



International Christian Committee - Nazareth

الجمعية المسيحية العالمية - الناصرة

**Annual
Report 2014**



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International Christian Committee - Nazareth

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Narrative Progress Report

January – December

2014

ICCI - Nazareth

Area Committee Members

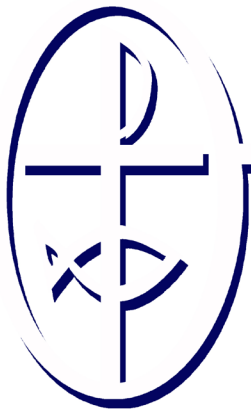
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Mr. Farah Geraisy	- Vice – Chairperson
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Mr. Adnan Copty	- Member
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Nasif Mweis	Finance Officer
Jorjet Haddad	Assistant

Table of Contents

1. Introduction an Context of our Work
2. Result Based Report Elements
3. Narrative Report



International Christian Committee - Nazareth

اللجنة المسيحية الدولية - الناصرة



Introduction and Context of work

According to the Israel Bureau of Statistics, about 1,750,000 Palestinians who constitute approximately 20% out of the total population, live in Israel (8,250,000). The vast majority of the Palestinian population in Israel today, resides in all-Arab towns and villages which are located in three main areas: the Galilee in the north, the “Little Triangle” in the center, and the Negev desert in the south. The rest lives in mixed Jewish-Arab cities. Currently, Arab-Palestinian citizens consistently rank in the lowest socio-economic echelons of Israeli society, with more than half of the Arab families falling below poverty line, and 80% of Arab residents live in communities that are ranked within the lowest three socio-economic clusters. Arab localities continue to be characterized by high unemployment rates, inadequate infrastructure and the absence of significant economic development. Discrimination is regularly apparent in state resource allocation particularly in land, education, housing, and social services, and Arab-Palestinians continue to be excluded from the centers of power and underrepresented in government institutions, as well in the general public sphere. The Arab citizens of Israel face institutionalized discrimination in the legal system, the allocation of the state’s resources, urban planning, and the accessibility of land. Overcrowded and understaffed, government run Arab schools are a world apart from Jewish schools, leading to poor academic achievement, a drop-out rate of 12%, and a failure rate of 50% in university entrance tests. The segregated life style of both groups substantially contributes to maintaining and aggravating the depicted situation. The cornerstone of separation is that of residential communities and schools: 90% of Israel’s Arabic citizens live in fully Arab villages and towns. On an institutional level, the dual run schooling system cements the segregation, starting with separated education from kinder garden on. As a consequence Jewish and Arabic children grow up in “different worlds” and know each other mainly through the (negative) information that is available within their own community or via the media. The prevailing stereotypes and negative images within both groups and the segregated communities provide no opportunities to dismantle them through direct, positive contact. The Arabic minority is composed of 84% Muslims, 8% Druze and 8% Christians of various denominations. Relations between the Christian and Muslim minority saw tense periods during the last two decades. In the ICCI we aim to contribute to strengthening civil society relationships between Israeli and Arab communities and continue our work towards supporting the development of a society that deals with differences in a liberal way, that acknowledges the uniqueness of its members and that respects the religious-cultural heritage of different groups that live in the Holy Land.

The Arab society in Israel lacks a framework how to integrate its younger members who are not studying or working. Young people, especially men, therefore tend to spend their free time in the streets. Drug abuse and tensions between rival groups became a problem in the targeted communities over the last few years. The Arab minority is in need of a new generation that is equipped with knowledge and skills in order to address its various problems, such as identity questions, early marriage, school drop-out, and violence within the family. Our goals derive from the challenges which face the Palestinian community in Israel and our intervention is to address two major areas: the conflict between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority within the state, and the inter-religious fragmentation within the Arab society, and second, the enhancement of the education and the economic well being of the Arab community.



