



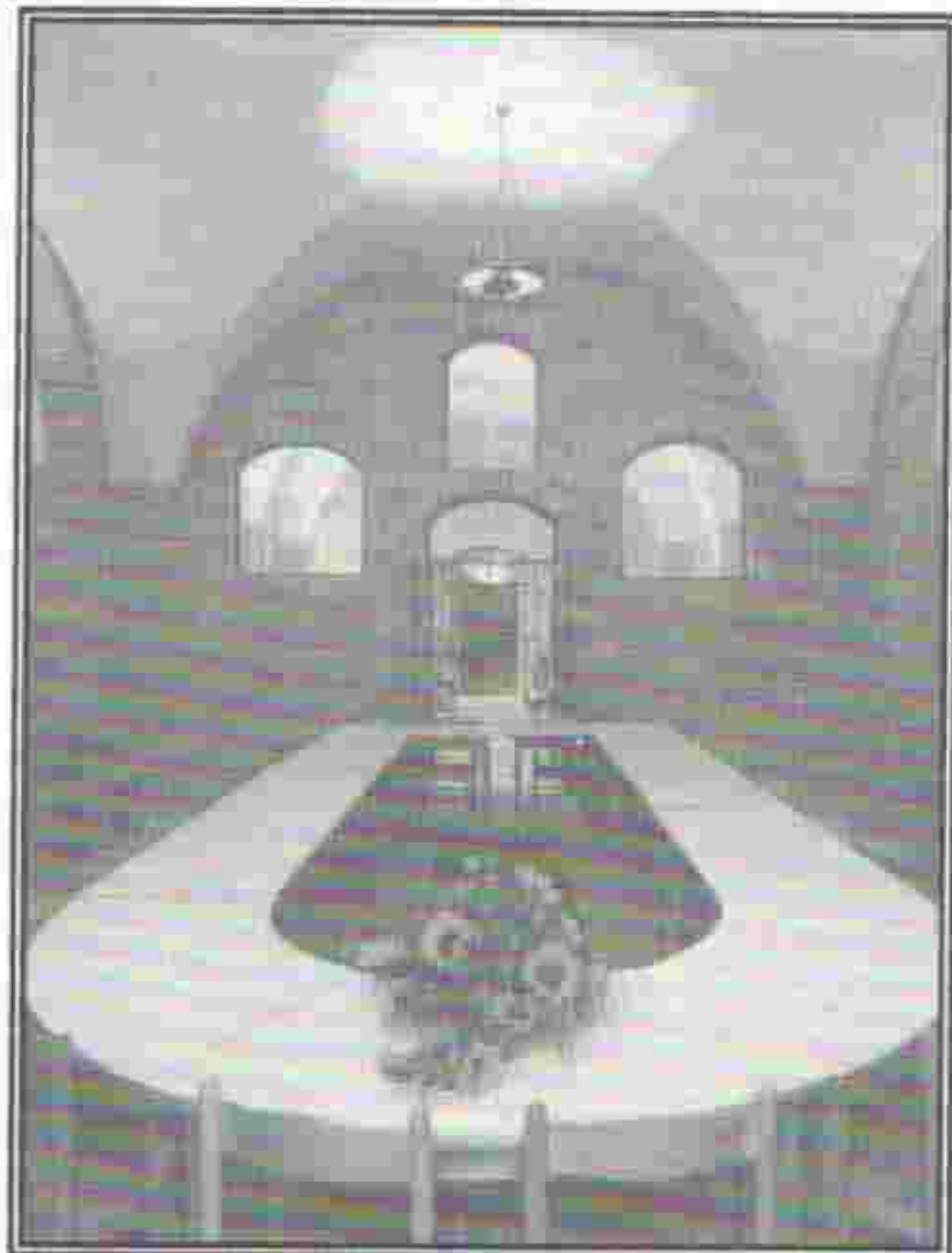
NEWSLETTER

P.O.Box 162, Bethlehem - Tel: 00972-2-647-0047
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No.1 (Nov. 1995)

Palestine's Window To The World

New life and new hope, a vision for the future, can be seen through Palestine's new Window.. " **Dar an-Nadwa Al-Duwalia.**" We have named our Center "Dar an-Nadwa Al- Duwali", which in Arabic means "the place where people meet for dialogue". We purposefully used "Duwali" (International) because we believe in the necessity of establishing links between Palestine and the rest of the world. As Bethlehem was heaven's window to earth, we want this Center to be Palestine's window to the world.



