

Brother Jack Curran, Vice President for Advancement at Bethlehem University: “Education is the way to salvation”.

When Br Jack Curran reflects on the intense conflict that has been raging for over a year in the Holy Land, where the Lasallian University run by the Brothers of the Christian Schools is the only Catholic University, he states unequivocally that “Lasallian education is about salvation; salvation in this world and beyond” and **“in these difficult times in the Holy Land, salvation is part of what we must do”**. That is why “Bethlehem University stands as a beacon to remind us all, ourselves in the Institute, the Church and the world, that salvation is possible and that education is indeed the way to salvation”.

He experienced this in the decade between 2003 and 2013, when he was appointed for the first time to Bethlehem University, and he confirms it now, in his role as Vice President for Advancement, convinced that in these crucial moments, **“the University is with the people in solidarity for justice and human rights and human dignity for all, for all people in the Holy Land”**.

“The people there need us to be in solidarity and we have the grace to be able to respond,” continues Br Jack, mentioning some concrete examples that have touched his heart deeply, and pausing to confess that **“I feel from the bottom of my heart that I joined the Brothers to be a person committed to education as a means of salvation”**.

Sustaining hope in the midst of war

Despite the days of intense occupation and war-related restrictions in Gaza, the Lasallian religious is convinced of the need to sustain hope even in this context. “We speak of hope for a better future, knowing that the reality is so brutal, in the day-to-day life of ordinary people. But **we speak of hope because it is the foundation of who we are as Christians**; it is the foundation of who we are as God’s people. It was in that very city where Bethlehem University is, 600 metres

from the University, where Jesus was born of Mary, where the King of Peace, the Prince of Peace, came to earth to be one of us, to show us how to live. And we, in a call to God, that is the hope that we keep alive today,” he explains.

“We are incredibly blessed at Bethlehem University with a generous network of friends, all over the world, who not only support us financially, which is incredibly helpful and necessary, but who support us spiritually,” he adds, concluding that “that is where hope comes from, from people pooling their resources, their prayers, their understanding and their finances to express a solidarity that gives us hope every day.”

[Embed video interview with Bro. Jack Curran].