provided essential animal feed

2013, offers first-aid courses, and spiritual assistance to the elderly of the Shelter Home in Loncoche. It also organises religious services and catechism courses in Liquiñe.

In the Yungay quarter of Santiago the Association has opened a welcome centre for immigrants.

Responding to the terrible bushfires in the area around Peralillo in early 2017, the Association sent shipments of supplies and animal feed to local farmers, to ensure their animals would not be lost.

COLOMBIA

The Order in Colombia runs a range of projects – from social healthcare to food support to social assistance and aid in time of natural disasters, in 22 regions (departments) of the country, benefitting 110,000 people.

Its most recent activities concern care for the refugees arriving from Venezuela. Together with the Order's worldwide relief agency, Malteser International Americas, a first phase of

emergency interventions in the urban centre of Riohacha and in five initial surrounding Wayuu settlements is underway. Emergency efforts include distributing hygiene kits, providing medical aid for refugees and indigenous people in host communities, and establishing sustainable systems and food security initiatives. Unofficial figures suggest very high numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in Colombia.

Since 2015, Malteser International Americas has been providing health and nutrition relief and development to internally displaced people, marginalised Afro-Colombian and the indigenous Wayuu, Colombia's largest indigenous population.

The Colombian Association receives medicines from AmeriCares, Food for the Poor, and Direct Relief, and distributes them to 43 humanitarian non-profit organisations in 22 Departments of Colombia. The beneficiaries are young children, victims of armed conflicts, the elderly, prisoners, disabled, ethnic minorities, HIV, AIDS and cancer

patients. In 2017, the Association distributed goods with a value of over US\$15 million. The same year, it celebrated 60 years of medical and social assistance to those in need.

In Barrio Lisboa, Bogota: in collaboration with the Scalabrini Priests, the Association runs and funds the 'Nuestra Señora de la Paz' health and dental centre for children and elderly patients, providing 8,000 medical appointments in 2017; with Javesalud, the 'Nuestra Señora de Filermo' health centre in South Palermo, providing consultations in basic medicine and disease prevention, and training sessions by the Fundación Santa Fé in Bogotá (about 130 patients from very low income families are treated monthly) with life skills training for around 2,000 adults, and art courses for 155 youngsters added in 2017; the 'Mercado de Francisco' provides food packages to the poor every two months. It has implemented a nutrition project, planting soy, under the supervision of the Chaminade foundation and the management of the Soy-Doy foundation, distributing 7,000 food packages to poor families and 750 to the elderly in 2017.

Disaster preparedness includes a warehouse 'Almaviva' where 200 cold weather tents, 200 personal hygiene kits and 30,000 water purification tablets are stored. A programme for disaster prevention and relief was developed in 2016 for communities near Ciénaga, Magdalena. In Easter 2016, 80 portable water systems were delivered to Galerazamba (Atlántico), where for over two months there had been shortages of drinking water.

Following a recent natural crisis - the avalanche which hit the provincial city of Mocoa in 2017, killing hundreds and leaving thousands homeless, the Colombian Association shipped four containers of medicines and emergency supplies and 17 tons of nutrition supplements.



▲ Emergency kits are distributed following disastrous floods in Colombia



▲ The Dominican Association manages mother and childcare in poor areas of Santo Domingo

COSTA RICA

Since 2015 the Order's Embassy in Costa Rica has been providing defibrillators to schools, sport centres and clubs for the elderly in poorer districts of San Jose, as well as an ambulance service and medical devices for patients with respiratory problems. Thanks to the involvement of the Order's Costa Rican Association, the Embassy canteen project, which distributes daily breakfasts at 6 am for 60 school children, has been recently expanded.

In 2016, the Association launched a prison ministry programme for the rehabilitation of young prisoners at the Centro Penal Juvenil Zurquí, and supported the construction of a centre for

the babies of young female prisoners. The Embassy has set up an agreement between the paediatric hospital of San José and the Leonarda Vaccari Institute in Rome, which specialises in juvenile disabilities. It provided for two paramedics from San José to attend a special one-month rehabilitation course in Rome, with the first taking place in 2017.

CUBA

In Cuba, the Cuban Association supports a wide range of projects in 69 Parishes and institutions in Cuba, including support for four care centres of the Siervas de María (in Havana, Matanzas, Camaguey and Holguin)

with food, medicines and clothing, a centre for Down syndrome children, a home for retired priests in Havana. The Association also helps support the Seminario Mayor de San Carlos y San Ambrosio and the Seminario Menor de Camagüey. Over 700,000 meals were distributed in the parishes to 13,000 elderly and needy in 62 'comedores populares' in 2017, and in the Cathedral of Santiago de Cuba, 4,500 meals for lonely and poor elderly were distributed every month, as well as those for 130 beneficiaries at the Santísima Trinidad.

Financial aid after hurricane Sandy helped rebuild many destroyed homes. Since 2016, an office established in Vedado coordinates all projects.

In Miami, the Cuban Association's outreach clinic, San Juan Bosco, started in 1992, annually provides medical care to over 800 poor patients, documented and non-documented. Over 30 Order of Malta volunteers at 'Casa de Malta', in the same parish, provide the local poor with food and health education in English and Spanish, aiding 110 people weekly over the last 10 years.

The Cuban Association collaborates with the Colombian Association in the DUNI project for the development of medical services for the native populations of the Kogi and Arhuaca tribes of the Colombian Sierra Nevada. A medical centre provides general medicines and dentistry, a water source and WASH education.

In Haiti the Cuban Association concentrates on medical education with their nursing team trained by the American Heart Foundation to operate as educators in basic life support. The Association donated all the educational material.

In Puerto Rico, the Association is aiding the victims of Hurricane Maria in 2017, with basic essentials, food and medical assistance.

In Nicaragua, there's support for a special needs school for Down's children in Ciudad David Matagalpa.



▲ Healthcare event for disadvantaged youngsters in Mexico City

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

In the Dominican Republic, the Order's Dominican Association activities centre on distributing medicines to over 400 hospitals, clinics and dispensaries; and on managing two primary health clinics for mother and child in poor areas of Santo Domingo since 1996 and Monte Plata from 2003. The medicines are donated by US Foundations and Associations, AmeriCares, Food for the Poor and Project Hope. The value of the 2016 donations was US\$ 62,300,000.

The health clinics provide medical services at very low cost. In both clinics, a programme to prevent vertical HIV transmission from mother to baby, funded by USAID, has been offered since 2003; the clinics also run a 'Five Star Award' for pregnant women who follow pregnancy care requirements - so successful a project that it has been adopted at national level. A third clinic was officially opened in 2017 in Haina, San Cristobal Province.

The Cuban Association of the Order, together with the assistance of the Do-

minican Association, continues its six-monthly medical missions to the Republic, with 63 doctors (13 specialisations), nurses and volunteers working at the Dr Manuel J. Centurion Hospital, benefitting over 1,300 patients, with 54 surgical interventions each mission.

EL SALVADOR

The Order's El Salvador Association runs nine clinics (in Zacatecoluca, Sonsonate, Suchitoto, Chalchuapa, Santa Tecla, Coatepeque, Ilobasco and Rosario de Mora and San Salvador), including four laboratories and four dental surgeries in eight regions. They all offer free general medical and dental services, for an average of 126,000 patients per year.

The El Salvador Volunteer Organisation (ANESOM) coordinates a number of volunteers who visit patients in clinics, fund raise, cover emergency response and provide youth services.

Recent special donations: An IT project supported by the Agency of Cooperation of the Republic of China (Taiwan) set up computerisation of the Order's

nine clinics which now have a new computer system and new equipment; five electrocardiographs were donated by the Rotary Club of Bologna Est, in collaboration with members in Bologna. Five cardiology departments were opened in five clinics, enabling 40,000 patients to be treated every year (there is a general lack of cardiac centres in El Salvador).

A number of new projects were set up in 2016: cooperation for training courses for doctors and officials of ANESOM provided free by Taiwanese universities (all related costs covered by the government); the 'Medical Days' project - free ophthalmic and orthopaedic surgery, blood tests and ultrasounds by doctors in ANESOM's clinics, donations of medical equipment. An addition, a tri-lateral cooperation for three projects was created between the Order of Malta/WFP and Republic of China (Taiwan). The projects provide food vouchers to new mothers, and distribute food supplements to children 0-48 months, and to renal patients.

GUATEMALA

The Order's Association in Guatemala yearly receives and distributes about 170 containers of humanitarian aid items around the country. With the cooperation of 150 institutions, the Order distributes the donations to thousands of poor people and victims of natural disasters.

The Guatemalan Association continues to support the National Health Network with disposable medical supplies and hospital furniture and equipment, which it distributes to health centres, hospitals and municipal fire brigades. It also dispenses nutritional supplements to around 500 disadvantaged children and 75 elderly every year. Next to the Guatemalan Basilica of the Holy Virgin of the Rosary, the Order's Guatemalan Association runs a mobile medical unit, with 6 doctors, 4 psychologists and 4 nurses. In 2017 they at-

tended to over 5,100 patients. Services provided: medical and psychological consultations, emergencies and donations of wheelchairs, crutches and walkers. Since 2014, the Order has been offering free oncology checkups for women.

A feeding centre for children in Guatemala City provides food for 100 children daily. Guatemala has one of the highest rates of chronic malnutrition in the world – 4 in 10 children are chronically undernourished.

The Hospice Ammaraydando Project, with seven rooms, a clinic and a pharmacy, supports terminally ill patients.

HAITI

The Order's international relief service, Malteser International, has been working in Haiti since the 2010 earthquake. Now located in the capital Port-au-Prince, it cooperates in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of schools and

vocational centres and carries out disaster preparedness promotion. A second location in Belle Anse focuses on food security for very poor families and reforestation and climate change adaptation. In October 2016 when the devastating hurricane Matthew hit Haiti, Malteser International again distributed emergency supplies, hygiene kits and an information campaign for those in the worst affected areas of Cité Soleil and Tabarre. The organisation's long term approach in the country is to continue with rebuilding and development.

HONDURAS

Together with three international NGOs - Americares, Food for the Poor and Cape Cares - the Order's Association in Honduras has developed nationwide programmes in the field of health assistance.

With Americares: importation and distribution of drugs and equipment is as-

sured by the Embassy of the Order and the Association. In 2016, 234 shipments were distributed with a value of over US \$16.7 million.

With Food for the Poor: importation and distribution of 18 tons of drugs, equipment and food to a value of US\$ 10.3 million.

With Cape Cares: the collaboration of American doctors, dentists and technicians to attend to the medical needs in the central/southern region of the country, bringing their own drugs and equipment. In 2016, 14 medical brigades attended 9,100 patients.

The Order's Embassy has provided direct assistance to local beneficiaries by channelling all donations and dealing with administrative issues. Beneficiaries were the 'Bless the Children' Foundation in the Progreso region, to support children with drug addiction; to 'Our Sisters of Notre Dame' who have set up homes for children and older people in the Progreso region; to



▲ Mobile clinic, Guatemala, delivers basic goods to outlying villages following the volcano eruption



▲ One of the Order's many support activities, from food parcels to medicines, to the disadvantaged

the parishes of San José Obrero and Don Bosco in Tegucigalpa which help poor families with goods imported through the Embassy; and to 'Sor María Rosa' which has established several orphanages throughout the country, most with a medical clinic. In 2017, this assistance amounted to 2,030 tons of medicaments with a value of US\$ 13.7 million.

MEXICO

The Association of the Order in Mexico supports the 'Internado San Juan Bosco' school near the capital, founded in 1946, for 141 children. In 2016, a new project, 'Aprendiendo a Comer' started measuring the children for nutritional deficiencies, then providing a daily nutrition plan for each child and teaching

them how to eat well. A new addition: classes for pre-school children aged 3 to 5 years.

Other projects include: 'Casa Hogar San Juan', a retirement home in Mexico City for 50 to 60 elderly people; 'Salva a un Niño del SIDA': in response to the increased percentage of HIV positive mothers over the age of 15, the Association runs transmission prevention programmes; in 2015 it distributed 1,260 kg of baby milk and 7,200 litres of enriched milk for the families, 11,000 kg of hygiene kits, courses for mothers and fathers, counselling - activities it continues today; Centros Asistenciales Zentapatl y Cacalote: the centre is in a poor area of Mexico City, providing 300 families with food, dental care, educational courses, job training and religious formation. The Healthcare Days

project organises 20 health days in various centres -1,878 patients received gynaecological, paediatric, ophthalmological, dental and psychiatric care and medicines; in 'Ayúdame a Crecer', a medical nutritional project for children provides free examinations to 3,200 children a year in five areas and distributes medicines and food packages. Donations of water filters and heaters, clothing and toys are distributed and families are shown the benefits of eating soya products.