"Lecture Hall" a pleasant place for dialogue.

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We believe that there is no future for Palestine except through establishing strong ties to the rest of the World-- this world that has become a large village with intertwined alleys and inter-connected roads.

Renovation Completed Giving



From Rt. To Lt.: Maj. Dep. H. Nasser; Palestinian Min. For Social Affairs I. El Wazir; Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb; Gen. Dir. Of German Min. For Youth & Women J. Weizel; Head of the Representative office of the German Govn't. in Jericho Mr. Kobler; Gen. Dir. of Yasir Arafat's office Dr. S. Musallan; Gen. Dir. of the Palestinian Min. of Social Affairs Wahid; Undersecretary of the Min. of Social Affairs D. Ayyoush; Palestinian Counselor for Christian Affairs I. Kandalafi.

This building, constructed in 1886, was part of the Lutheran School until the mid 1970's. Soon after, it was closed and abandoned and fell into ruin. With no water, electricity, windows or doors, it became a storage house for garbage and insects. In the late 80's we began plans for renovation. German and Palestinian youth worked side by side starting the reclaiming and reconstruction process. The reconstruction would not have been possible without the help and generous financial support of the German Youth Stamp Foundation. It is our wish that this renovation will provide inspiration and encouragement for our community. May it be a model of what we can do for the 2000 year Bethlehem celebration!



