

2025



40 *years*
with a mission



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Cover photo:
Betel men in San Blas 1989

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Forty Years with a Mission

Letter from the Director



Dear friends,

In October of 2025 Betel celebrated our 40th anniversary having completed four decades of professional, practical and compassionate care to a broad spectrum of peoples, cultures, and languages. Over the last 40 years a kaleidoscope of tens of thousands of marginalized individuals have entered Betel's residences and have been touched, healed and transformed by God's love in over 100 cities in 18 nations.

How has this been possible? We have done our best to affirm Christian love, tolerance, and care while at the same time embracing the highest professional standards.

Take a tour with us in the pages of our Annual Report. I believe you will see in the faces of Betel's residents and staff an authenticity that is undeniable.

Please come and visit us. Come and serve with us in our many centers in the nations. Over the years we have welcomed friends and volunteers.

Elliott Tepper
International Director of Betel

Photos:
Celebration of Betel's
40th Anniversary at the
Betania Retreat Center
(Ciudad Real, Spain)



“Tens of thousands of marginalized individuals have entered Betel's residences and have been touched, healed and transformed by God's love”



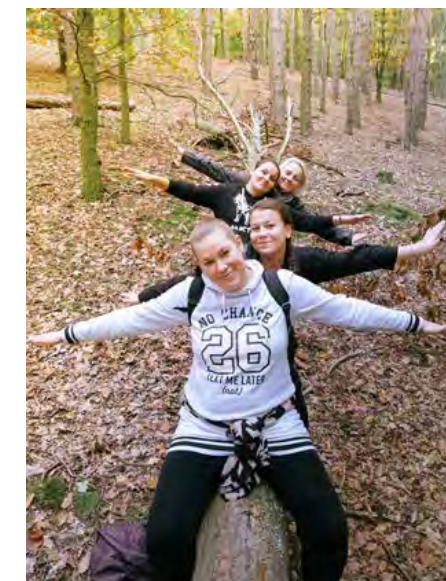
Committed to People

We are a Christian charity that, in 2025, celebrated forty years of working with people who suffer from addictions, homelessness and social exclusion. Over four decades, we have built an identity rooted in peer support and a commitment to individuals, carrying out our work in various countries, adapting to the realities of each culture while upholding the principles that define our mission.

Since our beginning, we have viewed caring for others as a way of life, placing these men and women at the center of our work. We carry out our mission through the collaborative efforts of directors, volunteers, professionals, and Betel residents, in coordination with the public health network and other social organizations.

As we celebrate 40 years, we look back with gratitude, remembering with great affection those who are no longer with us, and look forward to the future with hope.

“The celebration of our 40th anniversary inspires us and drives us to advance in our mission – to see lives restored”



Mission

Our mission is to help those who suffer from addictions, homelessness and social exclusion in the process of personal restoration, during which we encourage the development of life skills while providing new opportunities.

Vision

Our vision is to help the most vulnerable in society and to empower those individuals who embrace the Christian principles and ethos found in Betel.

Values

- › We are inspired and motivated by our Christian faith and tradition
- › We defend the right to life and the dignity of the individual
- › We consider the family to be the fundamental institution of society
- › We are committed to and embrace generous hospitality
- › Our residential program remains free of charge
- › We strive for transparency, effectiveness and efficiency in the use of our resources

Photos:
Men and women residents of Betel in Portugal, Mexico, Czech Republic, Scotland and Spain

(Center Right) Dr. Carmen Rosa with volunteer Julia Di Santi

Our Team

The Motor the Moves Betel

Our team is principally composed of people whose lives have been transformed through the Betel program. With the help of professionals and volunteers, they oversee the fulfillment of Betel’s mission: to see lives restored from the damage caused by addiction and social exclusion.

Board of Directors



President
Elliott Edward Tepper



Vice President
Luis Pino Sanchez



Secretary
Eduardo Hdez.-Lissen Bonilla



Treasurer
Juan Carlos Matesanz Hdez.



