



THE LATIN PATRIARCHATE
OF JERUSALEM

CONCLUSION REPORT

REHABILITATION OF THE RETAINING WALL AT RISK
FOR THE SEMINARY IN BEIT JALA
PALESTINE

GA 165/19



GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
JULY 2021

REHABILITATION OF THE RETAINING WALL AT RISK FOR THE SEMINARY IN BEIT JALA, PALESTINE

“And on we go, with joy, with consistence, always with the courage to tell the truth, the courage to step out of ourselves to meet Jesus in prayer and to step out of ourselves to encounter others and give the Gospel to them. With pastoral fruitfulness!”

(H.H. Pope Francis)

THE LATIN PATRIARCHATE

The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (LPJ) was restored in 1847, and since then is promoting the best interests of the local communities it serves. Today, the Patriarchal Diocese oversees about 180,000 faithfuls in four countries, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, and Cyprus, covering a rich tapestry of cultures, languages, religions, and traditions. Serving all with special emphasis on the support and care of indigenous Holy Land Christians remains the enduring mission of the Mother Church, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

It is the LPJ goal that the family is the fundamental building block of the local community and of society at large. As a result, the church takes a holistic approach in its work and assistance. While starting with the youngest group in the society; children and youth, LPJ builds outwards to serve the immediate parents, the surrounding community and ultimately the society.

THE LATIN SEMINARY OF BEIT JALA

The Latin Patriarchate Seminary was established in Jerusalem in December 1852, by Patriarch Joseph Valerga, for the purpose of forming diocesan priests for the service of all the parishes in the Diocese of the Holy Land. Due to several political reasons at that time, the Seminary was moved to Beit Jala on July 7, 1936, and it is still there till nowadays. At the beginning, the Seminary was managed by the priests of the Patriarchate

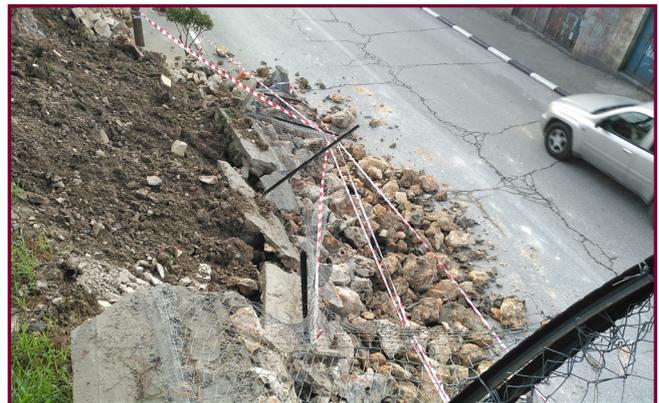


themselves. The German Fathers took over in 1921 and followed by the Fathers of the Sacred Heart (Beitarram) in 1932. The diocesan clergy of the Patriarchate returned to manage the Seminary in July 1980, and they are still in charge today. From the year 1921 to 1929, the sisters of St. Charles Borromeo served in the Seminary, and then came the sisters of St. Dorothea's Sacred Hearts to provide the same service. In 2009-2013 the sisters of the Mother of Mercy served the Seminary. Now the sisters of Serve del Signore e Della Vergine di Matarà are serving at the Seminary. The Seminary is made up into two parts: The Major Seminary and the Minor Seminary.

The patron Saints of the Seminary are Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Saint Joseph, Saint Francis Xavier and Saint Therese de Lisieux. With such good patrons and with the grace of God, the seminary has formed 289 priests, including 15 bishops and 3 patriarchs: Giacomo Giuseppe Beltritti, Michel Sabbah and Fouad Twal. Today the seminary is led by 8 priests including Fr. Yacoub Rafidi, rector since August 2017, and hosts 30 minor seminarians and 20 major seminarians, both Palestinians and Jordanians. Founded mainly to train local clergy, the seminary has traditionally been, and remains, open to students from other institutions and countries who wish to prepare themselves on site for the service of the Church in the Holy Land.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

A horrifying incident occurred in Beit Jala when the boundary brick retaining wall surrounding the Latin Seminary collapsed because of heavy rain during winter March 2018. The boundary wall was very old and deteriorated since it was built almost a century ago when the Latin Seminary was moved from Jerusalem to Beit Jala in 1936. The incident happened at night, and nobody got injured or hurt; however, the wall is built on the main street of Beit Jala where hundreds of cars and pedestrians, especially school and kindergarten students pass by every day. A warning letter from the Municipality of Beit Jala was sent to the Rector of the Seminary to notify that the rehabilitation of the wall should be a top priority since it is a matter of life-threatening risk to all people and traffic using the street adjacent to the retaining wall.