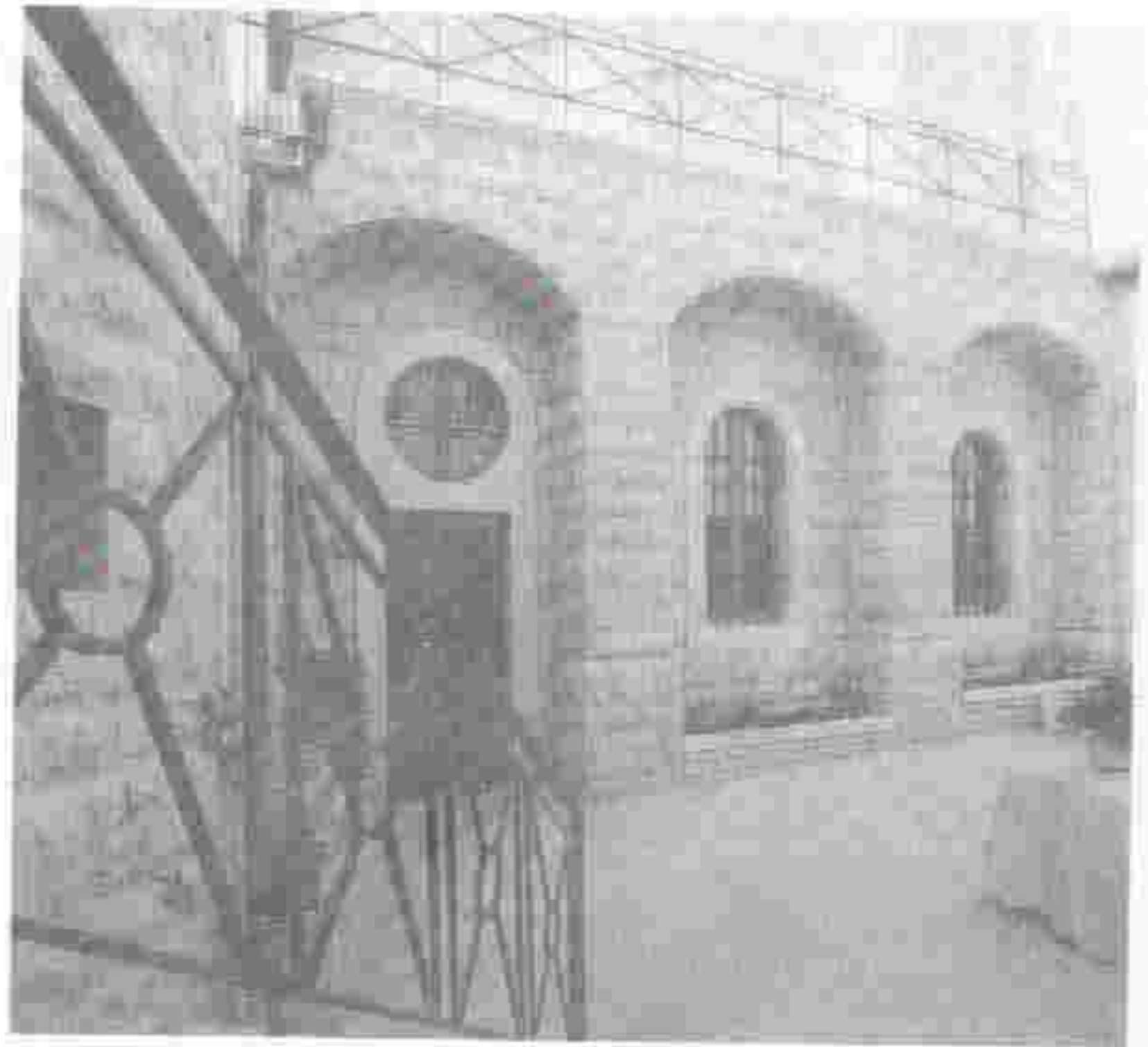
*Unveiling the mosaic emblem of the Center.
Pictured Rt. To Lt.: Architect B. Khoury, Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, Bishop N. Nassar and J. Weizel.*



Special guests visit the Lecture Hall during the dedication celebration September 28, 1995.

An Old Building New Life

This land and its people under occupation for the past three decades have suffered from a lack of infrastructure and services. Despite the obstacles, today we see this once-ruined building transformed like a bride dressed in her finest embroidery. The new life that has come into this building is symbolic of the new life among our people and in our Palestinian land. The Palestinian minds that have planned, the hands that have designed and the arms that have constructed this center are the same minds, hands and arms that will be able to rebuild our country.



Entrance to the Center, "Palestinian's Window to the World."



Beautifully furnished dining room where guests enjoy homecooked Arabic meals.



"The Cave" a place where guests can relax in a traditional Palestinian atmosphere

Faces & Departments



Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, General Director. Ph. D. Theology Marburg, Germany. Focus: Contextual Theology, Inter-religious Studies & Church History of Palestine

"Our goal is to recruit all personnel for the International Center of Bethlehem from young Palestinians who have received their education from well-known international universities and have returned to serve their people and church. As the stone needs a mason to form it, our society needs its young generation with their open and creative minds to shape it."

DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S STUDIES

Began in August of 1994 when it hosted its first lecture on "Women's Legal Status". The intent of this department is to raise the consciousness of the younger generation of Palestinian women regarding women's issues. And empower them by providing a place where women of different contexts can interact with each other, we also encourage scholarly research and publications.