Board Member
Javier Gonzalez Espejel



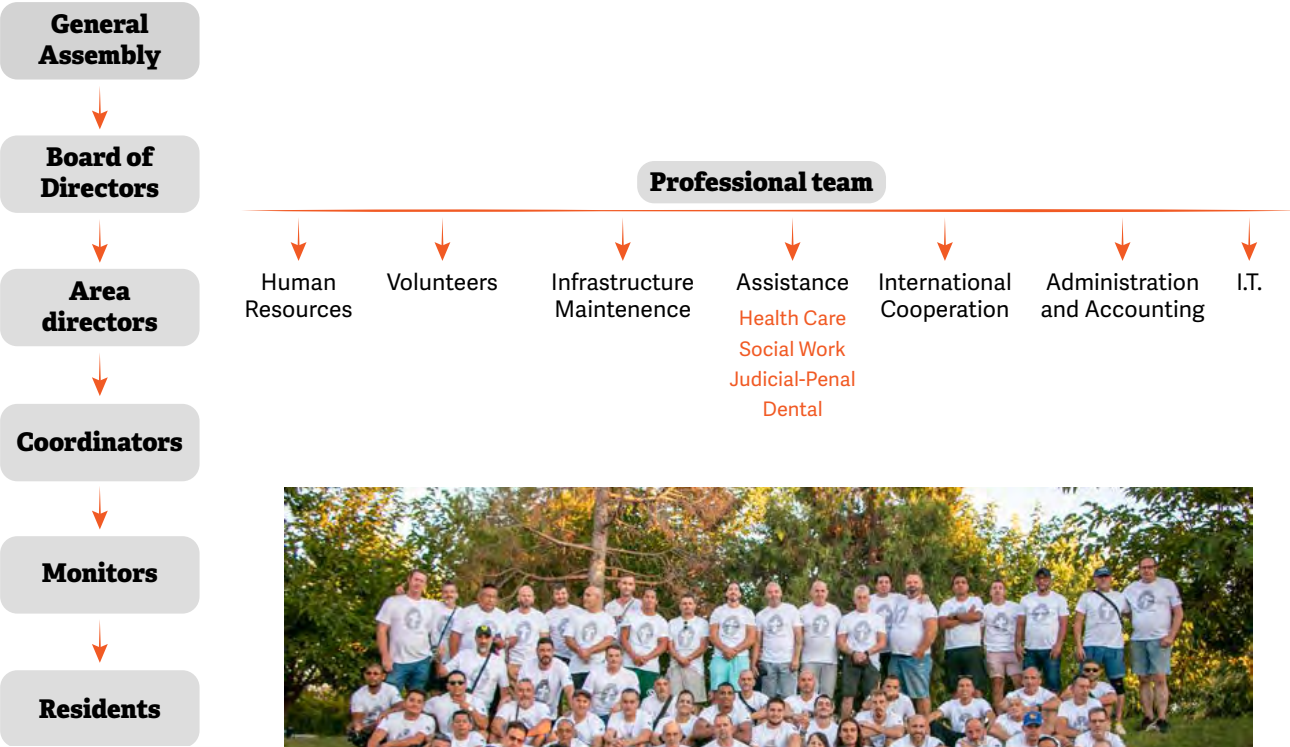
Board Member
Rafael Delgado Ramiro



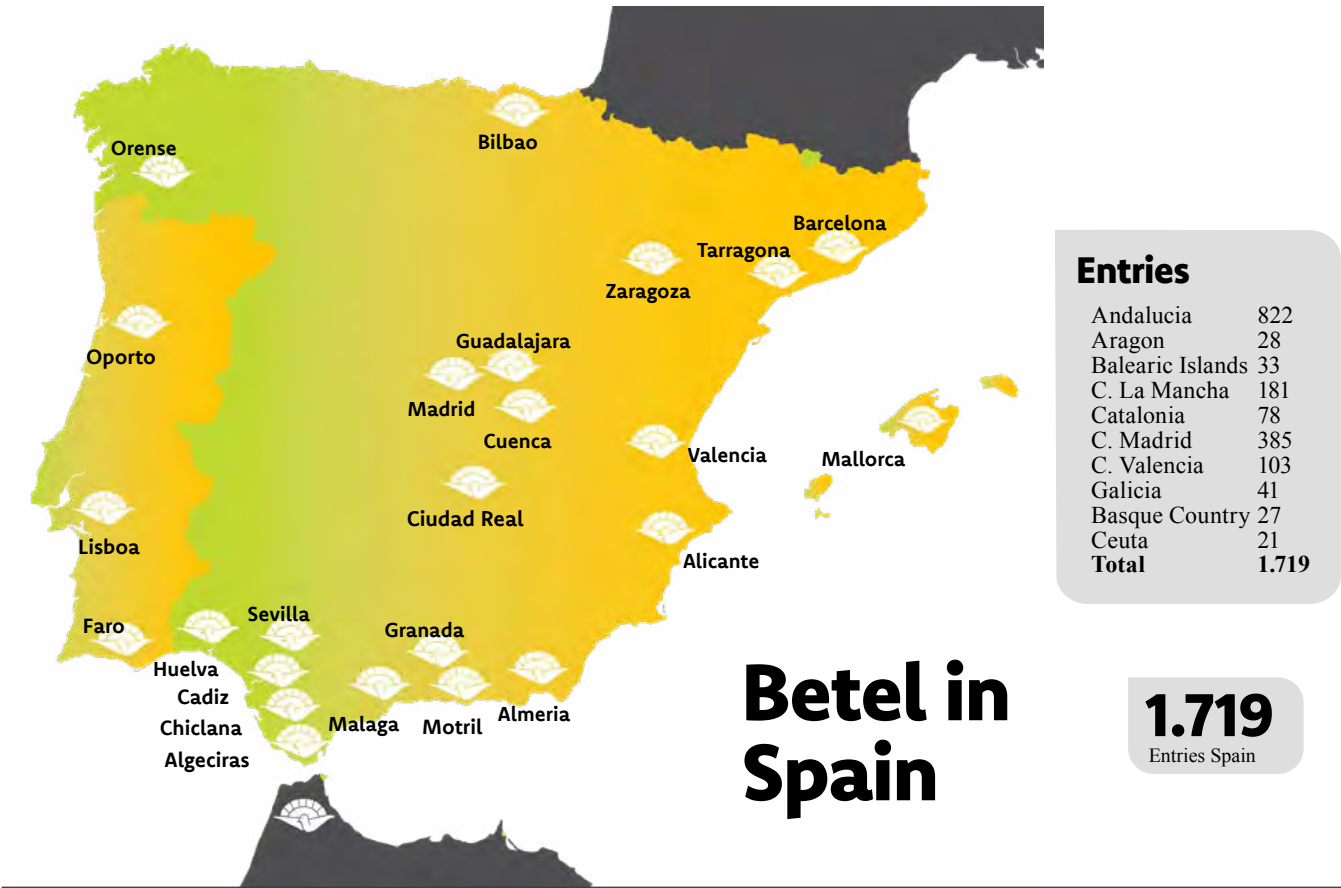
General Assembly members at Betel’s 40th Anniversary celebration

Professionals	Nº
Social Services Director	1
Area Directors	21
Children’s Activity Director	1
Medical Doctors	4
Dentists	6
Dental Assistants	6
Dental Hygienist	2
Social Workers	5
Social Educators	2
Psychologists	2
Family Therapists	2
Attorneys	3
Economist	1
Architect	1
Graphic Designer	1
IT Specialist	1
Administrative Assistants	11
Maintenance Technician	3
TOTAL	73

Organization

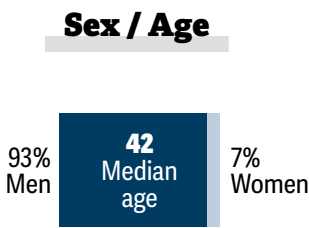
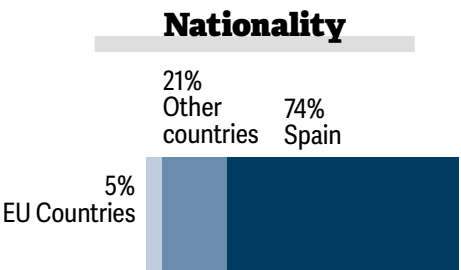
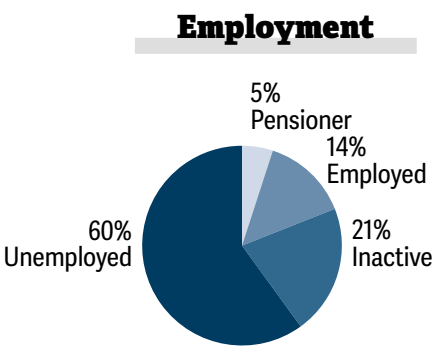
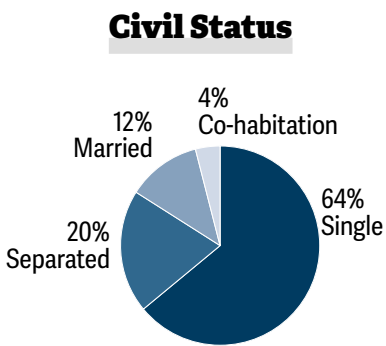
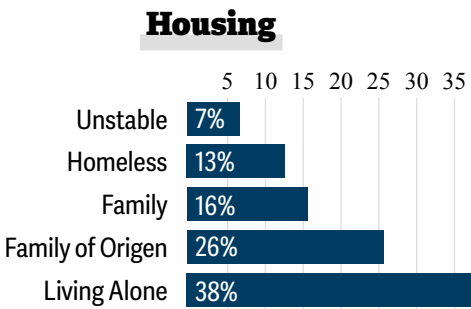
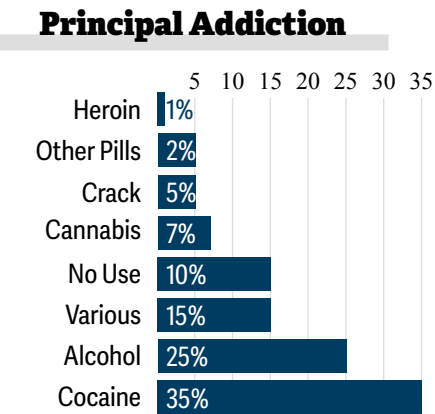
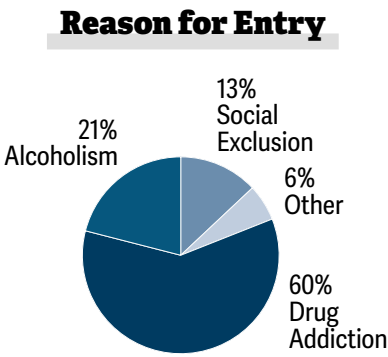


