

# MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

A few years ago, during a trip to Southeast Asia, I hired a taxi for a day. After about ten minutes, the driver sneezed once. He apologized profusely, reached over to pull out a mask from the glove compartment, and wore it for the rest of the day. You could spot people all over town wearing masks. I was told that this is the custom: When you feel somewhat unwell, you go about your business but make sure to protect those around you. There was no notion of personal freedoms being infringed upon by this measure. I wish the Western world, including Palestine, would learn from the advanced, socially aware, caring culture in what is officially considered a third-world country.

As Palestine is under a partial lockdown due to as many as 1,946 new cases of COVID-19 (November 25, 2020), you will find in this issue articles that explain the measures that have been taken by governmental and nongovernmental organizations, stories of reactions, and accounts of successes in responding to the changing environment during the pandemic, as well as readers' comments regarding their experience of the crisis.

We thank UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, Oxfam, and Sharek Youth Forum for their support of this issue, and all organizations and institutions that have used TWiP as a platform for communication. Special gratitude goes to our authors: H.E. Ambassador of Palestine to the Holy See Issa Jamil Kassissieh; H.E. Dr. Mai S. Al-Kaileh, Minister of Health; Haneen Qawasmi, project coordinator at the Palestinian Charity for Youth Economic Empowerment; the World Health Organization; Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi, president of the board of the Palestinian Medical Relief Society; Dr. Abir Giacaman, CEO of BGU trauma clinic in Frankfurt, Germany; physicist Dr. Anan Copty, the developer of a new type of face mask; Ahmad Ramahi, co-founder and CEO of WeDeliver; Michele Cantoni, co-director of the Bethlehem Cultural Festival; and all readers who took the time and made the effort to reply to our questionnaire.

Our Personality of the Month is Dina Nasser, the Book of the Month is *Wondrous Journeys in Strange Lands* by Sonia Nimr, and our Artist of the Month is Amwaj Children's Choir. Cook delicious Swiss chard dishes using the recipes presented by Morgan Cooper in TWiP Kitchen, visit Emmaus Church, presented by Bassam Almohor in Where to Go? and enjoy the many listed events.

From the entire team at TWiP, we wish a Merry Christmas to all who are celebrating this month and a healthy, safer new year to all of you!

Sincerely,

**Tina Basem**

