
Rev. Brian Frain SJ
St. Ignatius Catholic Community - The Jesuit Church of Baltimore
740 North Calvert Street
Baltimore MD 21202
United States of America

17 May 2023

Dear Rev. Frain,

On behalf the Jesuit Refugee Service, and especially our colleagues and volunteers providing emergency support to those affected by the earthquakes in Syria, thank you and the St. Ignatius Catholic Community for the gift of **USD 1,450** we received on **19 April 2023** to support our response.

I just visited Syria, and I was deeply impressed with our work in the Al-Sakhour community of Aleppo. The community is 100% Muslim, without electricity, with buildings damaged by war and/or earthquake seemingly outnumbering those that are habitable. Our community center there offers essential help: psychosocial support, homework clubs, education for children forced to work to support their families, as well as a clinic and dispensary focused on pre-natal, pediatric, and chronic illness care.

In response to the earthquake, we are offering food baskets, psychological first aid, and other outreach services to this community in the hopes of stabilizing people's fears and concerns and helping them move into the future.

The future is a precarious one. Life in Syria is hard, as the fighting has stopped but the war is not over. Dictatorship, global sanctions, and war-exhaustion force young people to imagine any which way to leave.

JRS's work in Al-Sakhour and other Syrian communities provides a glimpse of hope for the future, building a world where all are treated with dignity, and all have a future worth living. This is reconciliation at its most practical and most needed.

Thank you once again for your solidarity with the Syrian people and with JRS. Let us continue to pray for peace and for hope in Syria and all over the world.

All blessings,



Rev. Thomas H. Smolich SJ
JRS International Director