

The McCabe Educational Trust supporting children in Bethany



Jeel al-Amal Boys Home

Jeel al-Amal (Generation of Hope) School and Boys Home was founded in 1972 by two Christian Palestinians, Alice and her husband Basil Sahhar in the village of Bethany to the east of Jerusalem. Today, there are more than 300 children in the primary school and 100 boys living in the Boys Home. A visit to Bethany now requires a lengthy detour around the new Israeli security wall. When this wall is completed, Bethany will be separated from Jerusalem and pilgrims may no longer be able to visit. McCabe parties who do make the journey are made very welcome and the McCabe Educational Trust helps maintain relationships with visitors who would like to get involved in a practical way.



The boys come from Jerusalem and from towns and villages in the Palestinian territories. Many are orphans or have endured terrible domestic problems. While there is little material wealth, the love and devotion of the staff are reflected in the perfect manners and sunny dispositions of the children. Some older boys go on to further education at secondary schools and get jobs which would have been impossible without the help of Jeel. Many have gone on to help their families financially, which can be vital set against the dire economic situation that prevails in the Palestinian territories today.

Jeel al Amal changes lives and many are the pilgrims who over the years have been moved and amazed by its work. The McCabe Educational Trust supports the running costs of Jeel with a monthly remittance and funds improvements with capital grants.



Over the summer the McCabe Educational Trust linked up with the charitable teaching organisation, Unipal, to send a team of five experienced volunteer teachers from the UK to run a summer school in Bethany. The objective of the programme was to help the children with their English and also to have fun in arts and crafts sessions. Activities included making puppets and collages, cooking (the Palestinian children were particularly interested to experience English cuisine!) and painting and drawing. The boys at Jeel painted a large mural on the playground wall and the teachers accompanied the children on trips into Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah. This summer school will now become an annual event.

The volunteers were amazed at what the staff achieve with the children, especially in the light of the political difficulties and restrictions that Bethany experiences, not to mention the lack of resources and funding.. They were particularly impressed at how the older boys act as mentors to the younger children and help take responsibility for their welfare. All of the volunteers felt that the level of teaching at Jeel and the care given to often vulnerable children was exceptional.

Volunteer Rachel Holmes writes:

"It is hard to sum up what an amazing time I had in Bethany. I have learned so much, and I know that the skills I have acquired will now be put into practice in my teaching at home. What we gave, as volunteers, is only a fraction of what we received".

The work of the Trust and the generous support of our contributors, all become worthwhile when we see the smiles on faces of children and from the sense of achievement that comes from knowing that we are making a real difference to the lives of these boys and girls.



Lazarus Home for Girls

Let us introduce you to a remarkable woman and a remarkable work ...



“My name is Samar Sahhar; I was born in Jerusalem the eldest of six children. At the time of my birth my parents had founded the Jeel al Amal orphanage for boys in the village of Bethany near Jerusalem. It is not usual in Palestine for sexes to mix, but I grew up with all the boys and joined them inside the orphanage with games of football or marbles. Of course outside the orphanage we were forbidden to mix. Later in life I worked closely with my father Basil, assisting him with the running of the home. I gained first hand knowledge of the work God had given him in rescuing orphaned and destitute boys and after my father’s death, my mother and I continued to run the home.”

OUR STORY BEGINS

In November 1997, Alan Anderson visited Jeel al Amal and witnessed a heart-rending moment when four children were brought to the home, two boys and two girls. The boys were taken in but there was no place for the girls. In this moment, “The Friends of Lazarus” had its beginning. Alan found the funds and Samar rose to the new challenge. An apartment was rented and adapted for use as an orphanage and the name Lazarus adopted. After eleven years the home has grown to four apartments which house approximately forty girls, four housemothers and Samar. Conditions are cramped, sanitation poor, and the rent high. Even so, Lazarus provides a safe and loving environment and the girls are thriving. All of this has been made possible by ongoing financial support from The Friends of Lazarus, the McCabe Educational Trust and visiting pilgrim parties who include a visit to Lazarus in their itinerary - visiting the “Living Stones” of the land.

A NEW HOME

A new Lazarus home for girls is now emerging in Bethany. The Friends have purchased the land, employed a local architect and construction is well advanced. The shell of the building is now nearing completion and subject to continuing funding the girls will move in during 2009.

Various self-financing and money generating schemes are planned for the ground floor of the new building including a clinic to serve the local community. The basement will eventually house a laundry, store rooms and a kitchen. The girls will be accommodated on three floors in bedrooms sleeping four. There will be accommodation for housemothers and an apartment for Samar. There is room for the girls to play both inside and out and from the upper floors there are wonderful views over the Judean hills.

OUR CHALLENGE

Our target is to fund the completion of two floors of the new building allowing the girls to move in. The McCabe Educational Trust and McCabe Pilgrimages contributed £100,000 towards the project during 2008 and we aim to raise a further £200,000 before the end of the Oberammergau Passion Play season in 2010. In faith “The Friends of Lazarus” have taken on an enormous task and have brought the project close to fulfilment. We are delighted to come on board and to lay this need before McCabe travellers.

**This is an example of the work of the McCabe Educational Trust.
Together we aim to leave a footprint on the paths we travel.**



Let the McCabe Educational Trust be a channel for your charitable giving

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published January 2009