The Mexican Association has an Emergency Alert Programme whose aim is to create a culture of prevention in populations at risk, with first aid courses and training, to act before, during and after recurrent natural disasters in local regions.

Malteser International has supported

the Mexican Association since 2007 in Mexico D.F., Tabasco and Veracruz with income generation and health care initiatives and risk preparedness training.

NICARAGUA

From the start of 2017, the Order's Association in Nicaragua has been working with the Food for the Poor organisation to accept donations of medical equipment to distribute. The first shipment of 200 wheelchairs, hospital beds and general medical items totalled US\$15 million.

The Order's Embassy to Nicaragua has been supporting the most vulnerable in society, coordinating millions of dollars' worth of humanitarian aid sent by Americares.

PANAMA

In Panama, the Order's Panamanian Association supports two schools in poor areas of Panama City by assisting handicapped children, providing school items and, recently, restructuring some of the buildings. Since 2007, every three months the Order has been organising medical mission tours, entitled 'Christ Heals', to treat poor residents in the Darien jungle with doctors from the Ministry of Health, dentists and ophthalmologists. An annual Christmas Day event brings joy and a warm meal to children in Panama's poorest communities.

For World Youth Day 2019, the Order is sending 110 volunteer paramedics from France, Germany and Italy, to support the Panamanian civil protection authorities.

PARAGUAY

Paraguay Servicio de Emergencia Malta (SEMA), the relief organisation of the Order in Paraguay, provides medical assistance at major events and pilgrimages to the Virgin of Caacupé and offers medical and dental care to native

populations.

The Order also supports the Medical Faculty of the Asunción University, the research Institute of Health Science, the Paraguayan Society of Paediatrics and the Ministry of Health.

In the 'Puesto de Emergencia Malta', which operates from premises donated by the Embassy to the Association, free meals are distributed to poor children whose mothers also benefit from courses in cookery and hairdressing, and health education.

PERU

In Peru, the Order's Peruvian Association's activities in 2016 and 2017 include: a Christmas celebration for children from poor families in villages around Lima (Valle Amauta and Puruchoco in Ate, San Isidro, Chosica and Cañete); education in schools campaign with distribution of notebooks and school items to more than 200 children in the native communities of Santa Teresita and Chuquibambilla in the jungle; medical care for around 11,000 patients a month in the 'Divine Child Jesus' Order church, Pamplona

Baja, south of Lima; medical care and medicine distribution to the local communities along the Napo River thanks to an agreement with the Peruvian Navy; donation of 440 kilos of fish to the Home of Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo, where members of the Peruvian Association work with children and adults. The donation also included clothing and toys for Epiphany; medical campaign in the native community of Santo Tomás, Nanay River, in cooperation with the Peruvian Navy, plus a dental campaign for the children from the Order's soup kitchen in Valle Amauta, Ate; and stretchers for physiotherapy to the Naval Polyclinic of Quito, Amazonas region.

In January 2017, parts of Peru were battered by almost unceasing rains with consequent floods, landslides, loss of life and more than 100,000 people losing their homes. Over half a million were affected by the storms and the resulting damage, over a number of months. In response, staff from Malteser Peru, and Order volunteers, provided food, water, and clothing to victims in Ate in April 2017, and to victims in Piura in May.



▲ Distributing water filtration equipment after natural disasters



▲ The free mobile clinic operated by the Order's Western Association in Oakland, California, treated over 3000 patients in 2018

SURINAME

The Embassy of the Order in Suriname is supporting: the Sisters of Oord and St. Vincent's hospital Home for the Elderly, with food and health care necessities; food donations for the Abadukondre orphanage / boarding school, plus financial aid for extra-curricular activities, and contributions towards building a study hall. The Embassy also sponsors a psychologist to assist young women who have been sexually abused by family members. Since 2013 the Embassy has been supporting the Foundation 'de Mantel' in providing food for the elderly and sick in Paramaribo on a daily basis.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In the United States of America, the Order is active through its three Associations: the American Association, the Federal Association and the Western

Association. The three Associations jointly work for the Holy Family Hospital of Bethlehem Foundation based in Washington D.C. Their work includes: hosting area events to raise awareness of the HFH within the US; working with the clergy to bring the HFH Foundation story to the local Diocese, Parishes, etc.; reaching out to businesses, corporations and foundations; encouraging groups visiting the Holy Land to include a visit to the HFH.

The highlight of the American Association's activities is its Prison Ministry, involving the Order's three USA Associations and the Canadian Association. Participants in the project number over 2,500 members, auxiliaries and volunteers in 37 States, with a centralised communication centre.

The programme covers: rehabilitation with distribution of Bibles and a newsletter; pen pal participation; programmes for families 'Get on the Bus' to bring families together; re-entry

programmes (Dismas Home, Oxford Houses, project Prodigal, Social Service Guide); working with the US & Canadian Conferences of Catholic Bishops to advocate the abolition of the death penalty; working with Catholic charities to identify Prison Ministry resources and expand the role of the Apostolate; raising financial resources from individuals, foundations, etc.

The Federal Association covers 29 regions and 108 projects, serving over 50,000 people in need. Its major activities focus on food kitchens, food distribution, elderly and child care, hospital visits, medical clinics, radio coverage; Catholic radio support, mobile medical vans, home rebuilding, visiting members in assisted living facilities and suffering from family problems, and prison ministry. The works are carried out by the members, together with over 400 volunteers. Initiatives in 2017 and 2018 include first aid training and first responder training

for volunteers.

In 2017, the Western Association contributed over 46,000 hours of hands-on service to its main charities: the Malta Clinic, Los Angeles, for the sick and the poor provides examinations, assessments and free medicines. The clinic is staffed by 75 volunteers; the Malta Clinic, Oakland, located in the Cathedral complex, has 22 volunteer doctors and 35 volunteer nurses. Since 2008, over 25,000 patients have been treated, with 3,324 in 2017; the Parish Nurse Programme, which operates in San Francisco, Phoenix and Orange and cares for homebound senior patients. Nurses are accompanied by Dames and visit 36 patients/month. In 2017, over 400 patients were visited in San Francisco.

Since 2009 the Association has assisted in the administration of the World Day of the Sick Mass and receptions in nine major centres. In 2017, the events were televised from Phoenix Cathedral (viewer statistics for channel EWTN:

250 million people in 140 countries). Prison Ministry actions included 40 Order members now certified to enter San Quentin Prison and letter and card campaigns to inmates continue. The wild fires of October 2017 and 2018 which struck the wine region, saw members mobilising aid to the stricken with food and basic necessities. The Western Association developed a range of charitable works in 2018, to create impact in the lives of society's disadvantaged, including a soup kitchen in San Francisco, weekend food for the homeless, and direct assistance to the very poor.

URUGUAY

The Order's Association in Uruguay has a range of support activities, and runs community projects in Montevideo and a rural dental project: it assists at the hospice 'Hogar Pablo VI', Montevideo, which shelters 20 homeless men every night (a welcome addition was a con-

tainer of beds and furniture donated by the Swiss Association); supports the 'Hogar Casita del Señor', a home for elderly, low income women, which was built with a donation from the Association; in Canelones, on the ground floor of the Association's new premises, a residential hospice, 'Hogar Monseñor Jacinto Vera', shelters 35 young mothers and their children; a night and day shelter, 'Hogar La Milagrosa' houses 30 people each night and 30 each day. The Association also provides dental prevention and therapy to a school of 220 pupils, in Junta Local. Education initiatives: courses of catechism and arithmetic for the children living in one of the Montevideo homes; a computer training centre established in the Association's premises in Canelones. The 'Cocina Solidaria 2017' fed 70 poor children in the Fortaleza Barrio, Montevideo, over the cold season, with members and volunteers providing 1,000 lunches and 3,000 'empanadas' (pasties).



▲ Order volunteers regularly prepare lunches and picnics for poor children in Montevideo, Uruguay

ASIA PACIFIC

AFGHANISTAN

In late 2016, with the repatriation of refugees, over a million have returned, forced to live in provisional camps as the country struggled to feed them and house them. A provisional camp was set up in the province of Laghman for around 400 of the returning families. Since March, 2017, Malteser International, in cooperation with Afghanischer Frauenverein e.V. (Association of Afghan Women), and its local partner organisation, Union Aid, has been supporting the families (about 2,800 people) who are impoverished, live in tents, suffer cold and diseases in the freezing winter and the difficulty of finding even occasional jobs. The organisations have distributed warm blankets, gas cylinders for heating stoves and basic food stuffs – the essentials for survival.

ARMENIA

The Order's Embassy in Armenia continues to support a school for speech and hearing impaired children in Yerevan, and provides a yearly sum for them to attend summer camps. The Embassy has been carrying out two humanitarian aid projects for several years, despite the difficulties in raising funds in Armenia: support for the Orphanage of Zvartnotz which,

The Order of Malta has a presence across Asia Pacific where a range of projects improve healthcare and living conditions for many thousands of people.

In addition, the Order's national Associations and Malteser International are at the ready to respond to natural and man-made disasters, and implement extensive programmes in disaster risk reduction throughout the region.

thanks to donations, can feed 120 orphans twice a day every month; and support for the Sanatorium in Dilijan which treats tuberculosis patients, whilst their children are taught and cared for. The Sanatorium also receives regular donations to purchase the very expensive imported medicines for the patients.

In cooperation with the Order's Swiss Association, in 2017 the Order provided 50 specialised beds to a hospital in need of support in Etchmiadzin.

AUSTRALIA

Nationwide, the Order's Association in Australia continues its 'Coats for the Homeless' project, providing quilted water-resistant coats for homeless people in the country's main cities. The project is managed from the Order's Queensland branch. Over 6,000 coats were distributed in 2017 (doubling the number of three years earlier). A highlight in 2017 was the Association's participation in the first Asia Pacific summer camp for young disabled, held in Singapore.

In New South Wales, support for Gorman House in Sydney, a residential drug and alcohol detoxification and rehabilitation centre is ongoing, and includes legal and financial counselling. There is also long term support for the Palliative Care Unit and Day Centre at



St Joseph's Hospital, Auburn. Since 2015, a Community Care Van, operated every Monday by a nurse from St Vincent's Hospital Sydney and volunteer drivers from the Order of Malta, provides, healthcare and seasonal items to Sydney's homeless.

In Queensland, the Order supports the 'Knights of Malta Palliative Home Care Hospice', founded in 1981 at Mt Olivet Hospital and provides funding for major psychiatric research of the terminally ill. In Victoria, the Order is a partner in the Eastern Palliative Care Service, which provides home-based palliative care to a catchment of 1.3 million people in East Melbourne; a Homelessness Group is in contact with the housing ministry and arranges emergency housing; the well regarded Friday Night School is focussed on social and academic integration for refugee. In Western Australia, the Order runs the 'Reading Recovery Programme' for Aboriginal children in communities in the Kimberleys - so successful it is now government funded.

Activities abroad: the Association is involved in projects in Hong Kong, mainland China, Vietnam and in Timor Leste.

CAMBODIA

There is no national health system in Cambodia. Since 2005, the Order's international relief service, Malteser In-

ternational, has been working with a local partner in Oddar Meanchey for a community-based health insurance system covering 30 villages. In Siem Reap, where undernourishment of children is a major problem, they provide nutritional supplements and vitamin-enriched foods, and run educational campaigns in hygiene and nutrition. In Samrong, four programmes cover 80 rural populations, strengthening the community-based healthcare system and mother and child health, and providing school meals. Other works include very successful sanitation projects - construction of rainwater harvesting tanks in five schools, construction of latrines in five schools and 16 villages, as well as anti-dengue campaigns in 32 villages.

GEORGIA

Since the end of 2008 the Embassy of the Order to Georgia has been providing humanitarian aid to Georgia in various ways.

