



FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND

May 2016

Monthly Update

FHL reaches Iraqi Christian refugees

Our Iraqi Christian support programme is well under way. Guided by Fr. Mario from the Latin Patriarchate, a hundred of the most needy Christian refugees living in the poorest area of Amman are on our list for help.

Many of these families have fled violence and persecution in their homeland, leaving everything behind other than what they could carry. Now FHL is providing them with the basics - food vouchers, medicines, clothes, tables, chairs, cookers and heaters. Look out for the next FHL Newsletter, distributed at the end of May, for more information about this important new project. And of course we'll welcome donations to enable us to reach as many families as possible.

Four hundred families receive FHL Easter gift

Each Easter or Christmas we ask the leaders in the Christian communities in the Holy Land, mostly Latin and Anglican parish priests, to give us more names of families in the greatest need to add to those already known to us. This year around four hundred named families received an Easter gift of \$100 (about £70) from FHL, to help them buy something extra to celebrate the Holy Season.

A call for more FHL Ambassadors

One of FHL's key aims is raising awareness of the plight of Christians in the Holy Land and the formation of parish groups, with the active support of local clergy. In the last twelve months we've been able to increase the number of dioceses with Diocesan Co-ordinators, clergy appointed by their bishop to liaise with FHL and help two-way communications. We now need to add to these by increasing support on the ground in Anglican and Catholic dioceses. We are looking for interested Christians to assist us in a range of activities, from helping to set up parish groups to showing the FHL film and giving a short explanation of FHL's work in parishes. If you're interested, contact Vicki Urch 07539851099 - vicki.urch@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk

St Luke's Hospital Nablus

For the last three years, with support from a charitable trust of £25,000 per year, FHL has been funding medical treatment for needy Christians at St. Luke's Hospital in Nablus. In that time hundreds of Christians have had medication, small operations and investigations that otherwise would have been beyond their means. This is the last year that the trust has committed to support the hospital, and while of course we'll ask them to continue their support, we need to consider alternative sources so that this essential project at St Luke's Hospital can continue. Please help our search for new funding. Do you know of a charitable trust that might be interested in this type of project? Or an organisation looking for a fundraising focus? If so, please tell Vicki Urch.

A diary date - Fr Jamal's visit

Fr. Jamal Khader, well-respected Chairman of FHL's Holy Land Committee and Rector of the Latin Seminary in Beit Jala, will be in London for a few days, and has agreed to talk about the lives of the Christians in the Holy Land and how FHL responds to their needs. 'A View from Bethlehem' will take place at Our Lady of Victories Church, 235a Kensington High Street, London, W8 6SA, strating at 6pm. There will be more details in our next Monthly Update.

'Go Lean in Lent' sponsorship opportunity

Peter Rand writes: 'Well, 1st May, Easter Sunday in the Orthodox tradition in the Holy Land, has been and gone, and so has Lent for my fellow FHL Trustee, Charles Reed, and me. We set ourselves an ambitious target back on 10th February, Ash Wednesday, to lose 20lbs in 12 weeks. It all seemed so easy then, but the 'distractions' of extended overseas holidays and visits to the Holy Land, where Eastern hospitality cannot be refused, have limited our achievements to a combined 28lbs. So we still have 12lbs to lose between us, which we're determined to do. The sponsorship will close on 31 May, so please be generous either with a donation direct to the FHL office or via the FHL website.

Follow the link <https://mydonate.bt.com/events/leaninlent/289650>, or donate through the FHL web-site - www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk

FHL's first Lambeth Conference

On 7th April some sixty FHL Diocesan Co-ordinators, Regional Co-ordinators, Diocesan Representatives and Ambassadors came together for the charity's first Diocesan Co-ordinator's Conference. At the event, hosted by the Church of England at Lambeth Palace, the delegates reviewed FHL's progress since its launch in 2009 and the many challenges it faces as it reaches out to even more Christians in that troubled region.

Chaired by two of FHL's Patrons, Archbishop Bernard Longley and Bishop Christopher Chessun, the day's programme focused on learning, discussion and meeting like-minded people. As well as hearing from the national team and seeing FHL's film, delegates took part in group discussions and a Q&A session to help shape the charity's future direction, and to ensure that we achieve our objective of maintaining a secure, resilient Christian presence in the Holy Land. Let the FHL Office know if you didn't attend and would like to see the information pack from the day.

FHL Communications Manager

Marion Homer joins FHL as our Communications Manager early in June. This is a new post with a long list of communication challenges, and you'll hear more about these in the next Monthly Update. Marion's priorities will be a more effective website, and engaging with Anglican and Catholic diocesan communications teams to improved coverage of the FHL message. Marion will work initially from Monday to Wednesday each week.

May is 'moving month' for FHL

We're moving to larger offices in Kenilworth. The new office will be taking shape in May, but please use our current address until 1st June. The additional space will cost only around 20% extra for double the space. We'll have a meeting room for the first time, and extra storage, both very welcome now that we've grown so much.

The new address will be **Friends of the Holy Land, Farmer Ward Road, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2DH**. The telephone number will remain unchanged - **01926 512980** - but we have a new email address. It's now office@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk.

Friends of the Holy Land

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Registered charity No1130054

Friends of the Holy Land was founded in 2009 to help and support the Christian population of the Holy Land. We work to improve education, employment, health and housing, and to develop a resilient and enduring Christian community there.