



## FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND

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### “FRIENDS – SUPPORTING THE CHRISTIANS” March 2013 update from the FHL

- **FHL Chairman, Michael Whelan**  
Michael is receiving daily radiotherapy at the QE hospital in Birmingham, interspersed with chemotherapy and blood transfusions. The daily routine of travel is tiring, despite a rota of drivers; FHL ‘Friends’ and others. Please keep Michael and Norah in your prayers.
- **“Christians in the Holy Land – Improving their lives”. Everyone is welcome!**  
Organised by the FHL, this event has already attracted over 100 bookings, from the Midlands to the South Coast. 7pm – 9pm Tuesday 19 March. Westminster Cathedral Hall. Chaired by Archbishop Vincent Nichols, speakers include Sir Vincent Fean, HM Consul General in Jerusalem; Bishop of Southwark, Rt. Revd. Christopher Chessun and Laila Asfoura, a Palestinian Christian and FHL representative, living in Bethlehem. Admission is free, by ticket only. Tickets can be obtained from the FHL office. Please book as soon as possible and tell all your friends and other parishioners. Five minute walk from Victoria. **Details attached.**
- **FHL Distributions in the Holy Land**  
Among distributions in the last few weeks have been funds to renovate the garden at St. Martha’s House. This will add a new dimension to the visits of the ladies, who will not only have an area to sit outside in the warmer months but also somewhere to grow their own vegetables, which will offer exercise and mental stimulation. This in turn will reduce the costs of supplying lunch.  
Other beneficiaries of a few thousand shekels have been Gloria Bandak, a 73 year old who required an urgent Craniotomy operation but who was without sufficient funds. Similarly, Nasri Anton Naser from St. Joseph’s Parish, a 43 year old with a 12 year old son and 9 year old daughter had a heart attack, requiring subsequent heart surgery in Jordan
- **Visits to the most needy families**  
Our representatives in the Holy Land recently visited the families whom the FHL are supporting on a regular basis with 500 shekels each month, towards day to day essentials. They were shocked by how the living conditions had deteriorated and at least three home improvement projects are being finalised, including urgent improvements to an outside bathroom. If any individual or Group would like to sponsor any of these families, please contact the office. Thank you to those who have already made such a commitment.

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- **Volunteer Nurses or Carers required**

Excellent news! Following the appeal last month, a volunteer has come forward and arrangements are being made to provide support to those in the care home in Taybeh.

- **Sean's Travels**

February was a quiet month according to the weather man and indeed Sean's travels have been reasonably quiet too. However, the office activity has more than made up for this. As we write this update, Sean is heading back from addressing a meeting of returned Holy Land pilgrims at St Peter's Hazel Grove, Stockport and encouraged by their Parish Priest, Father Peter Sharrocks, a group will be organised to support the work of FHL there. Thanks to Pat Revans for galvanising the support in Shrewsbury Diocese. Next stop West Kirby and an evening talk there.

- **Peter's Travels**

Peter recently had a valuable day in London that included catching up with some of our local supporters and attending the Holy Land Forum to share experiences with CAFOD, Missio, Pax Christi, ACN, the Catholic Bishops Conference and others. It included a report on the recent Holy Land Co-ordination Conference in Bethlehem. He is off to Uxbridge on 24 March to support their first fundraising initiative – a Lenten lunch.

- **Jersey**

Jersey is the latest location where the FHL have an opportunity to spread the message. Peter is travelling there next month to speak to an ecumenical group from parishes all over the Island and then the following evening to local members of the Catenian Association.

- **News of Patrons**

Following his retirement as Archbishop of Canterbury, The Rt. Revd and Rt. Hon The Lord Williams of Oystermouth has agreed to continue as a Patron of the FHL. We are delighted with his ongoing support.

- **FHL Diocesan Co-ordinators**

The latest Diocese for discussions is Ely, where the Revd. Alan Partridge is very enthusiastic and has arranged for Peter to speak to his local Deanery Synod this week.

- **Crib boxes – time to empty!!**

The last few weeks to empty your olive wood crib boxes please, ideally by 15 March.

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- **A Lenten Prayer – repeated from last month.**  
Below are a series of suggested bidding prayers proposed by one of our volunteers. Why not speak to your Parish Priest, Rector or Vicar about including some of them during Lent?

### **PLEASE PRAY FOR CHRISTIANS IN THE HOLY LAND**

#### **Please join us in praying:**

- For young people that they get the educational opportunities that they need to give them a good start to life.
- For those struggling with poverty, poor housing and unemployment.
- For people with health issues; that they get the treatment and care they need.
- For the elderly suffering with loneliness and isolation.
- For the Clergy and the Church serving in the Holy Land, that they will be strengthened in their ministry of supporting the Christian community and bringing the love of Christ to those in need.

#### **Please also pray:**

- For a long-term peaceful solution to the situation in the Holy Land that is fair to all.
- That, as Christians, we can support our brothers and sisters in Christ in their time of need.
- For the FHL Management Team, all volunteers and the team of advisors living in the Holy Land; that the financial resources that we can provide will be used wisely and for those most in need.

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