



FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND

Helping Christians in the Holy Land

May 2015 update from FHL

Fr. Lawrence Jones RIP

It is with great sadness that we learned of the death of Fr. Lawrence, the Parish Priest at St Robert's Morpeth and FHL Diocesan Coordinator for the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. His Requiem Mass is at midday on Monday 4th May at St. Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle. Please remember Fr. Lawrence and his family in your prayers.

A Message from FHL's Director of Development, Vicki Urch

'My first five months have been a whirlwind of activity as I get to know how FHL works and understand the structures of the Catholic and Anglican churches. I have also been contacting Diocesan Coordinators and Ambassadors, developing our regionalisation initiative and putting together funding bids, and I even fitted in a short visit to the Holy Land. It's been brilliant, and extremely busy. In the next few months one of my focus areas will be to contact FHL groups around the country and visit as many as I can. I expect to call many of you in the next few weeks to arrange my visits, but if you want to be one of the first on my list, call me on 07539 851099 or email vicki.urch@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk. I look forward to meeting you all.'

Creating greater challenges

The financial year ending 31st March has revealed another surge in the growth of FHL, thanks to the generosity of you, our supporters, helping our Christian brothers and sisters in the Holy Land. Initial results, subject to audit, indicate a 36% growth in donations over the previous year to nearly £600,000, and an increase of 40% in FHL's grants to the Holy Land. Total costs have remained steady at 15% of income.

So what is the challenge? It is to maintain that growth for the next 12 months, and to keep on track to reach our £2 million a year goal within our current 5 year strategic plan. That requires an increase of 33% every year. With your help to spread our message across parishes and communities throughout the UK, this can be achieved, and so many more Christian families in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel can benefit.

Projects in the Holy Land

At the recent meeting of the Management Committee on 24th April a record 33 individual cases were approved, and since then a further 19 have been received for approval from the FHL Committee in the Holy Land. Peter Rand writes 'Each of these projects will help either individual families in great need or a project which will directly benefit Christian families in the community. Many enable medical operations to take place and medications to be provided. Others fund essential home repairs, education or employment opportunities. The FHL commitment to supporting more and more families on a regular basis is growing. Our next challenge is to meet our

commitment to pay school fees and university places for between 200 – 300 children in September. Please be as generous as you can.

A standing order of just £20 per month, gift-aided, can fund a child's education for a whole year - and you can sponsor an individual child. Please consider what more you can do and spread the word to your friends and family members.

Reaching more pilgrims in the Holy Land

Thank you to Shepherds Tours, based in Jerusalem, and the Khoury family, for printing a fresh supply of FHL brochures for distribution to their pilgrims while in the Holy Land. Shepherds Tours are the official ground handler for the Anglican Diocese in Jerusalem, and manage local arrangements for Lightline in the UK.

FHL's first Regional Director

Congratulations to Phil Roberts, the first FHL Regional Director to be appointed. Phil will cover the two Dioceses of Liverpool as well as Blackburn, Carlisle, Lancaster, Manchester, Salford and Sodor & Man. Recently FHL Chairman, Jim Quinn, and Director of Development, Vicki Urch, met Phil and the recently nominated Diocesan Coordinators in the Blackburn and Carlisle Dioceses. Recruitment for further Regional Directors continues, including advertisements in the Church Times and Catena, the monthly magazine of the Catenian Association.

Portsmouth RC Diocese

Peter Rand recently joined Deacon Iain MacFirbhisigh, Diocesan Coordinator for the Portsmouth RC Diocese, and his wife Cheryl on a road-show to Portsmouth, Basingstoke and Reading, promoting the Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This is being organised by Deacon Iain, and will be led by Bishop Philip Egan on 22nd November – 2nd December. It is already well over half full, and is being supported by Friends of the Holy Land. We're arranging visits to our projects and meetings with local Christian families while in Bethlehem.

If you would like more information, contact Deacon Iain or Cheryl on 01534 725963, or email [blessings41@gmail.com](mailto: blessings41@gmail.com)

Galloway Diocese

FHL now has our first foothold in Scotland, with the appointment of Fr. David Borland from Dumfries as the FHL Diocesan Coordinator by the newly ordained Bishop of Galloway, Bishop William Nolan. Peter Rand said 'I was very pleased to travel to Ayr a few weeks ago to meet with Bishop William, Fr. David and local FHL Ambassador, Nick Langford. They have exciting plans to spread the FHL message across the Galloway Diocese and then into other Dioceses in Scotland. With so much enthusiasm for our work from returning pilgrims, I am confident that FHL will grow quickly north of the border'.

Kensington FHL

Two dates for your diaries if you live in the Greater London area .. or maybe beyond!
Saturday 16 May. 7.30pm. Bollywood Night at Our Lady of Victories Church, Kensington High Street, London W8. 'Food, wine and dance - Bollywood style!' Tickets £20 each.

Friday 19 June. 7.30pm Midsummer Garden Party

For more details email [fhlkensington@hotmail.co.uk](mailto: fhlkensington@hotmail.co.uk), or call 020 7937 4778 or 0774 684 7126

CRM

Our new Customer Relationship Management system helps FHL keep up-to-date with details of our Friends as well as our many activities. It's being used by our loyal volunteers in the FHL office, led by Office Manager Karen Baxter. 'The system will enable the team at Kenilworth maintain better contact with our supporters and record our progress', says Karen.

Please make sure the FHL office knows your current contact details.

DVD 'The Suffering Church'

Copies of the DVD are available from the office. This 20 minute DVD is designed to be shown to groups who want to hear the views of those in the Holy Land about the plight of the Christian community and the work of FHL over here to help them. It includes contributions from Archbishop Justin Welby, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop Suheil from Jerusalem and the Latin Patriarch, His Beatitude Fouad Twal and footage from many FHL projects.

FHL Logo

The FHL logo is distinctive, and can be used on all promotional material for events and communications. However, the correct version should always be used. Low, medium and high resolution versions are available from the office - just ask for the version you want. Guidelines will be issued shortly, reminding everyone that the logo should not be used in any political context.

Visit to the Holy Land

Look out for the next issue of the FHL Newsletter, published in early June. It will include the latest news from FHL's projects in the Holy Land after Peter Rand's brief visit on 10th - 14th May.

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