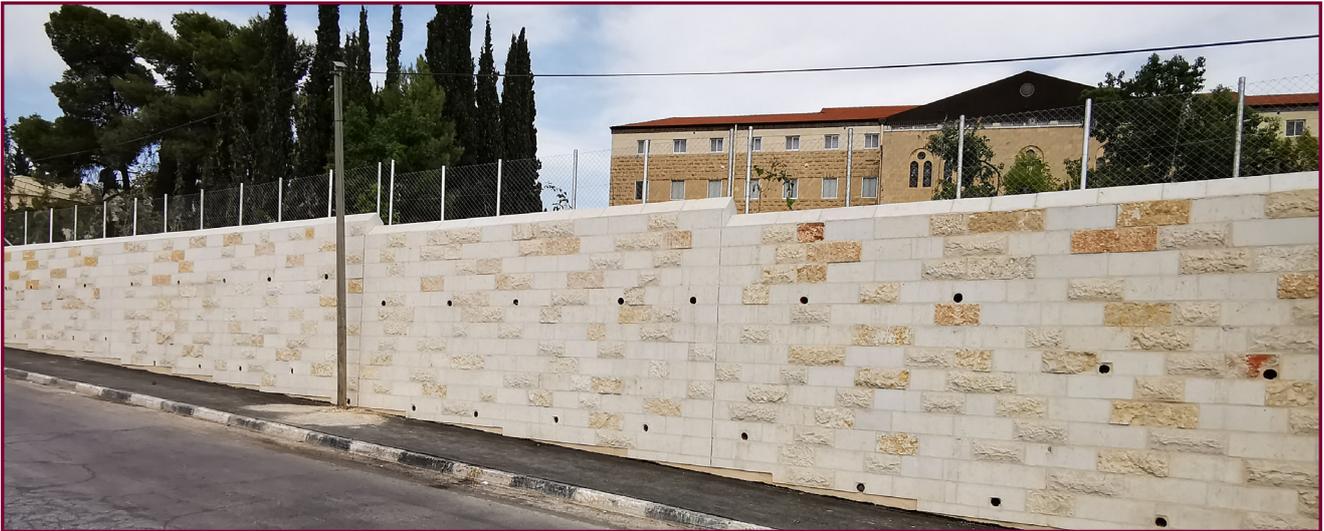


The administration at the Latin Seminary of Beit Jala, together with the Latin Patriarchate Engineering Office in Jerusalem agreed that there was an urgent need to rehabilitate the boundary brick retaining wall of the Latin Seminary as soon as possible. With the generous donations received from the Swiss Lieutenancy, the Latin Patriarchate was able to rehabilitate the damaged parts of the retaining wall.

SCOPE OF WORK

The works for this project included:

- Applying for building license from the municipality.
- Demolishing works including re-leveling of the existing soil.
- Excavation and backfilling works for the new designed foundation for the wall.
- Supply and cast concert reinforced foundation and wall of 60-meter long and 4-meter height.
- Supply and install new galvanized steel pipes and steel mesh fence of height 1.8M.
- Stone cladding works including pointing for the new wall.



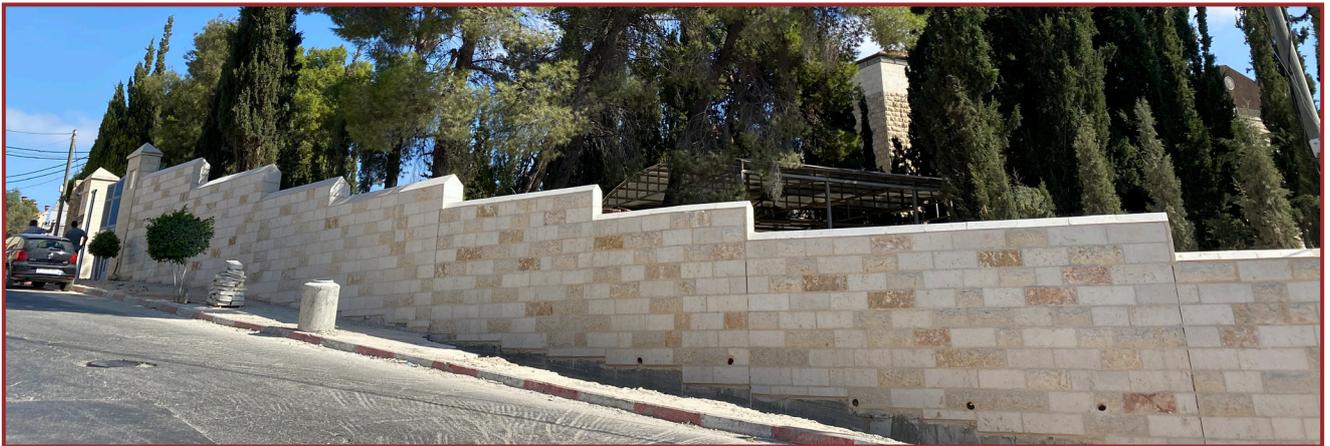
BENEFICIARIES

In addition to providing essential structural support, rehabilitating the boundary wall ensured protection, security, privacy and defined the boundary lines of the Latin Seminary compound. The project directly benefited all the priests, seminarians, students, workers, and all people living and visiting the compound. Repairing the retaining wall prevented any unanticipated dangerous accidents like wall falling, cracking, or bulging from happening again and will comply to the safety and security regulation of Beit Jala Municipality. This has provided security to all traffic and pedestrians using the street adjacent to the boundary wall daily especially school and kindergarten students.

PHOTOS - BEFORE



PHOTOS - DURING



PHOTOS - AFTER





LATIN PATRIARCHATE
OF JERUSALEM

Sami El-Yousef
Chief Executive Officer

General Administration Office
Jaffa Gate, P.O. Box 14152
Jerusalem 9114101
Tel. + 972 2 6282323
E-mail: ceo@lpj.org
www.lpj.org