Betel Madrid residents



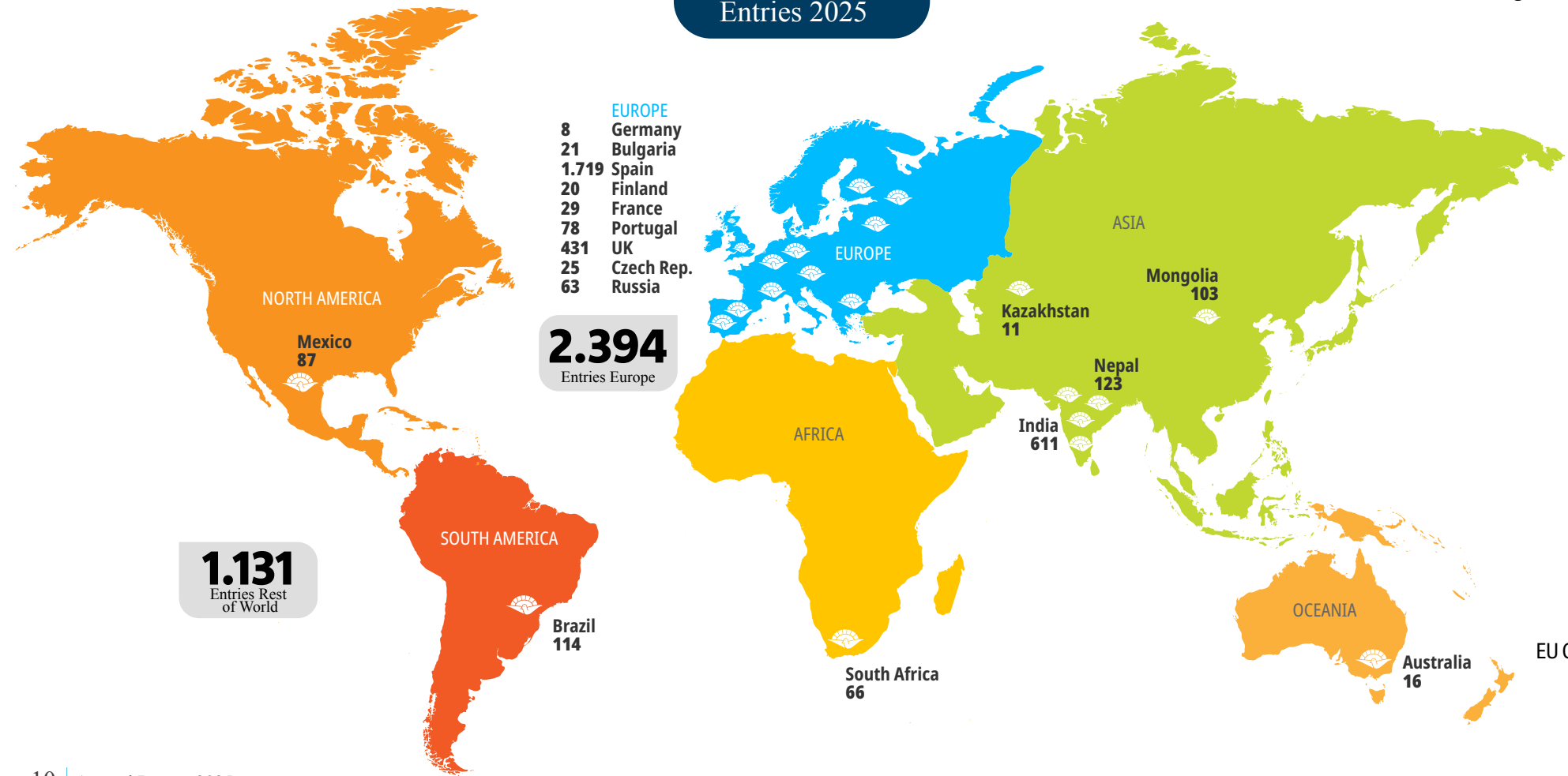
Profile of a Betel Resident

In 2025 we saw a significant increase in the number of homeless people entering Betel, rising from **5%** in 2024 to **13%** in 2025. In addition to the crisis of homelessness, which exacerbates social exclusion and marginalization, we see serious health issues, with substance abuse remaining as the primary reason for admission in over 80% of cases; **cocaine dependence** accounts for **35%** of these cases, and **alcoholism** for **25%**.



International

3.525
Entries 2025



Prison Ministry

Visiting inmates

In 2025 Betel expanded it’s prison ministry to include a new correctional facility: Madrid VII Estremera. Moreover, new outreach activities were organized for inmates such as Flamenco and Rap concerts, Christmas plays, testimonials, guitar workshops, basketball games, and more. In 2025, Betel sponsored 18 parole requests in which inmates stayed at Betel houses.

11 Penitentiaries

- › Alhaurin de la Torre (Malaga)
- › Archidona (Malaga)
- › Botafuegos (Algeciras)
- › Ceuta
- › Cuenca
- › Madrid V (Soto del Real)
- › Madrid VII (Estremera)
- › Ocaña I y Ocaña II (Toledo)
- › Seville I y Seville II

18

Men took Prison leave in Betel

Top: Betel Youth concert in the Madrid VII Estremera prison.

Middle: Activities in the Madrid V Soto el Real prison.

Middle Right: Performance by singer Nector Ortega in the Ocaña I prison

Bottom: Flamenco concert in the Ocaña I prison with artists Felix Crujera “El Sevillano” and Javier Romanos



A Kilo of Love

Food Assistance for Families

Betel offers support for families struggling with poverty through it’s food distribution program using two channels: the Food Bank and supermarket donations.

13%	Over 65
30%	Under 16
57%	Age 17 to 64
25%	Spaniards
75%	Immigrants

48.948
Kilos distributed



Weekly food distribution in Betel Madrid

Betel Houses

A Place to Call Home

Betel's houses are a free residential resource designed to provide a safe place to live for vulnerable individuals who struggle with addiction, lack a support network or stable housing.