In 2016 the Embassy cared for 60 sick people, some of them terminal patients, providing medicines and food through the 'Healthcare Tbilisi' project. From 2017, among the Embassy's proj-



▲ The Order runs disaster risk reduction programmes in southern Asia, where hurricanes are a regular phenomenon

ects is a cooperation with the Order's German Malteser Hilfsdienst (MHD) in the management of a home for disabled people in the province of Kutaisi.

HONG KONG (CHINA)

The Order of Malta in Hong Kong runs projects locally and on mainland China. In Hong Kong, there are outings and activities for families who live below the

poverty line - the 'Flying Young' programme; and volunteer work with the children in the Caritas Lok Yi special education school for disabled children.

The Hong Kong Delegation became the 48th national Association of the Order in 2018.

INDIA

The Order of Malta, through Malteser International, has been active in India following a series of natural catastrophes. Disastrous floods from the Koshi River system have threatened the state of Bihar since 2008. Because of the continuing risk of flooding and insufficient water and sanitation supply Malteser International trains alternative ways for livelihoods and disaster risk reduction, and is providing access to water and sanitation, benefitting 5,000 households.

Recurring drought in southern Tamil Nadu and local violence has meant much emigration, affecting the local economy so that young people have little work opportunity. Additionally the caste system brings social marginalisation. Support measures for the young include training life skills, finan-

The fight against leprosy

CIOMAL (Comité Internationale de l'Ordre de Malte) was founded in Geneva to coordinate the Order's projects to fight leprosy and exclusion associated with the disease. It has been operating in Cambodia since 1994 in cooperation with the local government, supporting the Cambodian National Leprosy Control Programme. CIOMAL also finances vocational training, sponsorships for primary/secondary school or university (over 100 in 2016) as well as micro finance for small businesses in livestock/agricultural projects. Awareness campaigns have been organised in garment factories, with training and explanatory documents offered. Running for over ten years, it means that 30,000 garment workers distribute the documents in their villages every year. Another, creating theatre productions which explain the disease, started in 2016 and has been featured on national television.

Since 2000, with the support of Ordre de Malte France, the 50-bed Kien Khleang Leprosy Rehabilitation Programme (KKLRC) in Phnom Penh is recognised as a centre of excellence.

cial support for educating the disabled, support for HIV/AIDS positive patients, community care.

Ordre de Malte France has had a representation in Delhi since 1984. Current care activities cover a day care centre in a poor area of the city which doubles as a school, a centre for the homeless which collects street children, a hospice for former leprosy victims near Chennai (Madras), support for a mobile clinic in Pondicherry and a school in Shanti engaged in the fight against malnutrition.

INDONESIA

Following the powerful earthquake in September 2018, measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale and the tsunami off the coast of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, Malteser International is supporting its Indonesian partner, YAKKUM, with

the repair and rehabilitation of damaged health centres in Sulawesi. Aid includes provision of medical supplies for the injured. Malteser International also set up an emergency fund for the distribution of essential relief materials for thousands of victims of the earthquake.

KAZAKHSTAN

In 2017 the Order's Ambassador to Kazakhstan continued assistance to the Missionaries of Charity (Sisters of St. Mother Teresa), financially and logistically, and also in the preparation and distribution of food and medicines to sick and poor people in the capital, Astana.

LAOS

In Vientiane, Laos, the work of Ordre de Malte France has been focussed on

leprosy since the 1960s. In 2009 a dedicated health centre with an operating theatre was opened – the Pavilion Malte. The centre includes a department specialising in treating foot ulcers in patients, in leprosy detection and care, and in dermatology.

The Order has partnerships with two clinics, both in Vientiane - in the Mitthaphab Hospital and the National Dermatological Centre; and has contributed to renovations at the National Centre for Dermatology, Vientiane and at Lak Sam Seap, has renovated a rehabilitation centre.

MYANMAR

Malteser International has been working in Myanmar since 1996, employing its own staff from 2001. It now employs more than 350 local staff in Rakhine, Shan and Kayin states, operating in pri-



▲ Providing care for displaced Rohingya in refugee camps



▲ The Order's international relief agency, immediately on site after the Nepal earthquake with emergency aid, is now rebuilding homes and livelihoods

mary health care, WASH, Disaster Risk Reduction programmes, climate change adaptation and post disaster relief. Another focus is health care for displaced people (the Rohingya) who have fled from Myanmar to Thailand and Bangladesh, where they do not have refugee status and are therefore not eligible for medical care.

NEPAL

Malteser International was on the ground in Nepal immediately after the 2015 earthquakes and remains, building earthquake resistant houses, repairing water reservoirs, training disaster risk management.

As a result of the Koshi River system floods around the border, as recently as 2017, some areas are at risk of further flooding, some facing farmlands turning into deserts. Malteser International is working to aid livelihood and income generation, with disaster risk reduction training and construction of irrigation systems, for 3,000 households in Sunsari.

PAKISTAN

With a continuous presence in Pakistan since 2005, Malteser International's work has focussed from 2014 on health and disaster risk reduction and care of pregnant women and young children. Help has also been provided to internally displaced families in the north west, at Bannu and Peshawar. With its partner organisation, support is offered to fifteen healthcare facilities in the communities, with basic healthcare and nutrition, and emergency preparedness.

PHILIPPINES

The Order's Association in the Philippines carried out two major emergency activities:

1. Aid for victims of typhoon Nona (Melor) in Northern Samar in January 2016 which benefited 10,000 people. Actions included 'Shelter assistance for affected households in Laoang', aiding 641 households in five villages, which received shelter material.
2. Following Typhoon Lawin (Haima) in

October 2016, the Association distributed food and non-food items and hygiene kits to 6,600 in the Archdiocese of Tuguegarao, Cagayan.

The 'Improved water, sanitation & hygiene services in Lengaoan, Benguet' project was carried out from September to December 2016 – for an intake tank and seven distribution tanks, 40 rainwater harvesting units, 30 communal pit latrines, male and female latrines, handwashing and training facilities, bio gas digesters, 40 bio sand filters, reforestation management, medical and dental missions. The 2,365 beneficiaries produce 80% of the vegetables in the area.

Other activities: The 'Paediatric Malnutrition – a Road to a better Tomorrow' project in the San Agustin Parish, Parañaque, in 2016.

Medical Missions/First Aid and Emergency Assistance in six locations, as well as 11 medical missions for the HIV & AIDS awareness programme, providing: a day camp with young volunteers and disabled persons and an annual early Christmas celebration in the



▲ The Asia Pacific summer camp for young disabled is now an annual event

Hogar de San Joaquin.

The Order has also conducted awareness workshops in HIV/AIDs in Paranaque City and in San Juan.

First aid stations are provided on special occasions, at the request of the Archbishop of Manila.

A fundraising campaign launched by the Grand Magistry for Typhoon Haiyan allowed the purchase of medical equipment for the Archdiocese of Palo, Layte, and musical instruments for the San Antonio de Padua youth choir.

Awareness conferences held in 2016:

The 'Prevention and Addressing vitamin A deficiency' programme was aimed at 300 children aged from 6 months to 6 years;

Seminar 'It's Okay, I got you back' on depression, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse for 80 participants. Malteser International has created a project for community based disaster risk reduction management in the Diocese of Catarman, Northern Samar. It includes disaster preparedness, rescue and first aid, emergency WASH, DRR handbook and training, DRR knowledge replication.

SINGAPORE

In Singapore, the Order's Association organises a range of activities locally, as well as providing aid abroad. In Singapore:

Members regularly visit the Assisi Hospice for the terminally ill and at St. Theresa's Home, arrange and provide outings for the sick and the disabled patients; in prison ministry, members and volunteers work with the Archdiocese's Prison Ministry in counselling prisoners and helping them with spiritual rehabilitation after discharge; members also help patients and residents at the St. Joseph's Home for the sick elderly, at the Good Shepard Home at Marymount for single mothers and broken families, the Mount Alvernia Hospital, and the Dementia Home at Apex Harmony Lodge.

In 2016, the Singapore Association organised the first Asia Pacific Summer Camp for Disabled Youth, aged between 18 and 30, counting 60 participants from Australia, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, all accompanied by an Order volunteer.

Abroad, the Association supports a number of Order projects: the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, the activities of Malteser International, a rehabilitation programme in Aceh, Indonesia, and in Laos, building a dispensary and clinic in Chiem Cong and providing medical equipment to the Luang Prabang hospital.

SOUTH KOREA

Members of the Order in South Korea, together with volunteers, work at the newly renovated 'House of Catholic Love and Peace' in Seoul for the Lunchbox Project. They cooked, packed and delivered 5,100 lunch boxes over 2017 to 300 lonely people living in the city's slums.

TAJIKISTAN

The Order's Embassy in Tajikistan is focussing on humanitarian and medical assistance, as poverty reduction and economic growth are aiming for greater impact in the country.

THAILAND

Malteser International has been operating in Thailand for the past 20 years. Healthcare projects in refugee camps at the Myanmar border near Le Koh provide medical assistance to more than 33,000 refugees who are not recognised by the Thai government and are not entitled to medical care. Formation programmes include training traditional birth attendants (midwives), community health workers and leaders, benefitting 70,000 people.

CIOMAL, the Order's foundation to support Hansen's disease victims, has also been active in Thailand for many years with a leprosy prevention and therapy programme.

The Embassy of the Order to Thailand is involved in supporting a number of projects, including aid for medical teams in the villages of the northern hill tribes, which is supplied every quarter.

Following widespread flooding in the country in August 2017, Order members and friends, together with other organisations, continue to offer support to victims - 17,000 houses were estimated to have been affected by water and mud. Medical care is a high priority, as is the supply of hygiene equipment.

TIMOR-LESTE

The Order, through its Embassy, has been managing four main projects in Timor-Leste:

- the Dominican Orphanage at Hera, a scholarship programme for orphans and other deserving students, caring for 26 boys aged 6 to 22;
- non-critical Patient Transport Service;
- a boys' orphanage at Hera, 20 km from Dili, was opened in 2014 and now houses 26 boys, with ages ranging from 6 to 18;
- the new Medical Clinic at Timor Plaza, which opened in November 2017. Offering primary health care, it has facilities to treat 200 patients a day, has a special

focus on care for mothers and children and is free for eligible Timorese.

The Order supports two clinics, located in Maubara (40 km from Dili) and in Bebonuk (Dili), providing each with an Order of Malta (SMOM) ambulance donated by the St. John Ambulance Service of Western Australia and medical advice on clinic operation procedures. Regular shipments of pharmaceuticals from Australia are sent to a number of clinics. A Creating Leaders Scholarship Programme currently supports 11 children, all from disadvantaged backgrounds, to participate in formal continuing education, to become positive agents for change and progress. Funding for the construction of a tuberculosis clinic at Venilale is underway.

VIETNAM

The Order began working in Vietnam in 1966. This was the first overseas mission for the Order's international relief agency, Malteser International – at the

time called the Malteser Foreign Aid Service. Fifty years on, the organisation now has a special emphasis in the central provinces, among the poorest areas in the country, on disaster risk reduction awareness, in particular for the risks posed to the disabled caught up in these crises. Training workshops for their inclusion in DRR are given at community, district and regional level. In Vietnam 7.8% of people have one or more disabilities. Malteser International also runs a variety of activities: hygiene education in schools, nutrition awareness, forest preservation as well as disaster preparedness in villages. Ordre de Malte France runs six medical centres in the country, with operating theatres specialised in treating leprosy. The centres in Ben San, Cantho, Nha Trang, Quy Hoa and Ho Chi Minh Ville deal with rehabilitation surgery for leprosy patients, in Diling treatment is for diabetic and leprosy ulcers and in Quy Hoa, specialisations are in ophthalmology.



▲ The Order's clinic in Timor-Leste treats 200 patients every day

EUROPE

The Order of Malta in Europe cares for displaced persons, refugees, migrants, the disabled, the homeless and the elderly sick.

The Order also provides training programmes for first-aiders, health education, medical and social care

services in remote areas and in underprivileged inner city environments, runs hospitals, old people's homes, transport for the disabled, meals on wheels services, rehabilitation and day care centres, including special centres for people with dementia and a number of first-aid and emergency corps that provide support after natural or manmade disasters.



ALBANIA

The Order of Malta Relief Organisation in Albania (MNSH), established 1995, provides medical examinations, treatment and emergency ambulance transport in the mountain villages of Boge, Bratosh and Sheld – treating over 3,000 patients in 2017. Medical services in the municipalities of Shkoder, Vau Dejes and Malesi e Madhe benefitted 3,250 patients in 2017.