Result Based Report Elements:

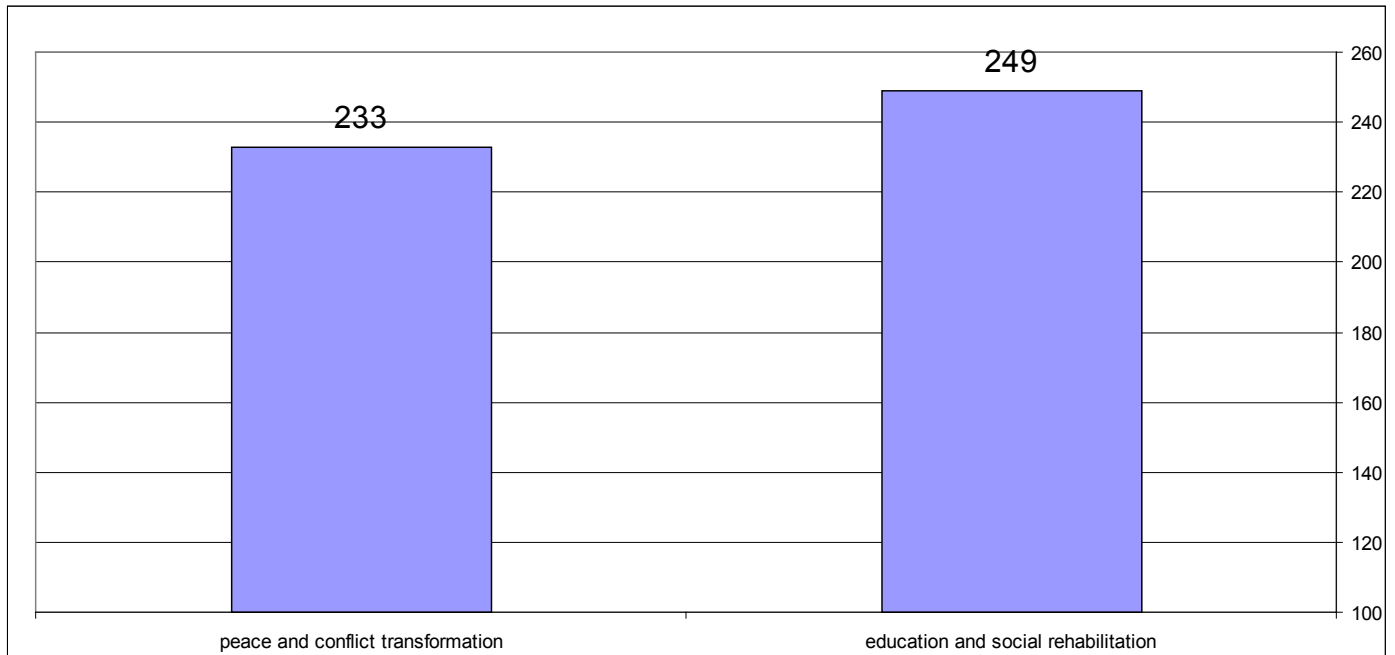
Five main activities took place during the year 2014

Table (1) below presents the actual achievements compared with the planned targets for the year 2014.

Table 1
January 2014 – December 2014

Indicators	Targeted	Achieved	Deviation
One day Conference "organ transplant – fraternity & solidarity between religions" was held	150	200	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• College students participated
An intensive course of 60 hrs. on Interfaith for teachers belonging to different religious backgrounds was conducted	40-50	33	
# of displaced young girls dropouts or in crisis from schools from Acre undergoing workshop and VT courses returned back to school	90-100	132	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wider and new premises• Greater needs of the community
# of high school students from the 9th grade undergoing a leadership program.	30	30	
# of undergraduate students accessing Educational loans (1000\$ each)	100-120	93	
# of men or women accessing Rehabilitation loans to open small businesses	Up to 10	1	
# of delegations informed about the status of the Arab minority in Israel	2-3	1delegation	