The facilities are community based non-medical residences that operate in coordination with public and private healthcare and social services, ensuring a comprehensive approach that adapts to each person's needs.

Methodology

Betel's program is based on a model of structured community living and peer support, with an approximate duration of 12 to 18 months. During their stay, residents engage in community life and participate in productive and socio-educational activities as part of their rehabilitation and process of personal recovery.

Betel Houses

The network of Betel's communities include facilities for men, women, and a specific shelter for women with children in vulnerable situations.

Objectives

The goal of this program is to see lives restored through a process of personal recovery that enables residents to improve their quality of life and move toward social integration.

Specific objectives include:

- 】 Providing a safe, structured, and stable environment.
- 】 Helping residents overcome addiction and social exclusion.
- 】 Promoting the values of responsibility, independence, and cooperation.
- 】 Developing individualized intervention programs.
- 】 Preventing violent situations and addressing the symptoms associated with exclusion.
- 】 Encouraging participation in social, educational, training, and vocational activities.

Eligibility Requirements

Access to Betel is voluntary and is intended for individuals over the age of 18 who possess basic independence in daily living, are open to professional support, and respect the rules of community living. A preliminary interview will help determine whether the program is a good fit for the person looking to come in.



Porto



Almeria



Australia



United Kingdom



Seville



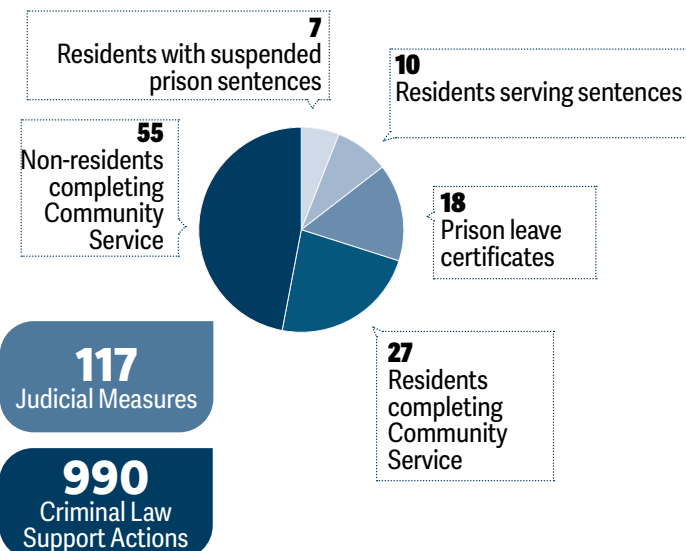
Madrid

Professional assistance

Legal Support

Assistance with Judicial Matters

In 2025, 990 legal and criminal support actions were carried out. Betel provides opportunities for alternative sentences to incarceration in Betel residences, as well as Community Service options. Betel also provides support for short stays out of prison for those inmates preparing for release.



Professional assistance

Social Assistance

Information and Orientation

Since 2018, Betel has been offering personalized support to individuals in vulnerable situations through our Social Information and Orientation Service.

The service is available to Betel residents, individuals and families receiving food assistance, as well as anyone seeking support or information regarding social services and other available resources.

Actions

- › Information on the availability, eligibility requirements, and access to social benefits.
- › Individualized social services, adapting each request to the available public and private resources.
- › Assistance with administrative procedures and paperwork.

244
Attentions

89
Procedures

69
Interviews

63
Assistance

465
Actions



Graduation day of the XXVI Leadership and Social Volunteering Course

Professional assistance

Training

Leadership and Social Volunteering Course

The goal of our Leadership and Social Volunteering Course is to offer useful tools that enable our residents and volunteers to provide effective, high-quality support in our communities as advocates for recovery within an environment of peer support and companionship.

Being an agent of change involves gaining confidence in oneself while also empowering others to discover their inner

strength. Through the support of peers, individuals can learn to harness their own strengths, enabling them to become influential in their environments.

To this end, from September to December, the 2025 annual training course was held in its XXVII edition, with a total of 20 students receiving a diploma of attendance.

XXVI
Edition

20
Alumnos

Professional assistance

Healthcare

Assistance and Prevention

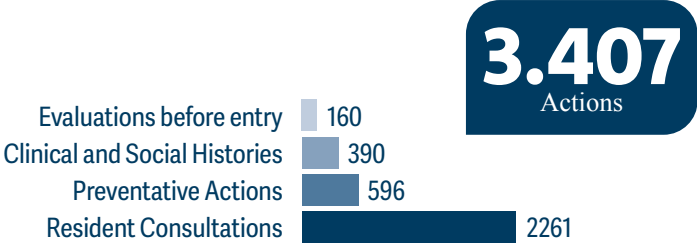
Betel residents have access medical services, provided by our own professional staff as well as through the public healthcare system.

Betel's residences provide a stable housing situation for residents in need of attention from the public healthcare system.

In 2025, Betel carried out 3,407 social and healthcare interventions using its own resources.



Medical consultation in Betel Madrid



Dental clinic team in Betel Madrid



Patient receiving dental care in Betel Madrid

Professional assistance

Dental Clinic

A Vocation for Helping Others

Betel's Dental Clinic has been operating in Madrid since 2008, providing dental care to people with limited financial resources.

We started with a single office, but growing demand led us to gradually expand our facilities and services. Over the years, we have grown to the point where we now have four dental units operating at full capacity, offering high-quality care with a team of experienced professionals dedicated to serving our patients.

- › Total number of patients treated: 3.213
- › Referred by Social Services, Health Centers, Caritas, and the Red Cross: 321
- › Betel residents: 87
- › General patients: 2.805



Moments to Remember

Betel Worldwide



Madrid



Mongolia



Ciudad Real



France



Ciudad Real



France



Madrid



Madrid



Madrid



Estonia



Alemania



Ciudad Real



Russia

A Place to Start Over

Celebrating 40 years of Betel

Betel was born in 1985

Betel began in the streets of San Blas, Madrid. What started out as an act of kindness toward a young man struggling with addiction now supports thousands of people on their journey toward a new life.

A Safe Place to Start Over

In the 1980s, missionaries Elliott and Mary Tepper and Lindsay and Mykal McKenzie of WEC (Worldwide Evangelization for Christ) reached out to young people struggling with drug addiction. There they met Raul Casto, who needed a place to rebuild his life.

After overcoming his addiction, Raul decided to help others in the same situation. The first Betel homes were established, and today they are present in more than 100 cities across 18 countries. Each home is a place to start over.

Social Responsibility and Commitment

For 40 years, Betel has provided companionship, a sense of community, and support to those who need it most. In 2000, the Ministry of the Interior designated it a Public Benefit Association.

