

# "Light for Beirut" - more than a project!

## 1. About the project

One of the goals of this year's „Procession of the Three Kings” („Orszak Trzech Króli) in the city of Łódź in Poland was to support 100 families in Lebanon. Together with Caritas of the Archdiocese of Lodz, we decided to spend the collected funds on the installation of lamps powered by mini solar panels. In this way, we help people to light their apartments (in Lebanon electricity is only 1-2 hours, half a day from the generator) and reduce household maintenance costs (paying the generator alone is a cost exceeding the monthly average earnings).



## 2. Implementation

We focused on large families as a priority, but with time the project was expanded to include single people and seniors. In the next phase, we also intend to include small workplaces or shops in the project.

From the beginning, we were surprised by the kindness and happiness with which we met from the beneficiaries of the project. Often these are people or entire families that we have already supported in the past after the tragic explosion in the port of Beirut - whether through restoration or other assistance (food packages, heaters).



## 3. Let's take one step further!

Quite quickly it turned out that the collected funds will allow us to install not 100 but 140 lamps!

However, something more important happened: after some time, one person asked us to meet. It was one of those people whom we helped to restore the house and return to it after more than a year. This person gave us \$100, collected for months (\$100 today is 1.5 times the average monthly salary), believing in the Polish Mission in Beirut. We cannot describe how happy we are for this personal donation. For us,



it is an expression that our actions make sense, that a community is created in pain - a chain of support, that "good returns".

For this \$100, we will install two additional lamps.

Perhaps some more good will happens to help us to develop this project?



#### 4. There is a story behind every installation:

- A. is Syrian, friendly, calm, has been with us for a long time in Chadi's construction team. He lost 2 daughters and a son in the war, now he has one child. He is the one who installs lamps by the families.
- L. is a little girl whose dad - a firefighter - died in the port on that tragic day. Fireman's wife was pregnant at the time. After her father's death, L. became quiet, upresent. Hiba from our Young Team - YBTE - led the therapy. L. began to smile again, and her little brother was born. One lamp for them.
- Michelle was one of the first people we helped after the explosion. We remember how he came to the church thanking us as if we had renovated his whole house, although in this case the help was small. Once again, we managed to bring a smile to the face of this kind and poor man.



- N. is an Armenian from Syria, living in poor conditions in the Nabaa neighborhood. He gave his lamp to a Muslim ("Because he needs it more"). There was more situation like that during implementation of the project.
- There are also situations when someone wants to get a lamp and there is no such need. Fortunately, these are marginal cases. Nevertheless, we check whether a given family does not have, for example, alternative power sources or even the number of hours of sunlight to determine the sense of the installation.