The organisation also provides first aid at national events, including recent national football championships.

Special, ongoing projects focus on socially integrating the Roma. In 2017 the

medical centre at the organisation's HQ provided 1,000 consultations to Roma patients, as well as to Shkodër citizens with no health insurance, and launched the 'One step forward for the integration of Roma and Gypsy communities' programme. The 'Roma community in action' project, started in Shkodër in 2016 with Save the Children Albania for 30 children and 98 parents, offers capacity building, cooperation with local institutions, preparing the young to become social and political members of society. In 2017, the summer camp at Velipoje benefitted 220 Roma children from remote areas of northern Albania. The annual summer camp at the same

location for 25 disabled people was organised by young Order volunteers.

Other activities: the Malteser Albania Kindergarten in Shkodër cares for 62 disadvantaged children, including Roma; the Malteser Consultation and Service Centre for the community in Shkodër, with additional services in Lac Vau Dejes, provides weekly assistance to 85 disabled (60 children, 25 young women) and treatment for 38 mainly autistic youngsters aged 3 to 16, as well as a special 'Every child ready to read' project to combat illiteracy. Recently launched: the 'Old is Gold' centre for 85 marginalised elderly, offering a social meeting place, basic health care and psycho-social support.

In 2017, the Multidisciplinary Socio - Medical Centre for Roma and Egyptian communities was launched in Lezha, with activities for 15 pre-school children, after school for 25, sports for 35 youngsters, and illiteracy courses for adults, as well as legal assistance and health services.

AUSTRIA

Malteser Hospitaldienst Austria (MH-DA), the Order's Austrian relief organisation, founded in 1956 and today a significant volunteer emergency service in the country, counts 2,000 volunteers, who, together with Order members,



▲ Harsh winters in the north of the country mean emergency callouts for the Order's Relief Organisation in Albania (MNSH)

provided a total of 170,000 hours of service caring for the sick and the needy in 2017.

From 22-29 July 2017, the Grand Priory of Austria and Malteser Hospitaldienst Austria hosted the Order's 34th International Summer Camp for Young Disabled, in sun-kissed Salzburg

Malteser Hospitaldienst Austria (which has now unified all its voluntary units) offers a wide range of social activities and programmes, including participation in the Order's International Summer Camp, canoeing in Styria with the handicapped, home and hospital visits, weekly soup kitchen, meals on wheels and leisure activities for the disadvantaged and the elderly. The Malteser Alten- und Krankendienst (MAKD) project: 28 volunteers regularly visit the disabled, the sick, and the homeless in hospitals or hospices, and arrange outings; from Malteser Betreuungsdienst (MBD), 42 volunteers regularly visit 33 disabled at home or in institutions; AIDS Dienst Malteser (ADM) - 13 volunteers make home and hospital visits, run monthly coffee and cake meetings in a general hospital ward, organise leisure activities and outings, and canoeing camps; with Malteser Palliative Dienst (MPD), 16 volunteers come to terminally ill patients at home or in hospital; since 2009 Malteser Medikamentenhilfe (MMH) has been collecting medicines from producers, wholesale traders, and pharmacies and sending them to Afghanistan, Bosnia, Greece, Romania



▲ Malteser Hospitaldienst Austria is a significant volunteer emergency service in the country

and Ukraine, the Syrian refugee camps, and to Albania, Bulgaria. With Rumänienhilfe (RH), volunteers, in cooperation with the Romanian Relief Service RH, collect clothing, shoes, hygiene and nursing items for Romania; Haus Malta, Vienna, cares for disabled elderly residents, with 25 employees, 15 volunteers, 35 beds; Malteser Care Ring (MCR) provides professional home care (nursing and general home help) to 304 elderly. Malteser Kinderhilfe runs a residential nursing facility for up to 10 terminally ill youngsters - a completely new care concept in Austria for young sufferers. 8 children were cared for in 2017.

In Graz, an after-school programme for Roma children was launched in September 2017, aimed at encouraging ac-

ademic progress and social integration. Abroad: support for Syrian refugees in Lebanon through 'Nachbar in Not' appeal and for Malteser International's drought crisis programme in Africa.

BELARUS

The Embassy of the Order to Belarus has been providing aid in the country since 1996, working in collaboration with Caritas and the Belarussian State's regional and local authorities in distributing daily essentials for those in need, providing help for orphans, renovating a children's home and a kindergarten, plus the supply of medicines to Belarussian healthcare institutions by various associations under the aegis of the Order of Malta, organisation of on-the-job training for Belarussian doctors in foreign university clinics and humanitarian assistance programmes, such as Ljubliu. In the wake of the Chernobyl disaster, from 2008 the Ljubliu Project has sent 20 Belarus teenagers every year to be hosted by the Order's Italian Emergency Corps (CISOM) for a month long summer holiday by the sea in Cecina, Italy, providing medical checkups and the opportunity to strengthen their immune systems.

Reintegrating returnees to Northern Albania

Following the return to Albania of many families who had sold up everything and left the country in search of employment abroad and returned destitute, in early 2017 the Relief Organisation responded. They delivered 2,000 leaflets and posters on reintegration opportunities, gave psychological support and speech therapy and offered legal assistance to 38 families, as well as orientation to 260 people to re-enter the health service. 50 families received food packages and 589 were given vocational training counselling and orientation. Support services are offered in Tirana, Fushe Kruje, Puke, Lezhe and Malesi e Madhe.

BELGIUM

The Order's Association in Belgium runs the La Fontaine Houses in Brussels (created in 1996), Liège (2000) and Ghent (2014) for the homeless. They provide basic medical care, showers and laundry facilities, hairdressing, pedicure, sewing, cafeteria and clothing. In 2016 27,000 homeless visited the three centres, over 25,000 in 2017. They are run with three employees and 120 volunteers.

The Brussels location has a new, larger house from 2017, in Liège focus is on mental health and addiction problems, in Ghent visitors in 2016 increased by 27% - the centre also provides weekly integration projects for Roma children.

The Association's activities are carried out by members and over 900 volunteers, especially visiting the elderly in hospitals and hospices. Volunteers receive regular medical training, including in palliative care.

In 2016, volunteer teams were in Krakow for the World Youth Day and in Rome for the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

The 'Our Weekends' project: four per year, for families with disabled children, offering a rest period for the fam-

Assisting refugees
Since July 2015, Malteser Refugee Aid has been active in refugee and integration assistance throughout Austria. Relief programmes for refugees continue in the main cities: in Innsbruck, the Order offers ambulance, first aid and medical care, support with medical appointments and public authorities, and language courses for refugees. Salzburg projects deal with emergency supplies and medical care, and daily language courses for refugees. In Linz, cooperation with the Red Cross ensures night emergency accommodation for the homeless. Members in Vienna arranged accommodation for 600-800 Syrian refugees in cooperation with other partners (MHDA staffs the facility three times a week); the organisation runs Saturday language courses with the local Syrian Orthodox church, and provides legal counselling for the refugees. There are excursions twice a week for refugee children. In Graz there is Saturday care for 150 unaccompanied refugee minors.

ilies and encouraging friendships among the children.

The 'Our Sundays' project: Eight times a year 20 volunteers prepare an activity for 12-15 disabled children - outside (eg. an exhibition) or inside (eg. dancing classes with wheelchairs or crafts). The day always concludes with a Mass. 'Mini Lourdes' - youngsters aged 9-11, with adult supervision, take part in the Order's international Lourdes pilgrimage, to teach the children to respect differences and learn responsibility.

Order of Malta Belgium International

Aid ASBL (MBI), is affiliated to the Belgian Association, with activities outside Belgium in the health sector in developing countries:

The Belgian Association also supports projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo and at the Order of Malta Holy Family Hospital, Palestine.

BOSNIA HERZOGOVINA

The Embassy of the Order in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in collaboration with German Malteser Hilfsdienst teams, organises an ambulance service in Medjugorje during the pilgrimage season (April to October) with local volunteer doctors and helpers (averaging 6,000 medical interventions). The Embassy also supports Catholic parishes, with help for restoring and re-equipping churches, such as the support for the parish church of Bl.Majke Terezije, Vogošća, recently donating bells for the bell tower and material to build a wooden pedestrian bridge to connect the parish with the village. In collaboration with the Law Faculty of University of Sarajevo and the Bucerius Law School in Hamburg, an international university post-graduate exchange programme trains students in constitutional and EU law.



▲ Three day centres for the homeless in Belgium offer their guests showers, laundry, warm food, clothing and basic medical care



▲ Refugees are cared for on arrival in Austria. Malteser Hospitaldienst Austria has been providing a wide range of care for those in need since 1956

BULGARIA

Since 2005, when the Embassy was established in Sofia, 460 initiatives to help the needy have been carried out in 177 locations in Bulgaria. 21 vehicles – ambulances and other vehicles, and mini buses, have been donated to hospitals, orphanages and social centres caring for the elderly and for single mothers – including in Belene, Busovgrad, Iskrez, Malko Tarnovo, Satovcha, Sofia, Stara Zagora, Rakovski, and many other locations.

For the hospitals and day care centres, these included medical equipment for the operating theatres and consulting rooms, electric beds, and medical drugs. In the schools and reception centres for refugees from the Middle East, together with support from the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan), consignments of computer equipment have benefited the institutions.

Every winter from 2013, hot meals are provided for the poor three times a week in Sofia, and from 2014, the Embassy has organised summer holidays for young orphans and Roma children, in areas of natural beauty around the country. The children's illustrations of these happy times have been bound into a book. Since 2017, a young volunteer group has been taking part in the International Summer Camp for Young Disabled.

CROATIA

Through the Order's relief organisation in Croatia, Hrvatska Malteska Sluzba (HMS), created in 1993 during the Balkans crisis, members of the Order organise an annual holiday in Porec, Istria, for 15 disabled young from the Bjelovar diocese. A group of volunteers accompanied disabled guests to the Order's International Summer Camp, in 2016 (in Poland) and 2017 (Austria).

CYPRUS

In Cyprus, through the Order's Embassy, the first humanitarian activity was set up in April 2017, in the village of Kormakitis, in the self declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, providing medical assistance to the local First Aid unit, and donating an ambulance. In 2018 new incubators were presented to the Makarios Children's Hospital.

CZECH REPUBLIC

The relief organisation of the Grand Priory of Bohemia in the Czech Republic, Maltéžská Pomoc o.p.s., has a staff of 140 and 300 volunteers carrying out its many activities in 13 cities. A strong focus is personal assistance for the elderly or handicapped, so they can stay living at home. 339 beneficiaries in 2016 were aided by 130 volunteers who provided 81,301 hours of service.

A social activation service for families – 48 in 2016, and now many more – was aimed at preventing social exclusion. Help for the homeless, an outreach service, offered over 1,000 hours of help in 2017 and 2018. There is also a transport service for people with special needs, and a programme of medical and humanitarian assistance which in 2016 launched a reading and physical activity project for seniors in nursing homes.

In Southern Bohemia, Česká Maltéžská pomoc (Czech Maltese Aid) celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2016. Its mission is the care of children and youth with disabilities, and promotion of social integration. In Strakonice, Borovany, Jindřichuv Hradec, Czech Budejovice and Domažlice, volunteers visit the elderly housebound and those in residential homes.