Betel is the social service arm of the Betel Church (AEMC) and carries out its work in coordination with public and private networks.

Celebrating 40 years

On October 24, 2025, Betel celebrated its 40th anniversary with a heartfelt ceremony, filled with gratitude toward its staff, donors, and volunteers.

The event brought together prominent figures from various fields, whose remarks highlighted the human impact of Betel:

Dr. Luis Buzon, a pioneer in the clinical care of patients with HIV/AIDS, he recalled how he treated the first residents at Ramon y Cajal Hospital, emphasizing the importance of providing knowledge, hope, and dignity.



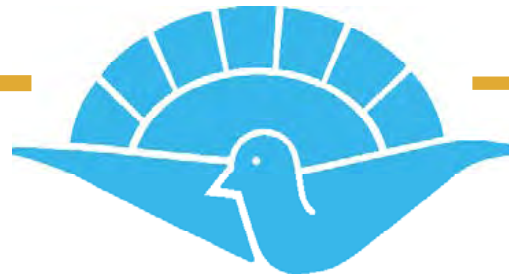
Jose Maria Romo, an evangelical pastor, recounted how he began by assisting Elliott and Lindsay in San Blas, taking part in the early stages of the social outreach program.



Begoña Somoza, of Triodos Bank highlighted the trust and ongoing collaboration with Betel since 1999, based on shared values and a cordial relationship that has endured for decades.



Zoraida Estepa, the director of Ocaña I Prison expressed her admiration for Betel's social impact and her willingness to collaborate more closely on prison-related projects.



40°

Anniversary

1985 - 2025



Betel Madrid 1991

Tribute to the Founders

Tribute was paid to Elliott and Mary Tepper, and Lindsay and Mykal McKenzie, who envisioned a community where each person in need could be supported, understood, and valued.



Elliott and Mary:

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”



Lindsay and Mykal:

“God has chosen what is low and despised to transform lives and bless the world”

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Celebrating 40 years means looking back with gratitude and remembering those who are no longer with us.

It means recognizing the efforts of those who continue to carry on this work.

And it also means celebrating the present and all the people who are part of the Betel family.

“We celebrate the present and everyone who is part of the Betel family”

Betel's Social Impact

- › **Founded:** 1980's, San Blas, Madrid
- › **Founders:** Elliott and Mary Tepper, Lindsay and Mykal McKenzie
- › **Current Locations:** More than 100 cities in 18 nations.
- › **Who we Help:** Thousands of people affected by addiction, homelessness and social exclusion
- › **Recognition:** Recognized as a public benefit organization (2000)
- › **Areas of Focus:** Addiction, social exclusion, recovery, support, volunteering



Betel Stories

To the Ends of the Earth

Ganbat and Davaa in Mongolia

Hi there. We are Ganbat and Davaa, and we have been serving as ministers in Betel since 2008 in Mongolia. We are incredibly thankful for the opportunity to share our testimony.

Ganbat: I've had a strong desire to assist those in need since the year 2000. I traveled to India and spent a year there with the Betel community to prepare myself to open a house in Mongolia.

In order to assist alcoholics in need, Betel was founded in Mongolia's capital city, Ulaanbaatar in 2008. We are now working in five cities in Mongolia.

The most important thing we have been learning is how to serve and love people who are lost and in need, with God's help, through the Betel ministry. We are incredibly thankful that this priceless ministry is still in our nation, as well as for the support of the "Betel family" and leadership in the world.



"We are learning is how to serve and love people who are lost and in need, with God's help, through the Betel ministry."



Men's community in Ulaanbaatar , Mongolia



Betel Stories

From Spain to Finland and beyond

Mario and Lina

Mario

In April 1991, after 15 years in the world of drugs, I entered Betel.

I was introduced to drugs at age 16. After many ups and downs and several jobs, I ended up on the streets. My father died, and my mother had to take my house keys away because there wasn't much left for me to steal. My sister had already died from an overdose. After wandering the streets of Madrid for five years, getting to know the world of crime, and after a couple of attempts at rehabilitation, I arrived at Betel.

Six months after entering, I had an experience that helped me understand that God was all I needed. When the opportunity arose to start a Betel house in Germany, I volunteered. There I met my wife Lina, a missionary with Amistad from Xalapa, Mexico; we got married, and our son Josua was born.

After six years, we decided to leave Germany to go to Russia and start Betel there.

From Russia, we opened centers in four cities, as well as in Kazakhstan and Ukraine. After nine years, we had to leave Russia and decided to start Betel in the nearest country, Finland. Later we also started Betel in Estonia.

We have lived in Finland for over 18 years. Our son studied here and married a lovely Finnish woman.

Looking back, I can only say that God has always been with us.

Lina

I am Mexican; my parents always taught us to believe in God. As a young woman in college, I was deeply curious to get to know that God, then one day I felt called to missions.

I had heard about Betel when I first began my journey of faith in Jesus Christ, through a missionary who spoke about everything that was happening in the Betel community: people on the brink of despair coming to faith and rescuing thousands of people marginalized by drugs. That missionary was Armando Garcia.

Betel was already 10 years old when I arrived in Madrid on January 6, 1996, with a great desire to serve. It was the heyday of missions; God's perfect time to expand beyond Spain. And it was on the mission field, in Germany, where I met my husband Mario, and we've been together for 28 years.

Later we left for Russia, where we experienced very intense times and saw God's provision and response to our calling, as well as the fruit of our labor. For reasons beyond our control, we had to leave there and went to Finland.

After serving all these years, the summary of what we have learned is that mankind's need is the same everywhere: to be free and to know God.



"The summary of what we have learned is that mankind's need is the same everywhere: to be free and to know God."



Betel community in Helsinki, Finland



Betel Stories

The Adventure of Our Lives

Ivan and Encarni Adan

We arrived in Betel in 1989, very young and, at the same time, broken. Ivan was deep in drug addiction, and Encarni was carrying the “baggage” of a broken family and a chaotic life.

At first, our only goal was for Ivan to kick his habit so he could lead a “normal” life. We never imagined that God had very different plans for us; His ways are always higher than ours. Over time, we both felt that the true purpose of our existence was to serve Jesus, being His feet and His hands on earth. So, we decided to stay at Betel to help others find the same hope that we had received.

Over the course of these 37 years, we have lived the greatest adventure of our lives. A journey that has taken us across three continents, blessed us with three wonderful children who fill us with pride, and given us a global family that has always stood by our side.

For the past 20 years, we have lived and served in Asia, where we’ve had the privilege of witnessing God’s power: restoring lives, healing wounds, and restoring hope to people whom society had already given up on. One example of this is the more than 40 children rescued from a childhood of abuse and deprivation; today they have a new life, many of them pursuing a college education and, above all, a bright future ahead.

Certainly, it has not been an easy journey. There have been battles, opposition, moments of discouragement, illness, and the sadness of seeing those who decide to give up without giving God a chance, walk away. However, the overall outcome is positive. Despite the challenges, we can make the prophet Samuel’s declaration our own: “Thus far the Lord has helped us.”