Rana Kouhry, Director of Women's Studies. M.A. Middle Eastern & North African Studies, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. Focus: The Role of Palestinian Women



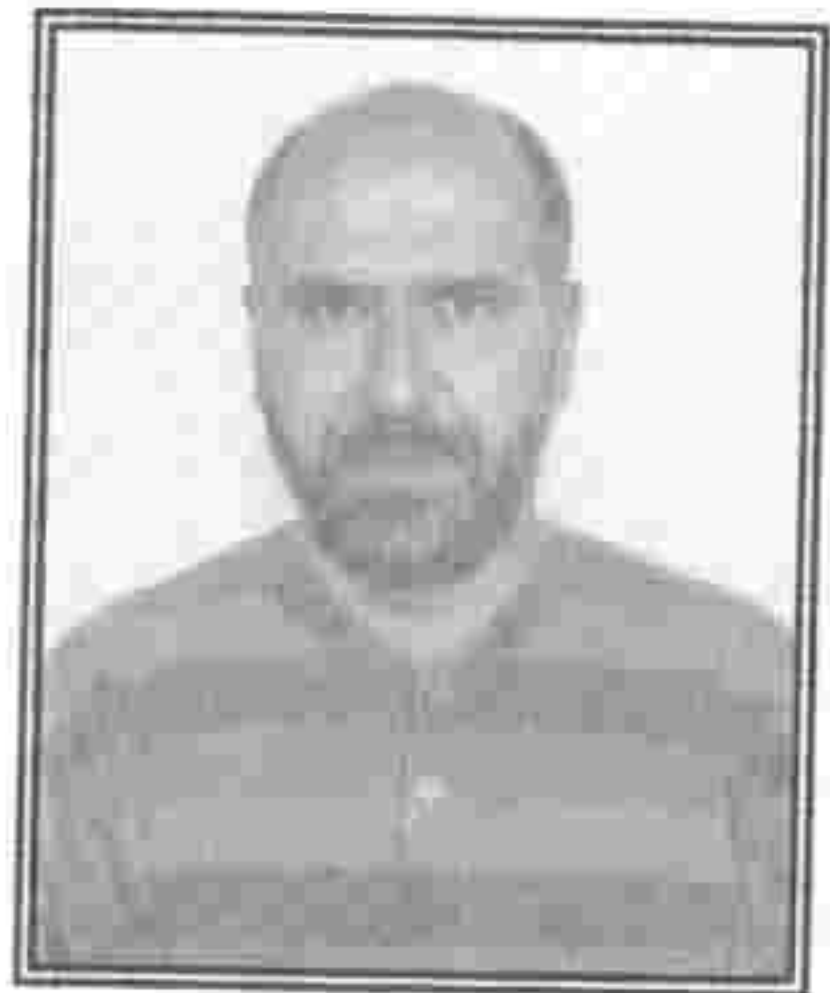
Viola Raheb, Director of International Relations & Adult Education. M.A. Education and Theology, University of Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany. Focus: Education in Palestine

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ADULT EDUCATION

Is concerned with promoting international understanding through encounters and exchanges. Our center is an ideal place for conferences, workshops and lectures that span cultural, religious and national boundaries. As well as hosting events here, our staff are active participants in world wide conferences, committees and exchange programs.

DEPARTMENT FOR FAITH AND DEVELOPMENT

Was established to explore the relationship between faith and economy, lobbying for sustainable development. The department strives to inspire Palestinians who study and live abroad; discouraging their emigration, and encouraging them to come back home and share their gifts with their people. We also hope to assist them in their re-integration process.



*Rif'at Odeh Kassis, Advisor to Palestinian Youth studying in Germany & Consultant for the Dept. of Faith and Development. B.A. Psychology & Sociology, Bethlehem University
Director for YMCA Rehabilitation Programs*



Daoud Nassar, Manager of Alternative Tourism, student of Business Administration at Bethlehem University

DEPARTMENT OF ALTERNATIVE TOURISM

Began work with the opening of the Abu Gubran guest house in 1992. This department provides alternative programs for tour groups, offering them the opportunity to get to know the people and culture of this land in addition to the historical and religious sites.

DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN - PALESTINIAN EXCHANGE

As an outgrowth of our close historical relationship with Germany; we have developed various educational, social, and cultural programs with special emphasis on German and Palestinian youth exchange. Another facet of this department is to advise Palestinian youth studying in Germany.