The Grand Priory runs the Knights of Malta school in Kladno for over 100 students, a Gymnasium (high school) in Skuteč, and the Higher Professional School of Nursing in Prague, which currently has 178 students and cele-

brated its 20th anniversary in 2016. Guests attend the Order's International Summer Camp each year and 50 members accompanied 26 guests on the Order's international Lourdes pilgrimages in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

FRANCE

Ordre de Malte France has a staff of 1,746 in France and abroad and 4,200 regular volunteers. In 2017 it celebrated 90 years of service for those in need. Its activities benefitted 14,000 people. Social exclusion support covers soup kitchens, the homeless, night shelters and professional support for social reintegration. 52,000 hot meals were distributed in 2016; medical care for the homeless and migrants runs under the 'Plateforme Famille' project in Lille, Metz, Paris and Strasbourg; shelter for the homeless is on two barges (St.Jean and St.Michel) on the Seine in Paris, registering 18,000 overnight stays annually and at Refuge Ste Claire, Versailles (1,550 stays annually). Supporters note that scorching summers are

Ordre de Malte France operates in 27 countries
 Ordre de Malte France works in Africa the Middle East and Asia. There are seven hospitals in Senegal, Benin, Togo, Equador, Palestine, Cameroon, Madagascar, with a total of 528 beds; 160 dispensaries and health centres, in Senegal, Tchad, Mali, Benin, Niger, Congo, India, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Guinea, Gabon, Madagascar, Lebanon and Iraq. A medicines distribution programme supports dispensaries in Africa, shipping medications and equipment and a programme of preventive measures against the Ebola epidemic in Guinea, organised in 2015 with Malteser International, continued in 2016. New in Njombé, Cameroon, in 2016: a training centre for paramedics and first responders. A special focus is programmes for leprosy prevention and care in Senegal (Tilène, Ziguinchor), Cameroon (Guili, Guider and Mokolo), Gabon (Ebeigne), India (Pondichéry and Shadipur), Brazil (Macapa), Egypt (Abou Zabal) and in Cambodia (Kien Khleang and Pnom Penh), Vietnam and Laos. In addition, the MALTALEP programme supports international teams in leprosy research.

as difficult for fragile homeless as cold winters. The organisation runs 16 medico-social centres: six hospitals for physically or mentally handicapped (325 beds) in Rochefort, Roquetaillade, Vigneux, Paris, Tours and Fontaine Française; five centres for autistic patients (98

beds) in Rochefort (2), Sallanches, Vigneux/La Maison Bleue, Bullion and Lèves; three establishments for the dependent elderly (508 beds) in Nice, Saint-Etienne and Clamart. The organisation offers training programmes on autism and Alzheimer's support, courses for ambulance drivers (Paris, Brest, Toulon, Bordeaux) and first aid courses in 27 centres. A service to assist those being repatriated has been in place for a number of years. Current key activities: Emergency work alongside the French Civil Protection in case of catastrophes – in 2016, 40 Order first aiders and eight ambulances provided emergency help during the Bataclan tragedy. Defence of migrants' rights, by providing social and legal help for individuals in detention centres and migrant families recently arrived, assisted 4,727 migrants in 2016-17.

GERMANY

The Order of Malta in Germany operates an extensive range of care programmes across the country through its relief corps, Malteser Hilfsdienst (MHD). Founded in 1953, the relief service is now one of the largest charitable service providers in Germany. A



▲ Ordre de Malte France intervenes during the Bataclan attack

million donors, 32,900 professionals and 51,000 volunteers are involved in the care it provides in 700 locations. Care stretches from support for high schoolers, to young drug addicts, to the homeless, to those with handicaps, to the elderly with dementia, and it is carried out in 10 hospitals, 32 residential homes, three high schools, as well as day clinics, soup kitchens and 250 rescue stations. Work in civil protection includes providing first aid and training and rescue services. Care for those suffering from dementia is a special ongoing concern, with the latest care practices developed at Silviahemmet, founded by HM Queen Silvia in 1996.

A significant percentage of medical transportation throughout Germany, including events, first aid on the street, medical transfers from house to hospital and hospital to hospital is carried out by Malteser.

The organisation runs Outpatient Care Services in 33 cities across the country. There are voluntary social services

where qualified volunteers take care of old, sick and lonely people, with the emphasis on giving quality and joy of life. There is a support service which offers visits with dogs – they can often succeed in creating what humans cannot. Currently, there are more than 800 Maltese visiting dogs and handlers in action. Another innovation is the 'Café Malta', which is a care and relief service for people with dementia and their care-givers. There are 58 of them around the country. And a Home Emergency Call Service which operates 365 days a year.

GREAT BRITAIN

The British Association of the Order of Malta in Great Britain focuses on care for the elderly, on homelessness, and on support for the lonely.

The organisation is one of two partners in the Orders of St John Care Trust (OS-JCT), the country's second largest provider of not-for-profit care for the

'I am caught in my world' – Malteser Germany's innovative approaches to dementia care

In line with the strategy for caring for dementia sufferers inspired by the work of Queen Silvia of Sweden, the Silviahemmet philosophy – to empower people (relatives, professionals, decision-makers) to best accompany and care for those suffering from dementia – is followed in all Malteser facilities. Patients need no longer fear being caught in their world of dementia and to be misunderstood.

The Malteser network ensures that all fulltime staff and most volunteers in regular contact with people suffering from dementia are appropriately trained (eg the nurses and paramedics). Their work involves encouraging the joy of life, emphasising the good moments and providing perspective for sufferers and relatives beyond the disease.

In hospital environments, informed treatment produces good results: the positive personal experiences with care at the Silvia ward, St. Hildegardis in Cologne and St. Francis in Flensburg, the Integrative Geriatrics in Bonn and Duisburg, and the Malteser Day Centre in Bottrop, are examples. The hospitals have trained their employees to become experts in dementia, with significant improvements in the mobility, mental abilities and everyday skills of the patients.

Trained staff also run outpatient care for sufferers in their own homes, and outpatient services also include training for relatives and advice on nursing care and long-term care.



▲ Closeness counts: Malteser Hilfsdienst runs care programmes nationwide

elderly. Its 72 homes, run by 4,000 staff for 3,500 residents, are located in four counties - Gloucestershire, Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire, with two new Homes opened in 2017, and three in 2018. A special emphasis is care for dementia patients.

Soup kitchens operate in four locations (two in London, one in Oxford, one in Colchester). New in 2017: the Breakfast Club provides a shower and hot breakfast for the homeless in central London. It is run by 12 very early rising volunteers who start distribution of a traditional hot 'English breakfast' at 6.45 am. A new initiative is the Nehemiah Project in London, which cares for just-released inmates with problems of addiction.

In Scotland, the 25-year old 'Dial a Journey' project provides door to door journeys for the elderly, a school run for disadvantaged children and in 2017, over 37,000 taxi journeys for those without transport. In central London, the 'Tea and Company' project arranges teatime treats for local lonely and elderly every month – singalongs included. The Foreign Aid Service continues its fundraising to support projects abroad – 2017 focus: famine in South Sudan.

In 2018 the British Association and its youth organisation, the OMV, hosted the Order's 35th International Summer Camp for Young Disabled.

HUNGARY

Whilst most of the Order's activities in Hungary are carried out by the Order's Hungarian Charity Service (Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat - MMSz), members of the Association, both in Hungary and abroad, are also involved in the Charity Service's projects, including collecting relief goods for the Order's homes in Hungary, and for Hungarian minorities in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Activities distributing hot meals, visiting the elderly, caring for the disadvantaged, benefit 240,000 every year.

A founder member of the Charity Service, Fr. Imre Kozma organised assistance for 48,600 East German refugees in 1989 after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Today it has 5,000 regular and 15,000 ad hoc volunteers and is one of Hungary's largest providers of social care. It has 350 locations with 142 local groups, 210 institutions and 840 employees, caring for the elderly, the homeless, the disabled, disadvantaged families and children, and drug addicts. It also operates an emergency service in times of natural disasters. Health care activities cover a hospital, nursing homes, consulting rooms, a mobile pulmonary screening station, a medical device rental service and a vo-



▲ The Hungarian Charity Service works in 350 locations around the country, benefiting 240,000 annually

ational/ apprentice school.

The Charity Service welcomed many very cold homeless into its headquarters during the bitter winters of 2016-17 and 2017-18 and organised nine ambulances to drive the streets at night looking for people in distress. By day, they distributed hot food and managed a mobile medical unit. The Service operates 60 homeless care institutions.

For children, the Charity Service manages 33 playgrounds all over Hungary plus four mobile playgrounds for small children and young people aged 10 to 15, offering them playtime, sport, a library, artwork and crafts every day. A week's summer camp for 250 disabled youngsters is organised yearly at Balaton Földvár (Lake Balaton).

Social integration programmes for Roma families in Tarnabod and Erk provide housing, employment and farming, with social inclusion projects in Monor, Táska and Pécs-Györgytelep. The annual 'Giving is joy' Christmas campaign in supermarkets is run by 2,500 volunteers who last year collected 288 tonnes of food, making 33,000 Christmas parcels for poor families.

In 2016, at the request of the Hungarian government, the Service started its 'Presence' programme in two very poor areas, Tiszabó and Tiszabura, to integrate the 6,000 inhabitants. In the same year, MMSz founder Fr. Kozma was awarded the prestigious European Citizens Prize for his works over a lifetime with refugees and those in need. At the MMSz 20th Sports Day in Győr in 2017 - 22 teams from 15 towns competed.

New initiatives in 2017: the 'Sinfonia Programme' where 700 Roma children from five centres join together in music projects. Special tutoring is given to those with particular talent; the opening of the Csilla von Boeselager Centre in Beregovo for the disabled in Transcarpathia. The Charity Service supports 700 needy families in the area; the taking over from the State of six residential homes (500 people) in Zalakomár, Sármellék, Görcsöny,

Keresztespuszta, Esztergom and Pilismarót.

The Order's Embassy to Hungary cooperates closely with the Association and the Charity Service in many of their activities and takes an active part in Roma support in Pecs, Budapest and Beregovo (Ukraine). Support for refugees is also a strong focus: a Cooperation Agreement signed between the Serbian government and the Charity Service in 2016 supports social programmes in Vojvodina to help refugees in Serbia, and provides family and child aid programmes in the reception camp in Szabadka. The projects are carried out by over 600 Order volunteers working in the transit zones. The teams are also providing support - medical checks and food and clothing - to refugees arriving at the border.

IRELAND

In Ireland, the Order's Ambulance Corps, staffed by more than 4,000 volunteers in over 80 units, operates 165 ambulances, rapid response 4 x 4s and mobile accident and emergency suites, and carries out an extensive range of community services throughout the country. One of the largest voluntary organisations in Ireland, it recently celebrated over 75 years of service. Activities cover pre-hospital care and training, support for the homeless and for people with physical or intellectual disabilities, and first aid services at community and sporting events which in 2016 were attended by over three million people. Ambulance Corps volunteers give their time and expertise to train young people in cardiac first response (CFR) and cardio pulmonary resuscitation awareness (CPR) - training 2,000 in 2016. The junior section is for cadets aged between 10 and 16, who are trained in basic life-saving skills and are involved in community work, helping the elderly and disabled.

'Share to care' weekend holidays for families of children with life limiting



▲ 4,000 volunteers divided into 80 units form the Ambulance Corps in Ireland

conditions offer a relaxing time for all. With 800 participants in 2016 over 12 weekends, the response has far exceeded expected participation in the project. A project to provide food, clothing and support for the homeless in St Stephens Green in Dublin – the ‘Knight Run’ - has been operating since 2014. Guests and carers participated in the Order’s International Summer Camp for Young Disabled in 2016, 2017, 2018.

The Association brings guests on pilgrimage to the Shrine of Knock, where in 2017 the Order’s Pilgrim Hostel was opened to able and disabled pilgrims alike, to Croagh Patrick and to Lourdes, which in 2017 added a special remembrance wall of honour on the ward for deceased pilgrims.

Abroad, the Irish Association has for years been sending nurses and mid-

wives to give further education to staff at the Order’s Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem.

ITALY

The Order in Italy is made up of three Grand Priorities – Rome, Lombardy and Venice, and Naples and Sicily, and an Association. They all engage in helping those in need.

The Association manages the 240-bed San Giovanni Battista Hospital, Rome, which has a specialist neuro-rehabilitation unit for cerebral trauma patients, a specialised ‘Reawakening Unit’ for patients recovering from coma – one of the very few in Italy - a day care centre and a polyambulatorio.

The Association employs 550 professionals and 60 volunteers and runs 13 health centres throughout Italy, including six centres for diagnosis and treatment of diabetes in Lazio and Apulia, and three dental clinics in Naples.

In 2017, the annual Italian summer camp for young disabled took place at Porto Sant’Elpidio in the Marche, in co-operation with the three Italian Grand Priorities, the Italian Association and CI-SOM, with a contingent of 85 volunteers and 47 guests. In 2018, 150 young participated in the summer camp in Padua.

The three Grand Priorities undertake many aid activities in their regions, including distributing food to the homeless, visiting the lonely and infirm

The Italian Military Corps of the Order

The Order of Malta’s Military Corps, founded in 1876, are permanent auxiliaries of the Italian army. The Corps carries out independent operations in the healthcare, first-aid and civil defence fields.

