



Laudato Si'  
Special Anniversary Year  
2020-2021

SEASON OF CREATION  
1.09 - 4.10.2020  
Jubilee of the Earth

World Day of Prayer for  
the Care of Creation  
1st September

## THE COURAGE TO CHANGE TO EMERGE FROM THIS PANDEMIC BETTER PRAYER | REFLECTION | EXPERIENCES

Friday, 4 of September 2020 - online for 1h

### Experience in Bethlehem: opportunities for work and meeting to overcome the crisis caused by the Pandemic.

#### • Vincenzo BELLOMO

*Representative Pro Terra Santa – Custody of Holy Land Bethlehem*



After a first wave of closures because of the pandemic between March and May, a second wave hit the Holy Land from mid-July with a much higher number of infections that still does not hesitate to decline. The economic consequences are very serious, especially for the community of Bethlehem not knowing when pilgrims and tourists will return to the Holy Land. Small businesses, restaurants, hotels and artisans risk not reopening or moving forward in the coming months, and the considerable rise in unemployment is lurking.

The focus on creating jobs has always been a central point for Pro Terra Sancta in the development of projects in the Bethlehem area, regardless of the pandemic. The commitment to create new job opportunities during this emergency for the population has become our priority. More and more people who are left without income need to be helped ”.

An example is the “Active Women Against Covid 19” project tailored to the social reality of Bethlehem which requires a professional trainer to teach local women the work of making protective masks. Seven women found a place and a way to support their families.

The project was launched in the first weeks of the crisis with the aim of supporting a group of women who have lost their jobs, training them in the art of sewing to create protective masks for daily use to be distributed free of charge to operators and beneficiaries of socio-educational works.

The project initially had a duration of 3 months from May to July, but the desire of women to continue to be part of the project was also driven by the need to work to support families in this second phase of the Pandemic.



Hence the idea of self-determination in a cooperative that in recent weeks we are trying to model, trying to produce sewing objects that are linked to the Nativity and to local culture and tradition.



The project was also an opportunity to meet in an informal group and help each other in a difficult moment.

As an Association we have decided to continue supporting this second phase of the project with the hope that pilgrims will soon be able to return to fill the streets of Bethlehem.