“We have had the privilege of witnessing God’s power: restoring lives, healing wounds, and restoring hope to people whom society had already given up on.”



Betel leaders in Asia



Betel Stories

Called to the Mission Field

Raul and Meike Reyes

One day at Bible school, God made a profound impact on my life regarding missions when I heard the teacher say, “If you want to bless your country, go!” It was a shock to me, since I loved Mexico, but God revealed to me that “it is more blessed to give than to receive,” and that if my nation gave me to bless other nations, my family to bless other families, and my congregation to bless other congregations, my country, my family, and my congregation would be doubly blessed.

And so at the age of 22 in 1990, I was sent by the Amistad Church in Puebla, Mexico, to Betel in Spain, where I stayed for five years, helping, living, and spending time with the young people in rehabilitation.

I don’t have the words to describe what God taught me and what He did during that entire time. It was amazing to see how the young people surrendered their lives to God and how their lives were radically changed, and soon they began going out as missionaries to other countries.

Meanwhile, in Germany, Meike received a letter from a German friend who had been with us in Spain, in which he wrote: “Meike, here in Betel, the Book of Acts is being lived out in real life and in full color! God is restoring drug addicts, and they are finding a new life!” So she traveled to Spain to visit Betel. We met there, and then she decided to go to Mexico to study at the Amistad Bible Institute in Puebla.

In 1995, I was sent with a team to Germany to open a new Betel center; that same year, Meike returned from Mexico and joined us to help with the new ministry!



“...Here in Betel, the Book of Acts is being lived out in real life and in full color!”

We were married in 1997, and together we have served the Lord for over 30 years; we have seen God’s hand at work continuously. Alongside us, the young men and women and the team that God has raised up are the ones who have made this ministry possible in Germany!

We give thanks to the Lord, because His faithfulness has surpassed anything we could have imagined!

And now the next step is the nation of Israel! May God bless you, Raul and Meike.



Men from Betel Germany

Charity Shops

A Value to Society

We offer a variety of services to the public, aimed both at supporting our residents and promoting environmentally responsible practices. These initiatives foster the personal development and inclusion of Betel’s men and women while creating a positive impact on society. For example, our charity shops promote environmental sustainability by collecting unwanted furniture, clothes and household items and giving them a opportunity to be reused. This activity promotes the circular economy, reduces waste, and offers the public the opportunity to purchase furniture and other household articles at affordable prices.

On the other hand, these activities also have significant therapeutic and educational value for residents. Participation in occupational tasks related to sorting, repairing, preparing, and selling items helps develop and reinforce social skills, work habits, responsibility, and personal autonomy.

In this way, our charitable businesses not only contribute to social and environmental well-being but also play a fundamental role in the recovery and social integration of the Betel residents.

What We Do

- › Second-hand shops
- › Furniture pick-up
- › Moving, cleaning, painting
- › Cafes y restaurants
- › English Academy
- › Book Store
- › Retreat Center





Cafes and restaurants





Betel Language Academy

English Learning

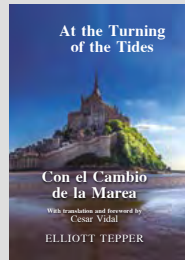
Since 2022, Betel has launched a training program at our headquarters in Madrid: a language school that offers dynamic English classes to small groups, both in-person and online, including specific courses for the preparation of official exams, primarily those from Cambridge University, or to improve language proficiency. In 2025, 17 students were enrolled.



Narnia Book Store

Reading in Another Dimension

Our bookstore offers a wide selection of Bibles and Christian literature. Titles such as “Don’t Hold Back” about Betel in Asia, “The Cost of the Kingdom” by Elliott Tepper, and “Rescue Shop within a Yard of Hell” by Stewart and Marie Dinnen are available.



Carolling

In the United Kingdom, Betel residents and volunteers take to the streets dressed in Christmas attire to sing carols, raise awareness about Betel’s work, and collect donations.



Betania Retreat Center

A Meeting Place

Located one kilometer south of Ciudad Real is the Betania Retreat Center, an ideal venue for retreats, camps, and conferences, set in a rustic, family-friendly environment. It features 28 rooms for couples with children, as well as 300 individual beds. It also features a campground with restrooms and showers and a large multipurpose summer auditorium that seats 3,000 people. There are also swimming pools, sports areas, and a playground. The dining service offers regional dishes and can accommodate up to 350 guests.

retirosbetania-betel.org





Scottish intern (left) with the cooking team in Betel Madrid



Spanish interns in the UK



American intern (second to left) in the UK

Local Volunteering

Part-time Service

In Betel, we offer the opportunity to participate part-time local volunteer work with flexible hours. You can help with activities such as:

- » Kitchen team
- » Food distribution
- » Admin or office work

En 2025, **44 local volunteers** collaborated with us, comprising 28 women and 16 men.



Voluntarios del reparto de alimentos o "Kilo de Amor"

International Internships

Living in Community

Through our International Internship Program, we welcome interns from different countries who wish to get a closer look at our work while living and participating in a Christian community with people whose lives are being restored from addiction.

Interns take part in daily activities, help with tasks, and share the experience of living in a community based on peer support and companionship.

The experience also allows interns to witness the process of recovery firsthand, as they see the transformation of residents in the Betel houses.



American intern in Malaga

Opportunities in

- » United Kingdom
- » Spain
- » Finland
- » Germany
- » India
- » Portugal
- » Brazil
- » Russia
- » USA

More information:
betelinterns.org

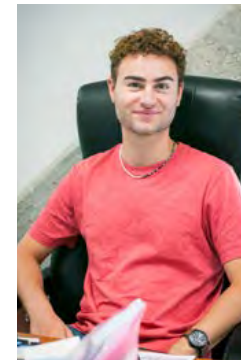


Testimony

"My internship has been much more than just a learning experience; it's been the perfect finale to my academic journey. I've gotten to see firsthand how the knowledge I've acquired through my studies comes to life when applied to real-world situations, with concrete responsibilities and real people. Each experience has helped strengthen my understanding of the work and of my calling."

I finish this internship with gratitude and satisfaction, aware that it has been a deeply enriching period, marking a turning point in my academic journey and preparing me to face the challenges ahead."

Pablo Hidalgo Perez
Political Science and Public Service
Rey Juan Carlos University



Testimony

"Here in Betel, I've learned the importance of building supportive communities for people who come from backgrounds marked by pain. They are given the opportunity to change their destiny here and, for many of them, they can finally take control of their own stories to forge a new identity: not as victims of an unjust system, but as living testimonies to the transformative power of love."

Miguel Culebras Garcia
Social and Cultural Antropology
Complutense University of Madrid

University Internships

Administration and Support

University interns are placed in Betel's administrative, accounting, and support departments, working at the headquarters in Madrid under the close supervision of their internship supervisors.