It has been in the front line in dramatic scenarios such as the Calabria-Sicily earthquake of 1908, the Po Valley floods of 1951, the Belice earthquake of 1968, the Friuli earthquake of 1976, the Irpinia earthquake of 1980 and in San Giuliano di Puglia in 2002 and the Abruzzo in 2009 and in the Marche earthquakes of 2016.

Since 2004, some of the Military Corps’ medical officers have been attached to the medical units following the Italian Armed Forces in the Balkans under the Ministry of Defence. They have also offered development help in Somalia and in Afghanistan, with donations of sewing machines, paediatric hospital beds and sports items to help the fight against the ‘child soldier’ menace.

The Italian Rescue Corps of the Order of Malta (CISOM)

The Rescue Corps has 4,882 volunteers (3,996 general volunteers and rescuers, 458 doctors, 300 nurses, 55 psychologists, 37 pharmacists and 36 priests in 143 groups). The organisation's field of operation is civil protection and emergency activities throughout Italy; it also participates in international humanitarian operations.

Since 2008 CISOM has provided emergency aid to immigrants in boats in the Strait of Sicily, working together with the ships of the Italian Coast Guard and of the Guardia di Finanza. In 2016 CISOM carried out SAR (Search and Rescue) activities in the Strait of Sicily, assisting 31,462 people. In 2017, CISOM trained the Libyan Navy and Coast Guard in the rescue techniques, with more scheduled in 2018.

Devastating earthquakes hit central Italy in summer 2016. CISOM provided assistance to over 2,000 people in Lazio, the Marche, Umbria and Abruzzo, and worked with 750 volunteers over five months (164 days and over 5,000 working hours) who at times served over 600 meals a day. The volunteer teams also included psychologists who provided counselling to victims.

In the freezing winters of 2016 and 17, in Milan, Turin, Siena, Pinerolo, Rome, Catania and Naples teams of volunteers provided hundreds of homeless with blankets, food and basic goods.

Assistance and welcome services in the Casa del Pellegrino at the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of Pompei have been operating since 2013, a cooperation between the Grand Priory of Naples and CISOM's volunteers, aiding hundreds of pilgrims - 19,500 arrived in 2016.

During the Jubilee of Mercy from the start on 8 December 2015 until its end in November 2016, volunteers from the three Italian Grand Priorities, the Italian Association and CISOM were present in St. Peter's Square with a first aid medical post and 151 rescue teams, as well as giving service in the other three basilicas.

A summer (2017) first aid post was set up on Asinara Island, Sardinia, in collaboration with local authorities and the Coast Guard, with 22 volunteers. From July till the end of September they carried out 160 interventions. The Ljubljana Project - organising a summer seaside holiday for 10 Belarusian children - was in 2017 extended to include 10 children from earthquake-affected Umbria.

housebound, caring for the victims of the natural catastrophes which often strike the peninsula.

LATVIA

Twice a year at Christmas and Easter, and in cooperation with the Riga Rotary Club, the Embassy of the Order in Latvia takes part in the distribution of second hand clothes coming from Germany to Riga. Malteser Hilfsdienst has been supporting the Embassy's work with the needy since 2007. A soup kitchen, first set up in Riga in 2013, was resumed in 2017.

LITHUANIA

The Order's relief service in Lithuania, Maltos Ordino Pagalbos Tarnyba (MOPT), founded in 1991, has 1,500 volunteers in 44 towns across the country and a raft of projects to help the needy. A bilateral cooperation agreement be-

tween the Order and Lithuania, signed in 2017, assures further social and humanitarian support. Also in 2017, the 25th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations was celebrated.

In 2017, the oldest project - Meals on Wheels for seniors - saw 151,000 meals delivered to 613 beneficiaries in 22 towns. A 'Home care at home' project involves 400 volunteers who regularly visit lonely sick elderly, almost 1,800 in 2017. Senior clubs in four towns bring company for over a hundred lonely elderly. Every year, MOPT organises Easter and Christmas treats and events as well as fundraisers - benefitting 2,600 at home and in hospitals in 35 towns. Their 'Malteser Soup' campaign each winter - now in its 12th year- is an effective fundraiser for their projects.

In 13 towns, the Service manages day care centres for children, five days a week, with two more centres opened in 2018. The centres are helped by over 100 volunteers. Two young people's

centres in local communities work with 120 youngsters.

Two new, highly successful initiatives are 'Let's go', launched in Vilnius in 2014, which provides transport for the disabled - 996 people benefitted in 2017 and 21,879 km were covered; and a rehabilitation summer camp in Klaipeda for 18 young wheel chair users with life-changing injuries, 'Move it!' which has attracted happy participants since 2015.

The Service also offers first aid training programmes in schools (230 pupils from 22 schools in 2017).

The Malteser Youth group brings together over 500 young volunteers who run summer camps and educational programmes in seven centres.

There's also a three-year joint project with the Lithuanian Jewish community 'Righteous among the Nations' to thank those who risked their lives to help Jews in World War Two. The project, started in April 2016, aims to pro-

vide material support through debit cards to buy medicines and food and psychological assistance to those whose bravery helped so many of their fellow citizens.

In 2017, the President of Lithuania declared that 'The Sovereign Order of Malta has become an integral part of a safer Lithuania.'

LUXEMBOURG

Ordre de Malte Luxembourg, which celebrated fifty years of service to society's most deprived in June 2017, has focussed recently on a Sunday breakfast kitchen for the homeless (the 'Cathedral Steps' project, first set up by Ordre de Malte France), operating since autumn 2016, and on community care for the elderly and lonely, with home visits, excursions, and accompanying to hospital appointments. In addition, Café Malte, set up in spring 2015 as a meeting centre for the elderly and

lonely, and run by a group of volunteers, is proving very popular. The Meals on Wheels service, operating for over 40 years, continues to provide hot food to the elderly and sick, preparing over 1,000 meals annually.

With more and more refugees arriving in the country, Ordre de Malte Luxembourg contributes support to the homes for refugees managed by Caritas, by distributing basic hygiene kits, with 1,000 distributed in 2017. A new initiative is visits to refugee centres with a mobile library of books in several languages.

NORTH MACEDONIA

The Sovereign Order's Embassy in Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic of) continues its support for the Demir Kapija Institute for Mentally and Physically Disabled adults and children, with medicines, medical supplies and food. In 2016 the Embassy was awarded the

Golden Plaque by the Macedonian government for the work it has carried out in aid of this institution. New equipment has also been donated by the Order's Swiss Association. Additionally, a training programme sends local nurses for specialist training in a British psychiatric hospital. The Embassy's special humanitarian activities have focused on children orphaned in the recent violent conflicts in the region, by supporting the Sisters of Mother Teresa and SOS Children Villages.

MALTA

In 2016 the Grand Magistry donated a mobile clinic and minivan for the refugee service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and made a special donation for the purchase and training of guide dogs for the blind.

Maltese Association members and volunteers run a range of activities: an annual Christmas party for 300 orphans and disadvantaged young, packaging and distribution of 120 Christmas hampers to those in need; a summer picnic in the Verdala Castle gardens for 300 elderly from residential homes; training guide dogs for the blind is ongoing; meals on wheels brings 98,000 meals annually to housebound patients. The Gozo Volunteer Group, as well as their main activities - transporting wheelchair patients to hospital and outings for the elderly - gives English language lessons to refugees and distributes food to families in need every month.

New activities: a refreshments trolley service for patients at the Sir Anthony Mamo Oncology Centre, launched in 2016; a prison ministry project for young foreign inmates at the Corradino Correctional Facility, with regular visits, and psychological support as they enter rehabilitation programmes. The Order organises an annual Thanksgiving Supper and a summer barbeque for all inmates at the Young Persons Offenders Unit in Mtaħleb; and a forthcoming project to provide shelter and



▲ The Italian Relief Corps runs many activities, including distribution of food for the destitute



▲ Lineup of Order ambulances – medical support for World Youth Day in Krakow, 2016

mentoring for small numbers of homeless youths. A team of members and volunteers have accompanied guests to the Order's International Camps each year – 2016, 2017, 2018.

MOLDOVA

In June 2014 the Order's Ambassador to Moldova opened a soup-kitchen in the basement of the Cathedral of Chisinau in cooperation with the Social Centre 'Casa Providentie'. Since then the soup-kitchen has provided over 19,000 substantial warm meals to elderly poor. At Christmas each year since 2015 the Embassy distributed hampers of non-perishable foods, and fruit to 170 elderly people. 30 children received baskets of toys, school items and sweets – an activity undertaken every Christmas.

MONACO

In the Principality of Monaco, the Order's Monegasque Association organises yearly collections on World Leprosy Day, benefitting the Order's leprosy organisation, CIOMAL, for the continuation of its projects in Asia and South

America. At home, the Association organises several successful Christmas luncheons every year, preceded by a Mass, for the 250 residents of the Résidence du Cap Fleuri and other Monaco homes for senior residents. Through the renewal of a 3-year partnership agreement, the Association also pursues actively its support for the Monaco Cardiac Centre for major heart surgery operations for young children.

MONTENEGRO

The Sovereign Order's Ambassador to Montenegro facilitated a donation of medical equipment sent by the Grand Priory of Lombardy and Venice to the Ministry of Health in the country's capital, Podgorica. The Order of Malta has set up a project enabling Montenegrin cardiologists to participate in the updating seminars on cardiovascular techniques in Naples.

NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands Association supports the Johannes Hospitium (Hospice of St. John) in Vleuten, founded in 1991 and

managed by the Association together with the Johanniter Orden). The hospice offers a home and spiritual support to terminal patients and is staffed by professional and voluntary carers.

A medical facility in central Amsterdam, in cooperation with the Johanniter Order and operated by the Kruispost Foundation and including Order volunteers, provides primary medical care to the uninsured and those with mental health issues, and to refugees.

The Association organises an annual summer camp for young disabled – the 21st took place in 2018 in Imminkhoeve im Lemele, for 18 volunteers and 10 guests. Volunteer teams and guests also took part in the International Summer Camp for Young Disabled in Krakow in 2016, Salzburg in 2017, Hampshire GB in 2018. A group of young volunteers have annually participated in the summer camp at Chabrouh, Lebanon.

POLAND

World Youth Day 2016, held in Krakow, was attended by over one and a half million young who were addressed by the Pope. The day was strongly supported by the Order's European Associations and first aid services at the major events. There were 500 volunteers (medical and paramedical personnel and volunteers), under the leadership of the Polish Association, 30 ambulances (out of a total of 134 deployed) and 30 logistics vehicles from five countries. 10 sectors out of 108 were manned by Order volunteers.

This was followed by hosting the Order's 33rd International Youth Camp, attended by 200 disabled guests and 300 volunteers from 24 countries. The Order's Polish Relief Organisation (Maltanska Sluzba Medyczna – Pomoc Maltańska) supported the event with 30 doctors and paramedics.

Activities around the country include six assistance centres for the disabled (Poznań, Kraków, Katowice, Radom, Olsztyn, Warszawa); 12 health centres;

a hospital which provides medical care to over 300 patients each year; two social care centres; two centres of occupational therapy for the disabled, with 2,000 people in permanent care, 7,000 people in temporary care and 1,000 volunteers.

The 'Little Malta' programme for young people trains them in specific activities to prepare them to assist people with mental and physical disabilities.

Abroad, in cooperation with the Order's Relief Corps in Ukraine, the Polish Relief Organisation provides training and equipment to volunteers to develop a rescue system with local teams.

PORTUGAL

The hospitaller activities of the Order's Association in Portugal are run by Obras Portuguesas da Ordem de Malta (OHPOM) and by the Fundação Frei Manuel Pinto de Fonseca (FFMPF).

The work of 'Obras' is focussed at home on the medical and logistics work of volunteers who assist pilgrims and support the poor, especially Fatima pilgrims, with medical care, meals and shelter; and on a range of activities - in Lisbon, Oporto and other cities, including hospices in Lisbon, Gavião, Crato Carnide and Queiriga, benefitting 300 patients, attended by 50 volunteers; an institution for the handicapped in Lisbon where volunteers provide medical assistance and medicines; social, religious and spiritual assistance for 70 inmates by 14 volunteers in two state prisons in Caxias and Carregueira; clinical and medical support for patients of the Misericórdia of Elvas hospital; and work with the 'Anjos Amigos - Friendly Angels' homeless programme in Oporto.