Table 1





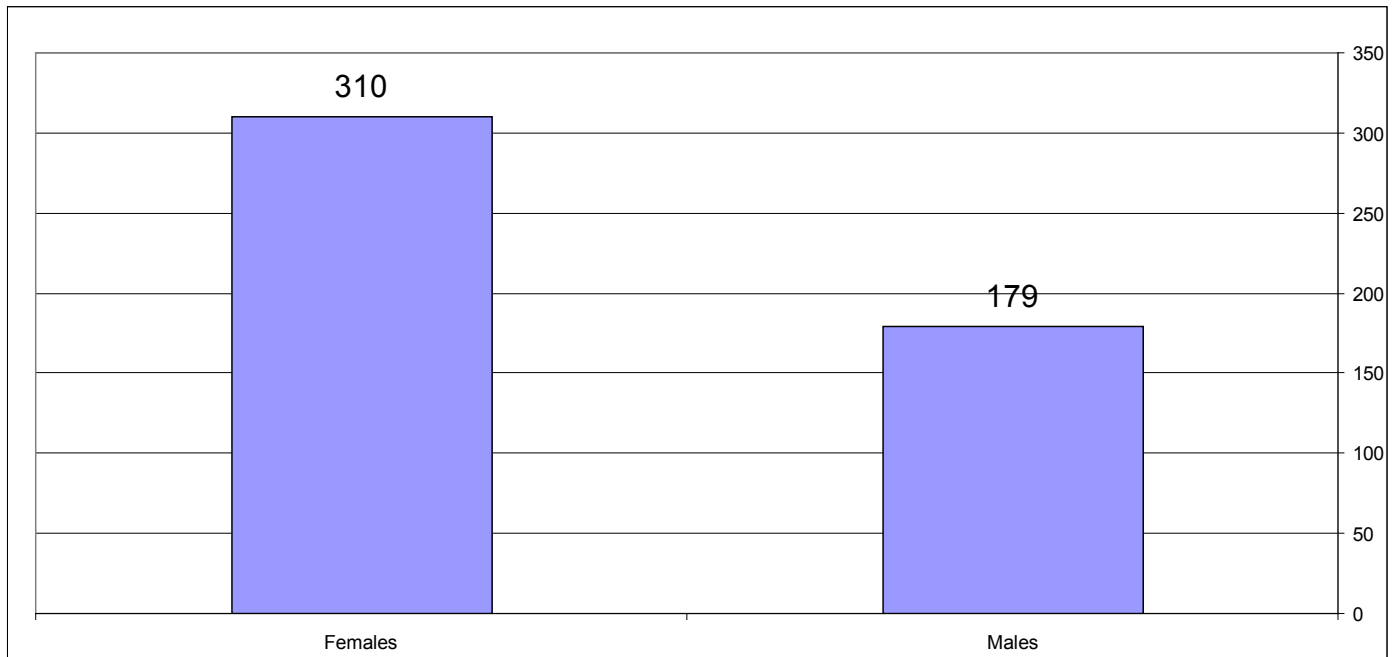
Gender Perspective:

As seen in the following table (Table 2) the number of beneficiaries increased in comparison to 2013 and are about 489. About two thirds of the beneficiaries for the year 2014 were females.

Table 2
January 2014 – December 2014

<i>Activity</i>	<i>No. of Males</i>	<i>No. of females</i>
Two day Conference "Religion, Peace, & Media Coverage" was held	110 (estimates)	90 (estimates)
An intensive course of 60 hrs. on Interfaith for teachers belonging to different religious backgrounds was conducted	15	18
# of displaced young girls dropouts or in crisis from schools from Acre undergoing workshop and VT courses returned back to school	*****	132
# of high school students from the 9th grade undergoing a leadership program.	20	11
# of undergraduate students accessing Educational loans (1000\$ each)	34	58
# of men or women accessing Rehabilitation loans to open small businesses	0	1
# of delegations informed about the status of the Arab minority in Israel	Not relevant	Not relevant
<i>Total</i>	179	310

Table 2





Workshop about Interfaith in Galilee: An Intervention Program in Schools

The 6th course in Mghar – Galilee: “Knowing the Other by Knowing his Holy Sites” Conflict Transformation

Rationale:

The community is disintegrating, thus, causing alienation between inhabitants belonging to different faiths.

Goal:

An intervention program aims to reduce stereotypes, preconceived ideas, and promoting more understanding and respect between people belonging to different religious backgrounds.

Targetgroup:

33 teachers and educators representing schools from mixed Arab villages in Galilee: Mghar, Eilaboun, Wadi-Elhamam, Tuba-Zangariah, Jesh.

Activities:

1. An intensive course of 60 hours started on 3rd of April and ended in June, in Mghar. The course included 4 theoretical sessions 4 hours each, and 5 full day visits, 8 hours each to holy sites of Christianity, Islam, Druze and Judaism.
2. The lectures were given by religious leaders. The tours were guided by Dr. Arraf.
3. Heads of Departments of Education in the local authorities, the supervisors, and the principals were involved.
4. The course was approved by the Ministry of Education.
5. Follow- up: hopefully, during the year 2014-2015 the school principals will devote 2 hours monthly to enable educators and teachers who underwent the course to convey their knowledge to their pupils.

Evaluation:

- Success stories were shared with the ICCI
- A questionnaire was filled by the participants, where at least 95% agreed on the importance of holding such a course which enabled people to know themselves and the other based on facts.





