

TALKING POINTS

1. During Holy Week, the Gospel readings come to life in a special way as we gather to celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The readings remind us of our special connection to the land where this great story unfolded.
2. Supporting the church in the Holy Land is an historic mission. Since the time of St. Paul, Christians worldwide have understood the responsibility to support the land where Jesus walked. (cf. 2 Cor. 8-9)
3. It has never been easy to be a Christian in the Holy Land. In these challenging times in the Middle East, Christians are experiencing unique hardships. We have an opportunity to help them through the Pontifical Good Friday Collection.
4. Christians in the Holy Land face special challenges – many of which we hear about in the daily news. The political, religious and military challenges in the Holy Land are more complex than ever. The war left deep wounds that will take time to heal. Many Christians (for example, 90% in Bethlehem) depend on the pilgrimage industry to live. They could not work during the pandemic, and the war stopped again pilgrims from coming. Supporting the Collection offers hope to the Holy Land Christians.
5. Although often through adversities, a Christian presence always remained in the Holy Land since the beginning of the Church. It is important that Christians continue to live, work and pray in the Holy Land, where the Church started. The Christians are now less than 2% of the population, from 23% a century ago, and with the war, many more are thinking about leaving.
6. The Pontifical Good Friday Collection offers all Catholics an opportunity to express their solidarity with Christians in the Holy Land. A donation to the Holy Father's annual appeal is a direct way to make a difference in the lives of those caught up in war, violence and instability in this region.
7. What has been accomplished? Last year's Pontifical Good Friday Collection:
 - Supported 23 parishes and three academic institutions
 - Provided a home in Bethlehem for 30 children from homes facing domestic violence
 - Offered more than 500 scholarships for university education
 - Helped keep schools open for over 10,000 pre-K through grade 12 students
 - Supported 53 friars preparing for the priesthood
 - Restored and maintained 640 houses/apartments for Christian families

- Provided assistance to more than 9000 families through weekly food baskets
- Employed more than 1,000 workers in the Holy Land
- Preserved 80 shrines from the life of Jesus, the Apostles and the prophets
- Continue the work of restoration of the floor at the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, the holiest place on Earth
- Humanitarian aid to those affected by the Israeli-Gaza Conflict
- Support for Holy Family Parish in Gaza.