In 2016, the Association initiated a simple system that allows donations to be made to the Order of Malta from any ATM machine in Portugal.

The Association supports Order projects in many Portuguese-speaking countries.

ROMANIA

The Order's relief organisation in Romania, Serviciul de Ajutor Maltez în România (SAMR), is present in 26 locations with 16 active branches in Transylvania and one in Bucharest. There are 1,000 volunteers (400 of whom are members of the Romania Malteser Youth) and 100 employees. At present the organisation runs over 100 social projects for over 4,000 beneficiaries every year.

The projects focus on helping children: (the Maltese kindergarten in Cluj cares

for 22 young disabled, an after school programme to integrate vulnerable children runs in Aiud, a day centre in Blaj cares for disabled children). There is care for the elderly (for 20 in St. John's Home, Timisoara) and for the disabled (a home for 35 residents in Dorobanti), plus meals on wheels for the elderly in Cluj and Timisoara, benefitting 185 regulars.

Other important activities include medical assistance, youth work and disaster emergency relief.

An important initiative started in 2016 is the development of programmes for



▲ Regular first-aid courses for volunteers in the Serviciul de Ajutor Maltez, Romania: 1,000 work in 100 projects in 26 locations

The riding project for Roma children in Korospatak

In a small Transylvanian village, a social miracle has occurred: the thousand Roma, or gypsies, living on its edge were not integrated in the local society. Their life was hard, and socially restricted. Now, with the development of a hugely successful riding school for their youngsters by Anna Talnoky, wife of the Minister Counsellor of the Order's Embassy, and an expert horsewoman - the project itself inspired by the Order's Ambassador to the Roma, Franz Salm - the village is integrating, the Roma are riding, performing spectacular gymnastics on horseback - and are going to school. The possibilities for their future are now way beyond what they could have imagined. As with many things, the project was rooted in developing skills and confidence and applying them to the rest of the children's lives. They are now so good that they take place in competitions.

Roma people in Pauleasca, in Satu Mare (educating Roma children) and Transylvania (a riding school for young gypsies, aligned to a social integration programme). And in Pauleasca, a social centre to support returning beggars from Salzburg is in the planning, with mentoring and tutoring currently provided in rented accommodation. A special focus is on developing the youth organisation, Romania Malteser Youth.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Malteser Relief Service in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2016, provides social services for 700 needy citizens every month, working with 17 employees and 45 volunteers. Their German partner is Malteser Hilfsdienst. The St Petersburg organisation distributes hot meals to 250 needy and disabled every day, around 49,500 meals a year, as well as providing clothing and books. In 2016, a new initiative 'Mother and Child' helps destitute families with small children, providing social workers and support services. A mobile shelter houses 15 disabled and provides shelter and support to 30 homeless every night. In 2016, over half of the 44 sheltered residents were found state shelters, hospitals or hosting relatives. Projects for returnees - 'Transit' and 'The Way Home' - played

an important part in homelessness prevention by safely transporting people without documents or funds from St. Petersburg to other cities, according to their last official registration. During 2016, 180 people were transferred, including Russians and people from 10 other countries.

The Malteser Relief Service in Moscow has been operating since 1994. Its eight employees and 30 volunteers look after 3,000 registered people in need, including 120 bedridden patients. In 2016 the Moscow service provided 70,000 hours of help and distributed humanitarian aid on behalf of Moscow institutions, as they are official partners of the 2018 social programme for the city. Ongoing social programmes include accompanying cancer patients to and from treatment, caring for children when mothers are working, free first aid courses (16 hrs each), pre-partum courses, and running 330 events in their social centre.

SCANDINAVIA

The Scandinavian Association of the Order covers the five countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Ongoing activities in Skåne, Denmark, focus on visits to the fragile elderly, helping disadvantaged children in a school in Malmö, and supporting migrants and the homeless

with food and financial aid.

Paperless migrants were helped in 2016 in Finland, and in Iceland there is ongoing assistance accompanying the elderly and handicapped to Mass, visiting the sick in hospitals and homes, and distributing coats to the homeless in Reykjavik. In Norway, medical care is offered for paperless immigrants and, together with the Order's Hungarian Association, in a camp for handicapped children in Transylvania. In Stockholm members regularly visit residents in Josephinahemmet, a Catholic hospice, and inmates in a detention facility.

SERBIA

Each winter from 2016 onward, the Embassy of the Order in Serbia has organised the 'A hot meal in winter' campaign in Aleksinac and Šabac, jointly with Caritas. To support recently arrived refugees, in February 2016, 27 pallets of clothing and toys and 10 pallets of baby food from Malteser Hilfsdienst were distributed to refugees in Presevo.

The Order's Embassy runs the very successful 'Make a wish' annual programme in Sremcica and Izvor, where participants nominate the greatest need in their local community. This has attracted generous donations of clothes for children and adults, a fully equipped ambulance medical equipment, an ECG machine, and a minibus. In June 2016 Belgrade Newsweek became a media partner of 'Make a wish'. In 2017, 'Make a Wish in 2017' centred its support on children from poor families who need vital surgical interventions and treatment. The programme enables children with particularly difficult diseases to be operated on in Serbia by specialised Italian surgeons.

As part of the focus on support for sick children, in which the Order participates, the construction of a centre for children receiving day care cancer treatment at the oncology hospital is underway in Belgrade.

SLOVAKIA

The young, very active auxiliary organisation of the Order in Slovakia, Malteser Aid Slovakia (MAS), is headquartered in Bratislava and works in four locations - Bratislava, Nitra, Topolčany and Eastern Slovakia, with 21 members of the Order and 57 volunteers.

Nationwide activities included in 2016: organisation and health care during the national pilgrimage to Sastin, help for the disabled at the National Air Show, bringing 94 pilgrims (68 volunteers accompanying 27 malades) to Lourdes, and collaborating in World Youth Day in Krakow in July.

Two Roma projects with sponsor support help over 100 children attending pre-school education every day in Olejnkov near Kosice, and Orechov dvor near Nitra.

Action in Bratislava covers daily meals on wheels for 50-60 elderly (over 15,000 meals delivered to homes annually), organises food collections for a night shelter for the homeless, provides medical care during the Corpus Christi procession and on several other mass events, and supervises a soup kitchen for 50-80 homeless in the winter.

In Nitra, a first aid tent during big events is organised, and donations of medicines and reconditioned equipment for seniors, visits and gifts to female prisoners, and volunteering at the St. Bernadette hospice.

In Topolčany, there is food distribution for the poor in winter, delivery and storing of medical equipment. In Trenčín there is a service in winter night shelter for 25-40 homeless, plus support throughout the year, and running a social clothing warehouse. In eastern Slovakia (Kezmarok, Kosice), activities include donations of reconditioned medical equipment to hospitals and hospices, meals and clothes collection for the homeless and the poor, food collection for poor children during the holidays, visits to the elderly in need in Pečovská Nová Ves, and education for

Roma children in Orechov Dvor (50/day). In Dobova, Slovenia, aid in 2016 for the refugee camp which is on the Slovenian-Croatian border was organised between the Slovakian auxiliary service, the University of St. Elizabeth and the Slovenian Association of the Order, with a medical tent (field hospital), health services and distribution of food, and clothing and bedding for a great number of refugees (up to 3,000 at times).

SLOVENIA

The Slovenian Association of the Order and its auxiliary organisation, Order of Malta Aid Slovenia (OMAS), undertook activities around the country in 2016 and 2017.

A defibrillator was donated to the Cathedral Parish in Ljubjana, with others going to the pilgrim centres in Sveta Gora, Zaplaz and Ptujška Gora.

The First Aid Assistance Service was launched at the shrine of Sveta Gora and served from May to October 2016

and for the first time, first aid was also provided at Gornji Grad and Zaplaz. A partnership agreement was signed with Slovenia's Civil Protection and Disaster Relief and the first dozen dehumidifiers were prepared for relief interventions. A special initiative 'Medical and other assistance to the Roma people' is providing water and electricity to Roma communities in Brezje and Žabjek.

In a cooperation project between the Order's organisations in Slovakia and Slovenia, in 2016 eight cubic meters of goods (sleeping bags and clothes) were transported and distributed in Slovenia.

SPAIN

The Order's Association in Spain, one of the oldest, is very active in many Spanish cities in a range of activities, from soup kitchens to horticultural and equine therapy, to outings, to visits to the elderly, to summer holidays for young disabled.

In Madrid, two soup kitchens care for



▲ In Eastern Europe, regular deliveries of supplies to impoverished local villages are a lifeline



▲ Every Eastertide, the Malteser Relief Service in Lviv, Ukraine, prepares hundreds of Easter baskets for those in need

those in need: the 'Santa Micaela' serves 350 people a day totalling over 150,000 meals each year – reflecting an increase in Spain's new poor; 'Virgen de la Candelaria' serves 150 meals daily to immigrants, poor families and the elderly; 'San Juan Bautista' newly opened in 2016, feeds 200 a day. In 2017, the centre was extended to include a health unit, showers and washing machines and a clothing distribution centre. Added to these is 'Desayunos de Cuaresma' in Atocha, which brings the homeless food and company during the 40 days of Easter. A new project offers soup and sandwiches to the homeless at night, twice a week; in another, 20 volunteers visit lonely elderly - 'Companeros de Malta'.

A soup kitchen in Seville, the 'San Juan de Acre,' has been operating since 2011, offering a daily meal for 200 people, with 200 volunteers working in daily shifts of 20-25.

The Barcelona Delegation's programme 'Food collecting and delivery' continues to collect food for several soup kitchens and welfare centres. The local Delegation in Balears, together

with volunteers, collects and distributes food in an assistance centre for the elderly run by the Congregación de Hermanitas de los Pobres. A weekly soup kitchen serves meals to 150. In Valencia, the Delegation continues its '6X1' project – 300 needy families receive a 12 kg bag of food every month. The Spanish Association also supports the 'San Juan Bautista' home for 84 elderly outside Madrid; three projects for the elderly in Valencia, and in Barcelona, work with Fundació Alba's home for elderly, where social and cultural activities are created, and medical services are provided. A project in Pamplona attends to retired priests. Special projects for young disabled include a micro finance project in Valencia, which teaches them how to grow plants and herbs; an annual summer camp for 30 disabled young in Andalucía, and in Castilla, through the Fundación Götze, and in Madrid volunteers who take disabled children on weekend outings.

The Order opened a new hostel for pilgrims in the heart of the Camino de Santiago, in the town of Villalcázar de

Sirga in mid 2017. It has capacity for 30 pilgrims, four medicos and at least five people with motor disabilities; a first aid stand in the pilgrimage city itself operates in high summer.

Abroad, there is support for a former leprosy colony in Equatorial Guinea and for a medical centre for haemodialysis and patients in El Alto, Peru and support for the very poor in the 'Nuestra Señora de Lourdes' medical centre in Chiclayo. In Cuba volunteers work in a young disabled summer camp in the Cienfuegos province.

Every year, a young volunteer contingent joins the Order's summer camp for the disabled in Chabrouh, Lebanon.

SWITZERLAND

The Order's Association in Switzerland runs many activities, together with the Swiss Association's relief organisation - Service Hospitalier de l'Ordre de Malte en Suisse (SHOMS). The service numbers 800 active members in 14 regions plus a boy scouts unit and one for young people. In addition, 350 supporters contribute with financial donations. In 2016 the 'Help and Assistance Foundation' sent 131 trucks and containers (about 2,100 tons) of humanitarian help to different countries. In 2017, 129 semi-trailers and maritime containers carried 2,100 tons of goods, to the value of 18 million Swiss francs, to countries in need, with the volunteers – members of the Order and friends - working 4,500 hours.

Every month, in collaboration with the Boat Association of Geneva, a free breakfast for 100-200 homeless is offered.

The Romande Delegation continues support for the 'Une chance, un cœur' Foundation in Lausanne, which supports children from third world countries for heart surgery in Switzerland. In Fribourg a riding programme cares for 16 disabled young with mental handicaps or autism.

Abroad, the Swiss Association contin-

ues to give financial support to the Order's Holy Family Hospital, Bethlehem and to the Pro Tantur Foundation (opened in 2017) in Jerusalem.