Dialogue between Arab and Jewish professionals – the 7th Conference “Organ Transplant – Fraternity and Solidarity between Religions”

Goal

The main goal of our proposed project is to help bring about understanding and to evolve a culture of tolerance between Arabs and Jews in the Holy Land, as a means for the achievement of equal rights for the Arab Palestinian minority.

Target Group:

Over 200 participants, Arabs and Jews, included Families, doctors, academics, heads of social change organizations, university and college students, and religious leaders.

Activities:

1. One day conference was held in Nazareth.
2. 3 panels were conducted. The first was on “organ donation and transplant in Israel”, the second was on “organ transplant and religions”, and the third included representatives of Arab & Jewish families of the organ donors and recipients.
3. A tour to the old city of Nazareth.
 - The conference will be arranged in cooperation with “The National Center for Organ Transplant”
 - It was covered by the leading local newspapers and websites. A report about the conference was broadcasted on the national Arab-Israeli TV.
 - The conference raised a vital issue at these times of struggles and conflicts, and the increasing hatred between the different parties.







Project for Dealing with Dropout Young Girls and Girls crisis in Acre (year 10):

Context of work:

Acre populated by about 53,000 inhabitants, where about 28% are Arabs mostly internally displaced.

The Arab minority is systematically marginalized. The physical infrastructure i.e. sewage system, roads, dwellings are in a catastrophic shape.

The education system suffers from a lack of supervision, lack of subsidies, and lack of professional guidance.

A high proportion of students (boys and girls) drop from schools. Two secondary and high schools for the Arab sector operate in the city.

Goal:

The aim of our project is to enhance education and employment opportunities for dropouts and girls in crisis from 13-18 years old, by providing them with a remedial treatment.

Objectives:

- a. To encourage the girls to continue their studies at school.
- b. To empower them to engage in academic courses, or vocational training workshops, to enhance employment opportunities.
- c. To depend economically and financially upon their selves. To be less dependent on their families or husbands in the future.
- d. To reduce early wedding phenomenon.
- e. To educate the girls towards more openness and better dealing with the outside world.
- f. To be constantly updated regarding social, political, and cultural matters.
- g. Help them develop their personal identity at a peaceful space.
- h. To recruit parents as part of the process.

Beneficiaries

The total number of girls is 132 were divided as follows:

7th grades: 15 girls

8th grade: two groups – 39 girls

9th grade: 23 girls

10th grade: two groups – 33 girls

12th grades: 14

Adults (over 18): 8

Activities

January:

Feasts and Holydays: values of Christianity (loving, forgiveness, patience), acceptance of the other who belongs to a different faith. The activity will include visit to the church and meeting with a priest.

February:

Hygiene and self awareness: physiological changes in adolescence, the right way to keep personal hygiene, taking care of the hair, mouth and tooth hygiene. The sessions would be guided by specialists including dentists.

March-June:

Adolescence: series of lectures and discussions:

- Adulthood
- Proper and healthy communications between kids and parents



- Mother's Day – meeting with mothers in the Center.
- Recognizing and facing risks at adulthood.
- Safe internet
- The role of the parents in “technological environment”
- Risks and disadvantages of early marriage

The lectures and discussions were carried out by social workers, family therapists, internet specialists, and a representative from the community police.

Healthy lifestyle and healthy nutrition:

- Appropriate nutrition in adolescence
- The effects of correct nutrition on physiological development
- The importance of sport activities

The sessions included meetings and discussions with sport teachers, nutrition specialist, and a course of Aerobics were carried out

July:

Due to the summer vacation and Ramadan, a few meetings were held. For the girls who attended the meetings, a lot of discussions were on the political situations during the war in Gaza

August:

Several outdoor activities, trips, and going to the swimming pool were held. Due to the war and the political situation and the severe economic situation it was impossible to hold a well organized summer camp as it was planned.

September - October:

- Breaking the ice activities for the new girls who joined the group. The emphasis is on expectations,
- knowing the rules, the annual plan, and commitment.
- My duties and rights as a member of a group
- Celebrating the Sacrifice feast for Muslims.
- Starting mid October, 9 girls from the 10th grade started to provide educational support (helping younger girls with their homework), where our center was recognized by the high schools in Acre to conduct this project of “self commitment”.

November – December:

- Sex education: the difference between the reproductive systems of males and females.
- My status within my family, my obligations towards my family, and my rights.
- Pluralism and the legitimacy of the different attitudes within the family, the community, and the group.
- 3 sessions were held between the girls and their mothers to bridge the expectation gaps.
- Participation in the different Christmas ceremonies that were held in Acre, and putting a Christmas tree in the center.