Jihan Hawwash, Office Manager. B.A. Computer Science, University of Cincinnati, U.S.A.

Abu-Gubran Guest House

"A Unique Opportunity!"

Each year, thousands of tour groups visit the Holy Land. Yet, only a few experience something of the real life of the people who live here. The Abu-Gubran Guest House is just the place where people can have such an experience. Situated in the middle of Bethlehem's upper city, adjacent to the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church, it provides a central location from which one can reach Bethlehem and its surrounding areas easily, quickly and cheaply. The guest house lies in the older section of Bethlehem, surrounded by a colorful shopping street where the pulse of Arabic life can be experienced first hand. Abu-Gubran offers its guests the opportunity to experience and enjoy the finest Arabic hospitality. Its twelve guest rooms on three levels are beautifully furnished with locally produced furniture and embroidery and can comfortably accommodate 26 guests. Our cooking is exclusively Arabic and as such, our cook prepares traditional Arabic dishes providing seasonal menus that incorporate local, fresh produce. From drinks to marmalade everything is homemade. Our guest house is meant for groups who not only wish to touch the stones of the land but also want to meet the "living stones".



Most tour groups come to only one site in Bethlehem namely Manger Square and the Church of the Nativity. Consequently they miss many important biblical and historical sites. Bethlehem was also the home of Ruth and David, with the prophet's home Tekoa, the Herodium, and Solomon's Pools nearby. Bethlehem has been a center of activity through Christian history with Jerome coming to translate the Bible and hundreds of monks establishing monasteries in the vicinity. We want our guests to become acquainted with the beliefs and culture of the people of the Holy Land thus we have developed and provide an alternative tour program. We have good contacts with many Muslims and Jews who are seeking to build bridges of understanding. Tour groups have the opportunity to meet with them. Jesus always concerned himself with the poor, the sick, and the weak. Following in Jesus' footsteps we make visits to hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and schools witnessing the ministry of others in diaconia, education, and social work.

Our talented staff includes well known speakers who are in demand nationally and internationally, and are articulate speakers of Arabic, German and English. They welcome the opportunity to meet with you in dialogue. Special topics include: Inter-religious dialogue, Palestinian Christian Community, Palestinian Women's Issues, Contextual Theology, and Challenges of Christian Education in Palestine. Frequently groups appreciate the opportunity to discuss the realities of the Peace process and hopes for the future of Palestine.



Through the International Center of Bethlehem and the Abu-Gubran Guest House, people of all ages and cultures can participate in a variety of programs, from an hour to a week or more.

This is your invitation to come to Bethlehem and experience the life and ministry here in a deep and profound way. We will organize and plan programs according to your interests and within your time frame.

Our offerings include:

- *Lectures*
- *Arabic Meals*
- *Alternative Tours*
- *Guest House Accommodations*
- *Dialogue and Exchange*

Special Target Groups

THEOLOGIANs
Youth & Students

Church & Congregation Groups

Women's Groups

EDUCATORs
Social Workers

The Center's Publications

Palestinian Women and the Intifada
by Rana Khoury.