Young volunteers participate in the Lebanese Chabrouh camp for the disabled every summer. They have added a Swiss camp at Sourat, together with a group of 'Kitchen Mommies', and take part in the Order's International Summer Camp for Young Disabled.

UKRAINE

The Order of Malta Relief Organisation (Maltijska Slushba Dopomohy - MSD) in Ukraine, established with the support of the German Malteser Hilfsdienst in Lviv in 1993, has regional branches in Ivano-Frankivsk, Beregovo and Kiev, and projects in seven regions: Mariupol, Artemivsk, Severodonetsk, Starobilk, Kramatorks, Boryspil and Kiev. Working with a small staff is a team of 230 volunteers.

The organisation's range of activities continues to grow in response to the needs of the sick and the very poor.

Projects include soup kitchens, assistance for the elderly, help for disadvantaged children and those in orphanages, support for the handicapped, and summer camps. In Beregovo, for example, a meals on wheels project runs every day; a kindergarten project feeds undernourished children and also supports the buildings; visits to the housebound elderly infirm are constant.

Since 2015, first aid training for schools and the general public has been offered, plus training of 60 trainers, with the support of the Order's Polish Relief Organisation.

In Kiev, Luhansk and Donetsk the Order's international relief service, Malteser International, is providing psychosocial help to local populations and an estimated 4,200 internally displaced persons who have fled from the east of the country.

In September 2017, the 3rd annual Maltese manoeuvres of volunteer rescuers took place in Kamyanets-Podilsky, with 17 Ukrainian and Polish teams from nine cities testing their skills in practice. Every year, the num-

ber of cities from which rescuers enrol increases. The event is part of the 'Development of the voluntary medical rescue service in Ukraine', supported by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Order's Ukraine Relief Service and the Polish Order of Malta. A mobile dental clinic is in the planning.

VATICAN

The First Aid Post in St Peter's Square, Vatican City, is maintained throughout the year by the Grand Magistry of the Order and staffed by 82 regular Order volunteers. The service runs 7/7, on both sides of the square. In 2017 the service provided over 700 treatments. With the acquisition of a small Order of Malta ambulance, the reaction time for a crisis now averages 1.15 minutes. An Agreement with the American Heart Foundation has meant the service is able to provide regular training for volunteer instructors in first aid.

From April 2018 first aid services in San Paolo Fuori le Mura and San Giovanni in Laterano have been added.



▲ The First Aid Post operates every day on both sides of St Peter's Square

MIDDLE EAST

The Order of Malta continues to respond to the conflict in Syria,

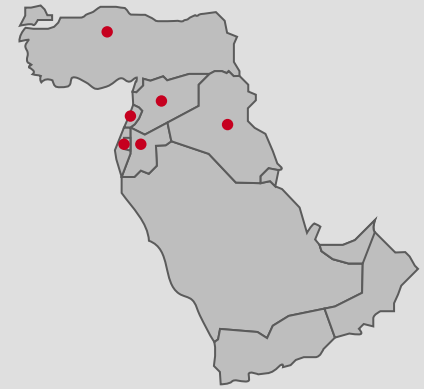
IRAQ

The Order's Malteser International has been working in Iraq since 2004, with projects in the Kurdish autonomous region in the north. Its most recent work has been focussed on aid for the country's IDPs.

Since the crisis of 2014, around 3.4 million people have been displaced. Many escaped into Kurdistan, to Dohuk and Erbil. Malteser International has been

through the provision of vital medical and humanitarian aid. Medical facilities assist the growing displaced population in Iraq. Elsewhere in the region, the Order continues as a significant provider of socio-health services for the poor and needy, with a special focus in Lebanon, and also runs the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem.

working in the area in cooperation with the Directorate of Health in Dohuk (aiding 26,000 IDPs) and local partner organisation, the Al Mustaqbal Foundation (AMF) in Erbil, providing drugs and medical supplies for IDPs living outside the camps in the city, and vulnerable local host communities. As well, three mobile medical teams are on the ground, distributing hygiene kits to 500 families in great need and managing medical facilities at Camp Kadia (aid-



ing 15,000 IDPs) and Camp Bersevi II (serving 10,000, mainly Yazidis). Emergency aid is particularly needed for Christians and Yazidis, and for the very young and the very old.

In July 2017 over 950,000 internally displaced had fled from the regions of Tal Afar and Tel Kaif, in Nineveh, northern Iraq, surviving in camps and small impoverished communities.

The Order's relief agency, with partners, distributed relief packages to meet critical basic needs (tarpaulins, mattresses, bedsheets, kitchen set, solar lantern, jerrycan and hygiene articles). The ongoing project is aimed at supporting those falling through the cracks and into chronic poverty and extreme vulnerability.

With the liberation of Mosul in 2017, its citizens began to return gradually, but the situation is precarious, both medically and socially. Malteser International has distributed relief goods and is gradually rebuilding healthcare capacities and offering psychosocial support to the traumatised. They will intensify their work in training and income generation and have launched 'Cash for Work' programmes, with many women participating in courses promoting good hygiene, becoming teachers and helping their communities to respect practices that can prevent epidemics.



▲ A small Syrian refugee is attended to in the Order's mobile medical clinic in north Lebanon

JORDAN

The Order's Embassy in Jordan supports the Italian Hospital of Karak and is liaising with the Bambino Gesù Hospital, Rome, in supporting the Karak Hospital with personnel and in raising the professional level of the physicians. Through a partner, the Embassy is supporting the refugee camps for Syrians escaping war, with medical technology.

LEBANON

With almost 1.3 million Syrians who have now fled to Lebanon, and the arrival of Iraqi refugees, medical and social care in the country is critically stretched. A key problem for the refugees is lack of opportunity to earn a living.

The Order's Association in Lebanon manages 9 primary healthcare centres (all specialisations), totalling 125,000 consultations per year. Together with support from the Order's international relief service, Malteser International, they operate four mobile medical clinics for Syrian refugees and Lebanese in need (in Siddikine, Ain Ebel, Wadi Khaled-Akkar and Kefraya). The centres, which are located at Kobayat, Khaldiye, Barqa, Kefraya, Zouk Mikael, Ain El Remmaneh, Roum, Marjeyoun, Siddikine and Yaroun, provide 39,000 consultations a year. In the Bhannes Palsy Centre, Beirut, the Order cares for 95 children with cerebral palsy, with 64 staff.

There are 24 summer and winter camps at the Chabrouh Centre for 609 disabled guests, with the help of 450 international and 305 Lebanese volunteers.

For the elderly in rural areas, where the exodus of the young for jobs in the cities brings loneliness, there are three day care centres and five 'warm homes', bringing companionship and social activities. They cater for 55 villages with a total of 1,168 elderly, for



▲ Malteser International mobile medical teams provide medical aid to IDPs in camps around Erbil, Iraq

whom over 30,000 hot meals are prepared each year.

Prison ministry includes assistance to 143 inmates in four prisons, with medicines, hygiene items, blankets, clothes, gifts.

With partners, the Association has provided social and medical assistance to Syrian/Iraqi refugees since 2011, aiding around 25,000 families (c 100,000 people) in north Lebanon, the Bekaa Valley, Wadi Khaled (with Malteser International) and Kefraya (with the Pierre Fabre Foundation).

The Order's volunteer youth organisation 'The Youth' runs a number of support programmes: in 2016, 150 Lebanese volunteers made a number of visits to Deir el Salib (psychiatric hospital) and to Deir el Kamar, and 300 visits to 70 elderly patients. Every year the young volunteers work with underprivileged children in two camps in Chabrouh, three during weekends, and

organise the giving of gifts and celebrations for 105 disabled beneficiaries. The organisation attends the Order's annual International Youth Camp in Europe – in 2017 they brought a group of

Inter-religious aid projects

The Order of Malta Lebanon cooperates with Lebanese Islamic institutions in the socio-medical domain:

At Dar El Fatwa (Sunni Muslims) in Beirut and the mobile clinic in Akkar and Wadi Khaled in north Lebanon; the Imam el Sadr Foundation (Shiite Muslims) for 29 years in Siddikine; the Sheikh Abou Hassan Aref Halawi Foundation (Druze) in various primary health care centres.

Lebanon: the Caravan programme

An international programme – Caravan – runs for 10 months each year, attracting young volunteers from various countries. The joint Lebanese/German project offers a carefully planned programme, emphasising love, coexistence and human dignity. The students work with handicapped patients, visit refugee camps, fundraise and spend two days a week at the Bhannes Palsy Centre, in addition to following an academic programme which includes courses in the Arabic language and the history of the region.

21 guests and volunteers.

The Centre Al-Fadi Chabrouh summer camp for the disabled is organised with and by young volunteers from the Order's youth organisations in France, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland, as well as Lebanon. The guests come from specialised homes and psychiatric hospitals across Lebanon. The aim is to bring joy, love and happiness to the physically and mentally challenged guests.

PALESTINE

In Palestine, the Holy Family Hospital, run by the Order since 1990, continues to provide the only first class maternity hospital care in the region, where an average of 4,000 babies are born annually. Every year 23,000 consultations for women and children take place at the hospital or at the outreach clinics. Patients are asked to pay when they can afford it, and their contributions cover 45% of the running costs.

In 2017 an air conditioned mobile van which seats five was added to the mobile clinic effort, funded by the Order's American Association. It operates in Raishayda refugee camp, a 45 minute drive from Bethlehem, and visits two locations in the village at the same time each week, providing consistent followup for the women from the surrounding villages. The teams are made up of a driver, a nurse, a gynaecologist and a paediatrician.

The hospital also offers a diabetes clinic (opened in 2010) and has run a 'Well Woman Programme' since 2012, targeting women aged 45 and over.

A Dignity Loan programme launched in 2013 in the Salfit region by the Order's Representative Office to Palestine continues to give microeconomic loans to local small businesses, creating jobs and improving economic outcomes. In consultation with local community partners, the interest-free loans typically have a repayment period of 1-3



▲ The Order's Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem offers the only neonatal intensive care unit for newborns in the region

years, the recipients are guided and mentored, and repayments are channelled into making further loans in the same community. A recent successful example is the 'Olive Oil Project', with the ecologically grown oil from ancient Rumi olive trees which are manually harvested, creating employment for 50 in its first year (2015/16). Proceeds from the oil will support the Dignity Loan Programme.

SYRIA

The civil war in Syria has led to the worst refugee crisis in recent history. 6.3 million have been internally displaced, 5.2 million have fled the country, many more millions require humanitarian assistance (OCHA, August 2017).

Malteser International has been working to provide aid to the people of Syria since 2012. Millions in the country are either unable or unwilling to leave, and these displaced are the focus of its work, with Turkish and Syrian partners, to organise and support cross-border medical aid projects.

The security situation in Syria makes working there very difficult, and the staff of the partner organisation live in the shadow of constant danger. In the Aleppo region, they operate two basic health care centres in refugee camps, two mobile clinics, two ambulances and a children's hospital in Bab al Salam, as well as managing the reconstruction and operation of four basic health care facilities in former IS strong holds (Azaz, Jarablus, Al Bab). Just three kilometres from the Syrian border, on the Turkish side, Malteser International is working with partner organisation the International Blue Crescent to assist Syrian refugees.

TURKEY

In Kilis, Turkey, together with a local partner organisation, Malteser International is concentrating on the med-



▲ Medical care and schooling for Syrian refugee children in Kilis promises a better future

ical psychosocial care of Syrian refugees, and education for their young. The organisation is running a rehabilitation hospital just three kilometres from the Syrian border. In Kilis city centre, a community centre has been set up to provide orientation and psychosocial support for the refugees in the urban context. Several training programmes, especially language courses, are provided to facilitate the integration of the Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Malteser International is also support-

ing two schools for Syrian refugee children to ensure their education – half of the 2.7 million Syrian refugees registered in Turkey are children. The organisation supports educational centres in Istanbul and in Kahramanmaraş, southern Turkey, working there with The Orient Face, a Syrian organisation. Refugee students are learning Turkish so that one day they can join the Turkish school system. This educational centre has 690 children, with classes from kindergarten to twelfth grade.

Order of Malta organisations worldwide

For contact details see www.orderofmalta.int/contact

International bodies

Campagne Internationale de l'Ordre de Malte contre la lèpre (CIOMAL)

Global Fund for Forgotten People

Malteser International

Afghanistan

Diplomatic Mission

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