Youth Leadership Program in Cooperation with Notre-Dame School in Mee'lya

Rational

As is the case in most Arab villages in Israel, the community faces a shortage in frameworks and activities which address the problems and challenges facing Palestinian-Arab youth. It is our belief that by socially re-integrating our youth in actively taking part in social and community processes, our youth will be more involved in determining as well as shaping their future. With the cooperation with Notre-Dame School in Mee'lya, the ICCI would carry out a program for youth leadership to strengthen relations between young adults and their communities, through integrating them in community institutions. This project is also a preemptive measure that aims to prevent youth from sliding into drug abuse, and any other violent practices.

Target Group:

30 pupils of the 9th grades who seek to develop and empower skills of leadership by facing social and community assignments.

Objectives:

1. Awareness raising for pupils to be an active leading members of the Arab Palestinian Minority
2. To empower them to critically reflect on their situation
3. To help them to find their own viewpoint and to develop visions if and how they want to participate or integrate in their society.
4. To contribute to the building up of a positive attitude and a sense of belonging to their surrounding communities

Output indicators:

1. 30 Pupils participated in 120 hours got a diploma (30 students each year)
2. The group of 30 pupils each year will be divided into 2 subgroups of 15 to maximize group dynamics.



3. 5 small projects\initiatives developed over the year project
4. 1 overnight session conducted each year.
5. 2 field visits conducted each year for the group.

Outcome:

- At least 80% of the participants of the extracurricular activities will be active in social/cultural/political/educational/environmental activities in the school or in the community in the following year.
- At least 80% of the small scale projects\initiatives are implemented by the end of the second year.

Activities:

1. One preparatory meeting was held between representatives from the ICCI with the Mayor of Mee'lya, the principal of Notre-Dame school, and the group coordinator.
2. The questionnaire was filled by the students in order to reach out and find the most appropriate students to take part in the project.
3. Personal interviews were held with the candidates.
4. Another meeting was held between the Chairperson and the Executive Secretary of the ICCI to gether with the Mayor of Mee'lya, the principal of Notre-Dame school, and the group coordinator.
5. The first two sessions (4&5 October) were dedicated to organize the groups and to explain the im portance and the rational of the program : expectations and targets.
6. The second session (10&11) October. The lecturers focused on building up group dynamics to enhance group work and cooperation through a variety of interesting and fun activities. In this session the students begin to tackle and define Leadership values and responsibilities.
7. The third session (24&25 October), the students continue to build up confidence within the groups

Again through confrontation of obstacles and challenges generated by the lecturers , the students were exposed to social skills .The activities targeted social values and skills as tolerance, share responsibilities, cooperation as well as mutual support and respect etc...

8. (7&8 November) at this stage of the program, skills as creative thinking (thinking out of the box) were targeted largely by the lecturers. Again several activities and techniques were applied to empower non conventional thinking and perspectives -such social skills are meaningful to be obtained by leaders especially in conflict resolutions and problems solving.
9. The following sessions (14&15 November), the lectures continued the second chunk or part of the program in which they tried to train and develop creative thinking skills .The students at this stage were confronted by issues and problems in which they tried to resolve by non conventional thinking and cooperation. In other words, the students were asked to apply both skills of group work and creative thinking.
10. In the following two sessions (21&22 of November).The second chunk was discussed and summarized.



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Educational Loan Fund:

87 loans (1000\$ each) were issued in 2014.

Rehabilitation Loan Fund:

1 loan was issued in 2014

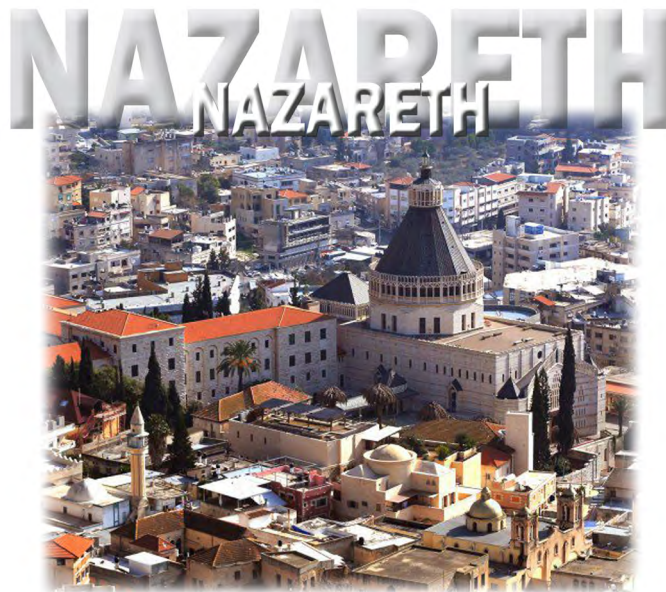


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Acknowledgement

Our sincere gratitude to all members of the ICCI, to the Central Office and the various Area Committees, and for all our partners for their moral and financial support enabling us to continue our holy mission, and to spread our Christian Witness within our communities in the Holy Land.



