

On the opening and blessing of the Palliative Care Day Centre at St Elizabeth Hospital Hyderabad Pakistan 12 January 2026 by Archbishop Germano Penemote, apostolic nuncio in Pakistan

We are here today in Hyderabad for the opening and blessing of the new Palliative Care Day Centre at St Elizabeth Hospital. It has been **well-thought out** as the vision of Mr Eric Siraj, administrator of St Elizabeth. It has been **well-planned** by the administration and management of St Elizabeth and its Board with the support and leadership of Bishop Samson Shukardin. It has been **well-funded** by Hungary Helps and the people of Hungary who are represented by Hungarian ambassador Dr. Zoltan Varga, Mr Mark Aurel Erszegi who is Special Advisor for Religion and Diplomacy from the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Hungarian deputy ambassador Dr Dora Gunsberger, and with the encouragement of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. It has been **well-built** by Mr Sabir Shafi and his construction team. It is **well-staffed** by St Elizabeth's medical, nursing and auxiliary staff who are represented today by our great team of doctors, consultants, nurses, department heads and auxiliary workers.

And so we have come here today, 12 January 2026, to gather the fruit of this thinking, planning, funding, building, and having good staff: it is the new Palliative Care Day Centre. This Centre will continue and expand the commitment of the Catholic Church through St Elizabeth Hospital to provide compassionate professional healthcare in Hyderabad which we have been doing since 1958. It is matter of great pride and thanks that we can welcome to Hyderabad for this special occasion His Excellency Archbishop Germano Penemote who is the diplomatic representative in Pakistan of Our Holy Father Leo XIV. Your Excellency, you honour us by your presence.

This Palliative Care Day Centre is a mile-stone breakthrough in healthcare in Pakistan. It is for cancer patients. It complements our Home-Based Palliative Nursing which cares for cancer patients in their homes. On 28 April 2024 while speaking at the World Economic Forum, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that treatment for cancer was too costly for the poor population of Pakistan. The Catholic Church in Pakistan responds directly and effectively through St Elizabeth Hospital to this healthcare crisis for cancer patients. The care that will be provided in this Palliative Care Day Centre is free, just as it is in our Home-Based Palliative Nursing. **We at St Elizabeth are making the difference. We are providing a new model of healthcare for cancer patients.**

This is why we so pleased that the Honourable Anthony Naveed, deputy speaker of the Sindh Provincial Assembly is present today. Mr Anthony Naveed, you are a source of encouragement for St Elizabeth Hospital and are an important link for us with the civil structures of government and leadership in Sindh and Pakistan.

We are surrounded by many guests and friends today. May I note with appreciation our dear brother in Christ, Bishop Kaleem John of the Hyderabad diocese of the Church of Pakistan. We also acknowledge and remember in a very special way our generous friends and donors who have helped in the furnishing of this Centre.

St Elizabeth was built and begun in 1958 in Latifabad by the Catholic Church in collaboration with and at the request of the government of Pakistan. The government had set

up Latifabad as a new urban settlement to house the huge number of people who had moved to Hyderabad after partition in 1947. St Elizabeth has been at the forefront in providing health care in Latifabad since 1958 and this new Palliative Care Day Centre shows St Elizabeth's continuing commitment.

In 1958, St Elizabeth Hospital was dedicated in the name of St Elizabeth of Hungary. St Elizabeth was a queen 800 years ago, a holy woman, a woman with compassion for the poor and the sick; she built a hospital in Hungary to care for the poor. Today 70 years later, our link with Hungary through our patron saint is made tangibly present and real by this Palliative Care Day Centre which is the generous gift of the people of Hungary through "Hungary Helps". Ambassador Varga, Mr Erszegi, and Dr Gunsberger, today you represent Hungary and its people here at St Elizabeth Hospital Hyderabad. Please convey to them our friendship and warm appreciation.

May God continue this good work.

May God bless us all.

Fr Robert McCulloch

St Elizabeth Hospital Board

Hyderabad Pakistan

12 January 2026