Available from the International Center of Bethlehem

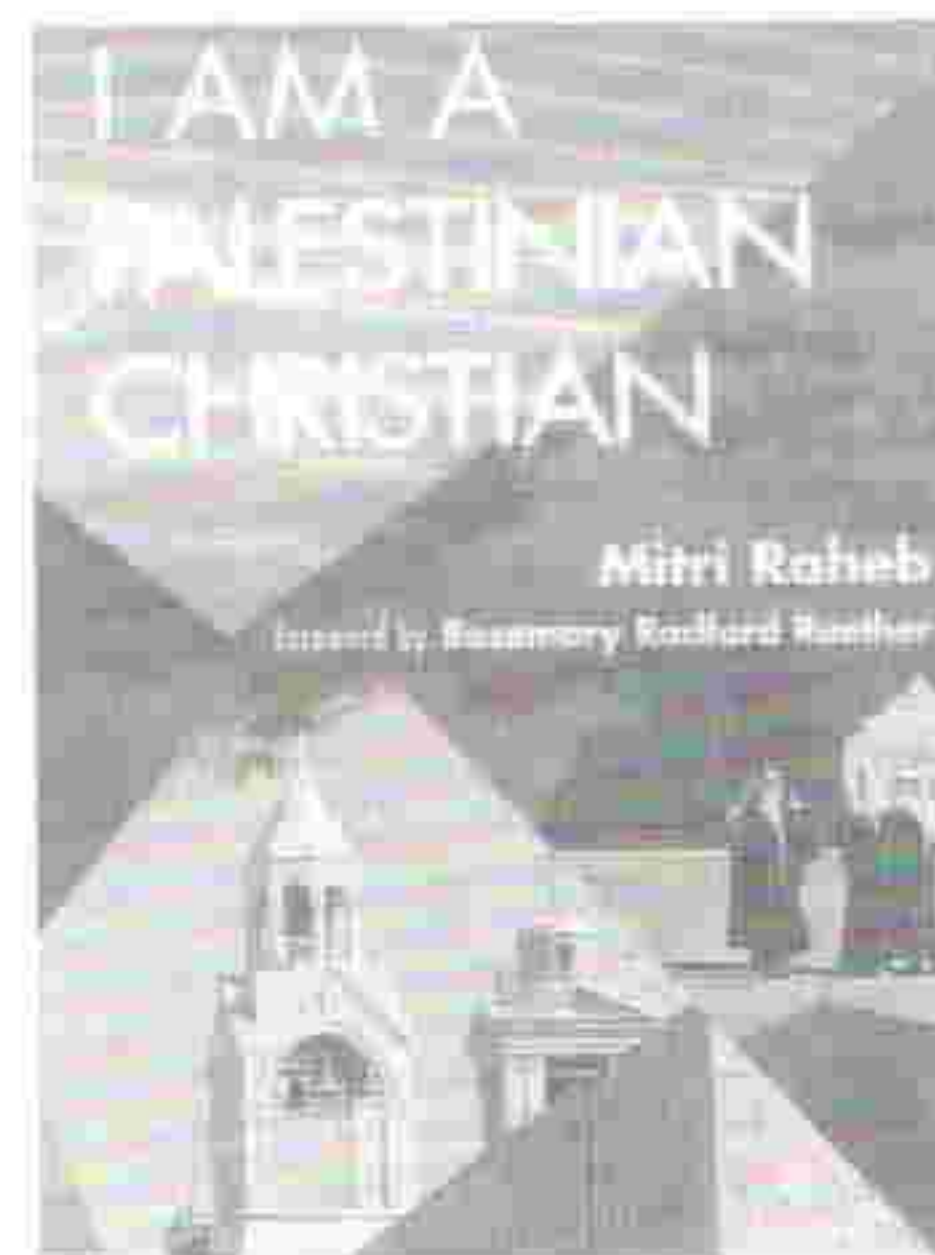
"Many accounts agree that the Intifada has been a critical period for Palestinian women...Due to their tremendous contributions during the early stages of the Uprising and their increased visibility in the public sphere, Palestinian women were expected to achieve permanent changes in their social and political status. However, this presumption did not materialize... This book provides a detailed analysis of the factors that worked against women's attempts to attain legitimate rights and equality."

I AM A PALESTINIAN CHRISTIAN
by Mitri Raheb.

Published by Fortress Press, Minneapolis

"Raheb wishes Western Christians to understand the Palestinian Christians' reality, of which they have been deeply ignorant and whom they have injured and betrayed in that ignorance. He also grapples with how Palestinian Christians can develop a local theology that can be both truthful and helpful in mediating the conflicts between Israel and the Palestinians and among Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. "

-Rosemary Rasford Ruether



Contact the International Center of Bethlehem to make your program plans and reservations.

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