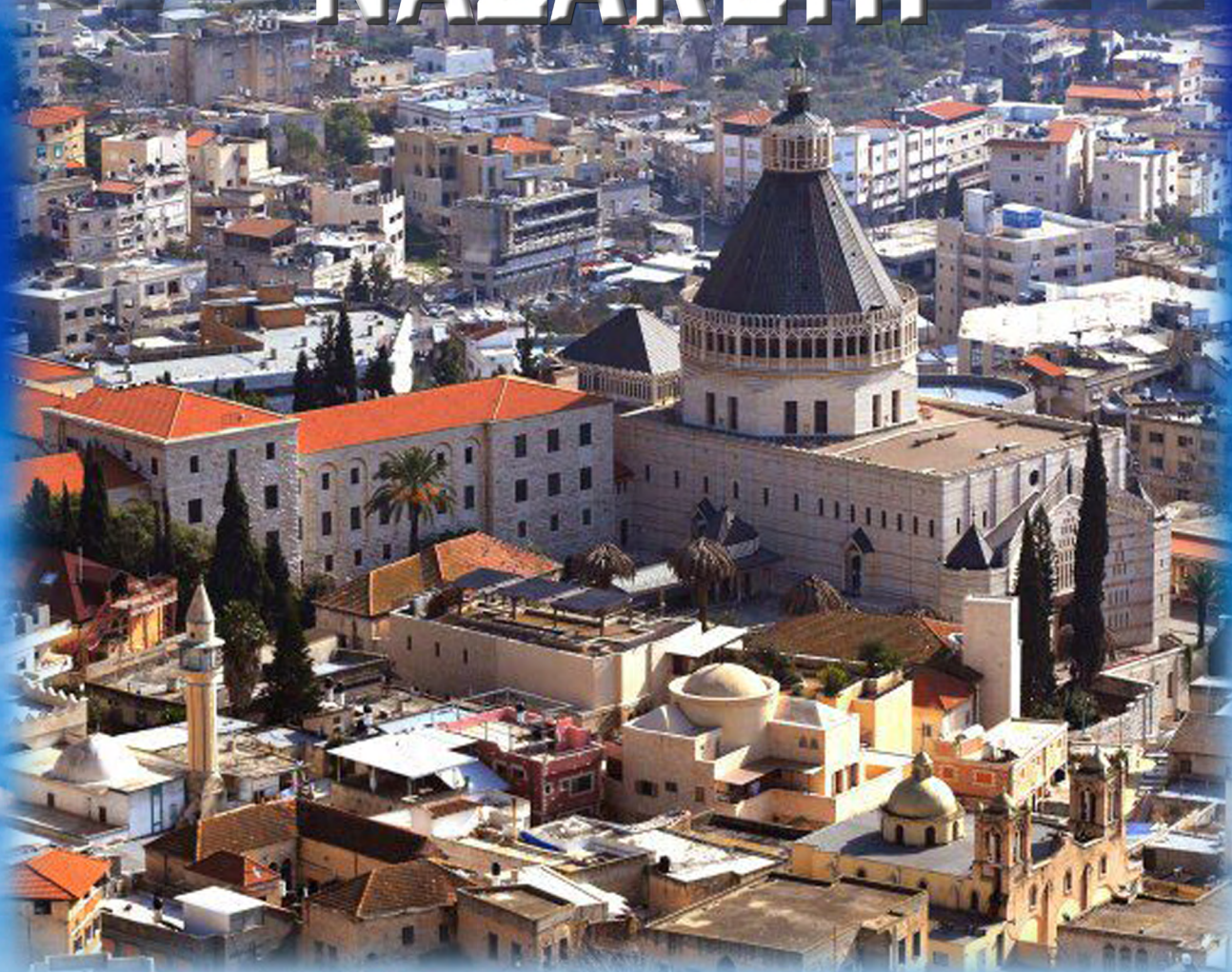


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