In 2024, Betel maintained Work-Based Training Agreements with secondary schools, as well as Educational Cooperation Agreements with various universities, notably:

- » Universidad Complutense de Madrid
- » Universidad Rey Juan Carlos
- » Universidad Pontificia Comillas
- » Lancaster University (United Kingdom)



Betel summer camp at the Betania Retreat Center



Gala Night at Betel Youth Camp "Take off - X"

Summer Camps

Children and Youth

Our children's and youth ministries are designed to promote the development of children and young people through ongoing activities such as education in values, nutrition classes, sports, music lessons, theater productions, summer camps and more.

Activities

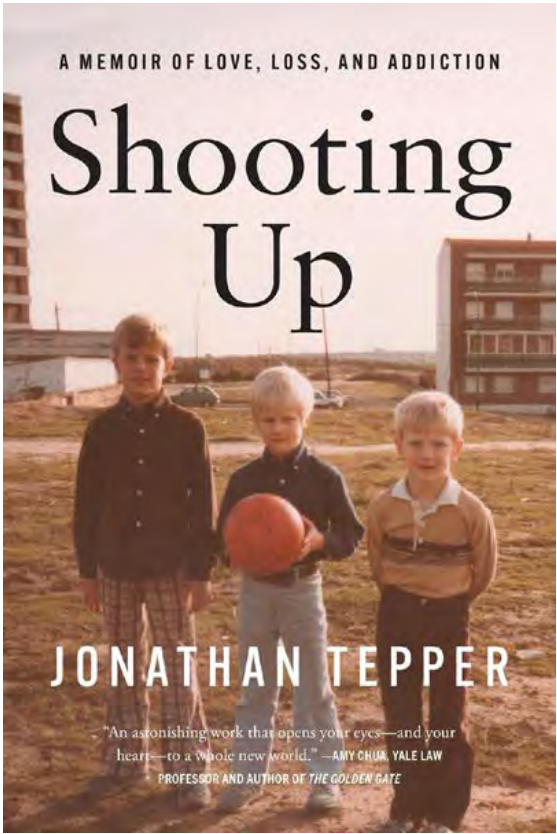
- › Camps
- › Values education
- › Social events
- › Sports
- › Nutrition classes
- › Music lessons
- › Theater productions

Summer Camps 2025

- › **For children age 6-12:** "Just Chance or Intelligent Design," held from June 29 to July 3, with 73 children and 62 camp counselors participating.
- › **For young people age 13 and up:** "Take off - X", August 6-10, with 140 campers participating.



Children's summer camp "Just Chance or Intelligent Design"



Jonathan Tepper’s Memoir tells the Story of Betel

‘Shooting Up’

In the shadows of Madrid’s San Blas neighborhood, an American missionary family puts down roots among heroin addicts and builds an unlikely church. Shooting Up is Jonathan Tepper’s searing memoir of a childhood spent in San Blas, where syringes littered playgrounds and his closest friends were recovering junkies twice his age.

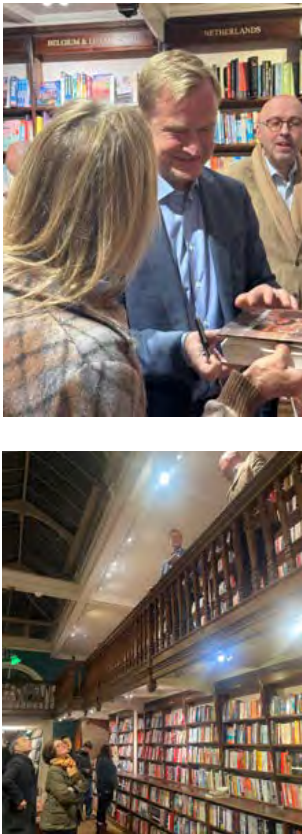
When Elliott and Mary Tepper arrive in 1985 with their four young sons, San Blas is ground zero of Europe’s heroin epidemic. While other children play soccer, Jonathan befriends bank robbers and former prostitutes. His heroes aren’t athletes but men like Raul and Jambri, charismatic ex-addicts who transform their lives through the revolutionary drug rehabilitation center the Teppers help found.

What begins as eight men in an apartment becomes Betel, now one of the world’s largest drug rehabilitation net-

works. But this isn’t a story of institutional triumph. It’s an intimate portrait of radical compassion amid the AIDS crisis, told through the eyes of a boy watching his parents choose the damned over the respectable, witnessing miracles and tragedies in equal measure.

Tepper writes with unflinching honesty about the magnetic pull of the streets, the seductive danger of heroin, and the complicated love between broken people healing together. His prose, elegant yet raw, captures both the squalor of addiction and the stubborn persistence of grace.

This is a memoir about choosing to see beauty in ruins, finding family among outcasts, and learning that the answer to suffering is always more love. It is a story of love and loss, but it is also a love letter to friends, family, and even to learning.



Reseñas

“Powerfully moving...an extraordinary memoir.”
George Stephanopoulos, Good Morning America and ABC Sunday News.

“Tepper’s story about addiction, AIDS, and his parents’ work with addicts in Spain in the 1990s is an insanely entertaining and wild account. In fact, it’s the most riveting memoir I’ve ever read.”
Frank Schaeffer, author of Crazy for God

Shooting Up is an astonishing work that opens your eyes—and your heart—to a whole new world, one that is as beautiful and inspiring as it is gritty and harrowing. Jonathan Tepper is an extraordinarily gifted writer who has somehow managed to write a memoir that is at once heartbreaking, gut-wrenching, and joyous.

Amy Chua, Yale Law professor and author of Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother and The Golden Gate

Quote from the book

“Suffering itself is meaningless. It is our response to it that gives it meaning, and it is not an easy task to thread the needle of suffering. The answer to suffering is always more love. We can love those who are hurting, and when we are grieving, we can treasure and remember those who have passed.”
(p. 266).

Feature story on Television Channel RTVE

Good News

The Spanish television network RTVE commemorated the 40th anniversary of Betel International’s work with a 15-minute segment on its program “Buenas Noticias” (Good News) on Sunday, May 25, 2025.

The segment was filmed at the organization’s headquarters in Madrid. It recounted the history of the social work’s inception and development through interviews with directors, staff members, and residents of Betel.



New Betel House in Rio de Janeiro

Growth in Brazil

On October 12, 2025, the team consisting of Claudio, Odair, Edgar, and Flavio arrived in Rio de Janeiro to open a new Betel community.

During the first two months, no men came in. Far from being a waste of time, this was a crucial phase for establishing the project: strengthening ties with local churches and beginning various initiatives. By the second month, the center had already become financially self-sufficient. Starting in the third month, men began arriving, with the number reaching eleven.

In December, a very important step was taken with the purchase of plot of land for the future Betel home in Rio de Janeiro.

