

What will I give this Christmas?

Eliza Minasyan

Less than 300 miles from Bethlehem, an Armenian family in Syria lives as refugees in their own city.



Yet they are not alone—the Jinishian Memorial Program (JMP) is bringing laughter to war-traumatized children at a

Christmas party. We're providing fuel for winter. We help give life-saving care to the injured.

Unlike remote international agencies, we offer hands-on help with local, faith-based services. As we approach the 50th anniversary of our service to Armenian communities in the Middle East and Armenia, the honor of being a part of this glorious mission fills our hearts with joy and humble gratitude.

And you can be part of it, too.

As Mary sang that first Christmas in this weary yet holy land, we can bring God's mercy to life, lifting up the lowly, filling the hungry with good things!

Look over the gifts that you can make possible. We itemized some of our many projects—see the direct impact of your contribution to the Jinishian Memorial Program. You may use the enclosed envelope or go online to give and print out gift cards (pcusa/jinishian.org). Touch the hearts of loved ones at Christmas when you share one of these blessings in their honor!

With gratitude,

*Eliza Minasyan, Executive Director,
Jinishian Memorial Program*

We've Moved! We would love to meet you or your group. Contact us for a personal encounter with the amazing work we do.

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Bring healing to war-torn Syria

JMP-Syria country director Talin Topalakian explains how once active citizens, now devastated by years of war and unemployment, are left “feeling helpless, hopeless, and depressed.” We provide vital financial assistance to families crippled by debt, major illness, and rapid inflation.

Most of these families are living as refugees—displaced from homes too dangerous or damaged to inhabit. As winter approaches, JMP fuel distribution brings relief when heating is costly and scarce.

Assisting with medical services has been a hallmark of Jinishian's work since the beginning. Nowadays, more and more clients are coming to us for help each day due to fewer health professionals, resources, and the rising costs and risks of importing equipment.

“We saw a need among mothers who are neglecting their health to save money for their families,” says Topalakian. “So we launched a project over the summer providing all breast and ovarian cancer screenings, treatments, and hospitalizations needed for 107 women.”

War also creates new health problems. Young fathers, feeling helpless to sustain their families, experience high anxiety leading to serious heart disease and many deaths. JMP has stepped in to help with life-saving heart surgery.

In continuing response to the many casualties within Armenian Syrian



JMP grants for food, shelter, and school needs bring smiles to Syrian family racked by illness and unemployment

communities, JMP assists with critical treatment and hospitalization. Your gift will help us bring hope to the desperate soul of a burned or injured person.

You can do something. Give concrete help in the face of violence, scarcity, and homelessness.

WHAT WILL I GIVE?

- Prescriptions for unemployed patient **\$16**
- Cancer screening/gynecological exam **\$50**
- Cover one-month of rent **\$100/family**
- Keep a family warm with winter fuel **\$100**
- Support a family of four for one month **\$300**
- Medical care for war victim **\$100 to \$1000**
- Chemotherapy for a cancer patient **\$500**
- Treatment for diabetic patient **\$500**
- Heart surgery assistance **\$1000**

Delight the Children with Christmas Joy

For children traumatized by war—driven from their homes, parents kidnapped or killed—the Jinishian Memorial Program provides not only material needs, but a chance to smile.

“These children have been witnessing and experiencing violence for three years. They risk losing hope and are deprived of their most basic rights,” says JMP-Syria country director Talin Topalakian. She began organizing children's programs throughout the year to provide education, treatment, and counseling, but also to share a meal and time to socialize and laugh. Children come away encouraged, with packages of nutritious snacks and small gifts.



On Christmas Eve, festive performances brighten the lives of orphans and special needs children in Armenia.

School expenses are an additional burden for struggling Syrian families. Jinishian grants for registration and school supplies give children the chance to stay in school.

The Jinishian Memorial Foundation in Armenia has a lively tradition of Christmas events for children. Games and Christmas gifts bring joy and blessing to these precious little ones.

WHAT WILL I GIVE?

- Children's program in Syria **\$10/child**
- School registration fee in Syria **\$60/student**
- School supplies in Syria **\$20/student**
- Christmas party and gift (clothing, toys) for orphaned or disabled child in Armenia **\$35**



Children devastated by the violence of war gather for a meal, counseling, and the chance to be a kid!

Make a Lasting Change in Armenia

Young people are helping transform this country. Our debate clubs for high school and college students help develop socially responsible citizens in Armenia and foster democracy. The skills gained will be life-long gifts preparing these young people for leadership.

Over the last 30 years, the Jinishian Memorial Foundation (JMF) in Armenia is known for its impact on prenatal and infant care. More recently, our effort to eradicate developmental hip displacement through early intervention has established a network of specialists and equipment needed to prevent a lifetime of disability.

JMF is also a champion for those with special needs as they grow older. Specialized summer camps with art therapy and Bocce ball provide barrier-free outdoor experiences and life skills training. Program coordinator Alina Hovhannisyan says campers get to “try new experiences in order to gain self-confidence, learn cooperation and communication, and increase personal independence in a safe and fun environment.”

With a goal to build strong communities, JMF empowers university students in out-lying regions to play a more active and informed role

in the economic, social, and political development of the country. Small grants enable students to identify needs in their villages and to initiate their own projects. Give a chance to these students to exercise leadership and engage their communities in positive change.

WHAT WILL I GIVE?

- Debate club participation for one year for **\$50/student**
- Walker for a child with hip dysplasia for **\$200**
- Doctor training and infant ultrasound screening table for **\$800**
- Summer camp for disabled for **\$80/session**
- University student community action grant **\$400**



Small grants enable students to identify needs in their villages and to initiate their own projects.

Give hope to teenagers and the elderly in Lebanon

For a decade, JMP-Lebanon has been working to transform the next generation of young women otherwise destined to repeat the cycle of poverty. According to country director Pauline Sagherian: “Our unique, faith-based, self-development program empowers teen girls with vocational and life skills needed to realize a better future.”

In Beirut, JMP is also known for its health services to the Armenian community. Diabetes is a major epidemic in Lebanon, increasing the risk of heart disease and death. Many diabetics rely on medications provided by JMP. Similarly, the most common surgery older clients face is for cataracts, yet needy patients risk losing their sight for lack of health coverage.

Elderly care is another hallmark of JMP-Lebanon. Stipends help with daily expenses for those without resources, in some cases for such basic needs as running water. In addition,

special gatherings offer friendship and spiritual uplift through activities such as visiting a monastery.

WHAT WILL I GIVE?

- Vocational program for teen **\$25/week**
- Transportation to teen training center **\$50**
- Diabetes medication for chronically ill **\$50**
- Senior group recreation & meal **\$16/person**
- Support elderly living alone **\$10/day**



Dignified care for seniors allows them to live independently while connected with their Armenian community.

Decorating for Christmas, these vulnerable teens have found faith and the tools to overcome generational poverty.

Tell us your story!

Thanks to the historic action of the Presbyterian Church (USA) 221st General Assembly in Detroit last summer, we are preparing to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

in thousands of churches across the country on Sunday, April 26. (Resources at pcusa/jinishian.org)

Was your ancestor or congregation a part of bringing aid to Armenians in the Middle East

during the last century? We want to share your personal stories of heroism and generosity and thank your family and communities as part of the commemoration activities. Email us! jinishian@pcusa.org.