

## Relief rendered possible in 2021 thanks to your support!

Dear friends and sponsors,

As promised at the end of last year, we have now summarized the projects that we implemented in 2021. I look back on the past year with much gratitude to the Lord for His inexhaustible grace. Even if the past year was difficult and stressful for many people due to the ongoing Covid pandemic, the team of the Foundation “Korbgemeinschaft” was privileged to experience the grace of God even more clearly than before, through numerous types of spiritual, material and non-material support, which we received through the hands and by the compassion of many friends.

Despite the pandemic, the economic sanctions and other hardships in Syria, we were able to experience, with God's help, the love and active support of friends and sponsors, enabling us to implement important projects and to give hope to many desperate people.

I should like to illustrate by way of photos what was made possible thanks to your contributions:

**Collecting and sending humanitarian goods:** Seven large containers with clothing, blankets, numerous medical articles and nursing items for old people's homes, as well as furniture for kindergartens, schools and parishes, small tools for craftsmen, and toys for children were sent. All these second-hand items, which are still in good and orderly



condition, are no longer needed here in Europe, but they are a real blessing for the needy people in Syria. Humanitarian supplies for four more containers have been collected and piled up in the interim storage facilities.

**Coordination of monetary donations for Corona emergency aid packages:** These products were purchased and compiled locally at wholesale prices. Depending on their most urgent needs, impoverished families received basic food, hygiene products, diapers and other baby



and toddler products, medical support or even some money for living expenses or for rental support to avoid imminent homelessness (approx. 3,000 families in total).

One can hardly imagine the deep gratitude that people show for even the most modest and basic products.

**Blood glucose meters for diabetics and other vital medications:** Chronically ill people are particularly unfortunate in such a deprived situation. A donation of measuring devices and test strips proved to be a real blessing for diabetics. The pharmacist Juliette Rahhal in Damascus, who lost a leg in the war, helps to the best of her ability and very often at cost price in supplying the poorest with medicines.



**Mass stipends** have provided invaluable help to hundreds of priests in many parishes across Syria so that they can continue to fulfill their pastoral responsibilities.

**Benches and other furnishings for the new church in Homs „Notre Dame Al Arman“:**

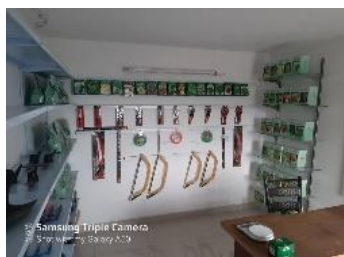


People's attachment to the church is still very strong. The joint service means comfort and support for many and conveys an important feeling of solidarity and confidence. The services are attended very regularly by all generations, young and old. For another church, we were able to coordinate the financing of a loudspeaker system.

**Green energy:** Projects that are sustainable and environmentally friendly are twice as helpful. Thanks to photovoltaic panels, the *Bakery of Grace* and later also the social market and the soup kitchen are to be supplied with reliable, clean solar energy. Once the project has been completed, the photovoltaic panels will even generate excess energy, which will be fed into the public power grid, so that electricity can by exchange be obtained for the bakery's night shifts.



**Start-up help for small family businesses:** With a few breeding animals, a tool box or the equipment for a small craft business, one can enable the long-term survival of a family. This help towards self-help is very reasonable, as it preserves the dignity of the recipients, who feel happy and proud when they can do useful work with their own hands.





**Support for students, pupils and kindergartens:** Education is essential for the future and for the development of the country. We supported students so that they had a chance to continue their studies. We were able to provide pupils with the most important materials for their school lessons, and we supplied play material to some kindergartens. We also paid small extras to pedagogues, whose salaries are way too low.



**First Communion Celebrations:** Thanks to charitable donations we were able to provide a gown, a cross, a wreath, a copy of the New Testament and a rosary to each First Communion child. After the devastations caused by the war, these New Testaments are often the only source of Bible texts directly available to a family.



**Easter packages:** On the occasion of the Feast of Resurrection, the suffering people in Syria sense a special longing for their country to rise from misery and to recover. People are aware that this will still be a long and arduous journey. In any case, positive signals and start-up help are needed so that the reconstruction can succeed.





**Catechesis, summer camps, scouts:** Many of the children and teenagers have seen their home country in no other condition than that of war or post-war misery. It is important for them to develop a sense of identity and togetherness and to organize joint leisure and cultural activities. Catechesis always constitutes a living part of such events, as the young catechists are enthusiastic and highly committed.



**Christmas celebrations and small gifts:** Here, too, tiny amounts can bring great joy to the little ones, thanks to the skilful choices made by the catechists.



**The „Bakery of Grace“:** One couldn't find a more appropriate name for this first major reconstruction project of the Foundation "Korbgemeinschaft". Despite numerous obstacles, the bakery managed to remain in operation in the face of all the restrictions imposed by the pandemic.



### **"Bread instead of bombs" campaign:**

An exciting project that was developed by the Catholic Workers' Movement (KAB) in Bavaria and carried out and sponsored by a well-known German company was already mentioned in my previous letter to friends and supporters. The project consisted in the technical adjustment and conversion of a Russian-type minibus into a small truck: strong, rugged and suited for all-terrain conditions. It will in the future transport daily bread to the needy people in remote villages under the motto "bread instead of bombs".



There were many more persons whose acute hardships we were able to alleviate by targeted individual support.

In summary, I can say that we have clearly felt the grace of God in these difficult times.

The past few years have shown us that it is by the grace of God that people can live and survive. Your help and support have made this possible. Even though the prospects for Syria are bleak and the challenges keep growing, we trust that the Lord will continue to bestow His mercy and blessing on our work. This trust makes us carry on and allows us to move forward with confidence.

At this point I should like to pass on to you the heart-felt thanks of the people for all the support experienced. I remain confident that together we will manage to continue providing help and confidence to the needy and suffering people in Syria.

Our projects require also a lot of administrative work. I would be very grateful if we could find additional volunteers for these tasks as well as for the coordination of the collection and handling of humanitarian goods: many work steps are necessary on the way from the donors to the final dispatch of the containers: picking up the goods, packing and re-packing them, labeling them and loading them.

Every one of your suggestions, donations and offers for help encourages me to carry on this mission.

During this Holy Week, I am praying for God's abundant blessing upon all of you and I wish you a happy Feast of the Resurrection.

With warm regards I remain gratefully Yours,

Fr. Hanna Ghoneim

Vienna, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022