Winning Documentary about Betel in the United Kingdom

Nominated at the Cannes World Film Festival

“21st Century Monastery” Duration: 75 minutes

Four years ago, a British filmmaker and her husband, supportive donors to Betel UK, were introduced to the charity through the transformed life of their work colleague’s son. Impressed with what they saw and experienced at our Nottingham and Birmingham centres, she inquired whether we would permit her to produce a full-length documentary about the work of Betel UK. Our team agreed, and the filming lasted more than 2 years. The film crew followed the stories of two lives. They chose to profile heroin-addicted Adrian from day three of his entering Betel Birmingham, all the way to his court sentencing for seri-

ous drug charges 20 months later. They also followed Nikki, whose cocaine and alcohol addiction led to seven miscarriages, one still-born child, and a daughter named Hope. The film introduces us to Betel leaders and recovery practices as Nikki attempts to regain custody of Hope from her legal guardians, Nikki’s parents.

In Spring 2025, 21st Century Monastery was nominated among four finalists for Best Feature Documentary at the Cannes World Film Festival. Since then, it has won three awards at additional festivals, and has been officially selected or nominated at seven others.





Betel

“Recognized as a public benefit organization”

- › We adhere to the principles of transparency and best practices
- › We report to the Ministry of the Interior
- › We publish our annual report on the association's website: betelespana.org/transparency
- › The financial statements for the 2025 fiscal year are audited by Ms. Maria Elena Castejon (R.O.A.C. No. 17,361)

Friends of Betel

We are extremely grateful for the commitment and cooperation of the organizations that support Betel, both public and private. We would also like to acknowledge the individuals whose donations contribute to the growth and sustainability of our organization. Thank you!



F.A.Q.

What is Betel's purpose?

Providing refuge and care for vulnerable individuals struggling with addiction or facing social exclusion.

How long does the program last?

We recommend a stay of 12 to 18 months. During this time, residents make progress in learning to care for themselves and others.

How is it funded?

Our program is completely free of charge and is supported by revenues generated from our occupational projects and activities, as well as through donations and grants.

How can I enter?

Contact the Betel office closest to you or visit our website: betel.org.

Our contact number in Spain: **900 264 840**

How can I help?

Every donation helps us fulfill our mission.

Donate furniture and household items

We offer a pickup service through our website: rastrobetel.org

Give

Bank transfer:

ES16 2100 3279 0413 0026 6837 (CaixaBank)

Bizum: 09034

Spain

Algeciras

C/ Segismundo Moret, 7
11201 Algeciras • Cadiz
T. +34 956 58 70 08

Alicante

Av. Pintor Gaston Castello, 40
Bajo
03014 Alicante
T. +34 965 17 12 47

Almeria

C/ Hermanos Pinzon, 37 Local
04005 Almeria
T. +34 950 23 41 27

Barcelona

C/ Santa Llucia 10 Bajo
08191 Rubi • Barcelona
T. +34 93 588 63 24

Bilbao

Plaza Aita Patxi 2, Local 7
Entrada Errondoko
48015 Bilbao • Bizkaia
T. +34 94 416 26 17

Cadiz

C/ San Bruno, 28
11100 San Fernando • Cadiz
T. +34 856 17 61 88

Ceuta

Paseo de la Marina, 26
51001 Ceuta
T. +34 956 51 07 44

Ciudad Real

C/ Toledo, 34
13003 Ciudad Real
T. +34 926 22 89 13

Cuenca

C/ Zaragoza, 2 Bajo
16003 Cuenca
T. +34 969 21 29 33

Granada

Av. America, 53 Bajo
Barrio Zaidin
18008 Granada
T. +34 958 13 14 10

Guadalajara

C/ Wenceslao Argumosa, 13
Esq. Dr. Fleming
19003 Guadalajara
T. +34 949 22 97 69

Huelva

Avda. de Cristobal Colon, 82
21002 Huelva
T. +34 959 28 21 91

Madrid • Headquarters

Antonia Rodriguez Sacristan, 8
28044 Madrid
T. +34 91 525 22 22

Malaga

Av. Jose Ortega y Gasset, 286
Poligono El Viso • 29006 Malaga
T. +34 952 33 49 26

Mallorca

C/ Francisco Fiol y Juan, 7, Bajo
07010 Palma de Mallorca
T. +34 971 75 38 82

Motril

Plaza San Sebastian, 3
18600 Motril • Granada
T. +34 958 60 02 06

Orense

C/ Nuestra Señora de la Sainza
8 Bajo
32005 Orense
T. +34 988 25 37 51

Seville

C/ Jardin de la Isla, 6-M, Expo-local
41014 Seville
T. +34 95 468 08 45

Tarragona

Trav. Nou de Sant Josep, 17
43204 Reus • Tarragona
T. +34 977 77 69 83

Valencia

Ctra. D'Escriba 6 Bajo
46007 Valencia
T. +34 96 341 04 33

Zaragoza

Av. Arias, 35
50010 Zaragoza
T. +34 976 53 48 84

Internacional

Africa

North Africa
T. +34 956 51 07 44

South Africa

Suite 197, Private Bag x4,
Menlo Park 0102 • Pretoria
T. +27 793 84 87 61

Asia

India
T. +91 124 351 11 31

Kazakhstan

T. +7 778 328 7375

Mongolia

Songinhairhan District
Area 3, 1-10
Ulaanbaatar City
T. +976 997 96824

Nepal

T. +977 980 106 0066

America

Brazil
Alameda dos Eucaliptos, 750
Chacara Seabra
06900-000
Embu-Guaçu • Sao Paulo
T. +55 11 967 369 058

Mexico

Ferrocarril, 3
Lomas de San Juan 72700
Cuautlancingo • Puebla
T. +52 22 22302445

Europa

Germany
Wasbeker Str 276
24537 Neumünster
T. +49 4321 179495

Bulgaria

Ul. Pop Bogomil, 49
Sofia 1202
T. +359 2 83 52 68

Finland

Lyranpolku, 1
01480 Vantaa • Finland
T. +358 445 477 767

France

72 Rue Monte Cristo
13004 • Marseille
T. +33 4 910 25415

Portugal

Av. 25 de Abril de 1974, 5A
2800-300 Almada • Lisboa
T. +35 121 276 3168

United Kingdom

Windmill House
Weatheroak Hill
Alvechurch • Birmingham
B48 7EA
T. +44 121 594 0650

Czech Republic

U Hrbítova, 939
27801 Kralupy nad Vltavou
T. +42 0731 501 150

Russia

Ambulatonaya Street 53,
Novo-Ivanovskoe
Mokovskaya Oblast
143026 Moscow
T. +7 915 322 88 25

Oceania

Australia
PO Box 806 Lilydale
3140 Victoria
T. +61 1300 904 505



Betel

C/ Antonia Rodriguez
Sacristan, 8
28044 Madrid
+34 91 525 2222
madrid@betel.org
betel.org