

the promise

News about our Covenant With the Poor

The Catholic Parish of Hampshire Downs

BEHIND THE WALL

A diabetic clinic for Abu Dis

Abu Dis is a small town in the suburbs east of Jerusalem, next to the Mount of Olives. Because of its proximity to Jerusalem people have always gone to the city to go to school, to work, to the cinemas and the theatre, and, if they were ill, to the hospitals. But they can't anymore, because the people who live in Abu Dis live on the wrong side of the Separation Wall, which has cut off the town from the main part of Jerusalem since 2002.

The health situation in Abu Dis is very difficult. If the patients cannot get permission to pass through the terminals in the Wall in order to visit the hospitals in Jerusalem, they can no longer to get the specialist care they need. Even if they do get permits, there is no guarantee that they will be allowed to pass. Doctors in Abu Dis currently estimate that of the people given referral letters to the local hospitals in Jerusalem, only one third actually get there. And to make the short journey they have to travel miles out of their way.

There has been a large increase in stress-related illnesses, such as diabetes, in and around Abu Dis, including among children. However, there is currently no diabetic clinic in the town or in the nearby villages. So, for the next two appeals of our Covenant with the Poor, which was renewed again at Pentecost, we will be seeking to raise £8,910 for equipping, and running for one year, a diabetes clinic in Abu Dis, through the charity **Camden Abu Dis Friendship Foundation** (CADFA, registered charity 1112717). More over...



The Separation Wall

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No. 19

Pentecost 2009

Abu Dis is not a name you may recognise, but mention the town of Bethany, and the place sounds more familiar - the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary and a place where Jesus often rested and was made welcome.

There was occupation and conflict then in the Holy Land, as there is now. The high wall that today cuts relentlessly through the landscape is more than just a symbol of separation, it is a concrete barrier that hardens the divisions between communities.

The politics are, as always, complex, highly emotive and seemingly intractable, but behind them the human needs are simple, real and urgent. And they are needs which we can actually help answer by raising a very modest sum of money to equip and run a diabetic clinic in Abu Dis.

Thank you.



It is the aim of CADFA to promote awareness of the human rights situation in Abu Dis and to work to change it. One of the practical ways they do this is through their health links group which supports doctors and patients in Abu Dis by

providing funds to help the clinics, and to buy medicine and equipment. For example, CADFA has raised money for an eye clinic for people who can't get to the eye hospital in Jerusalem, and has provided money for basic medicines for one of the clinics in Abu Dis that has reported that, with rising poverty, some people cannot afford the usual prices for medicines.

The health links group also supports an out-of-hours and emergency clinic which is organised on a rota by Abu Dis doctors from different clinics. The clinic was started when Abu Dis had no emergency clinic because of the Separation Wall. CADFA discussed the possibilities of extra hours of opening with the existing small clinics (it did not prove possible) before helping a new clinic to open for evenings and holidays, which doctors there have chosen to call the Camden Clinic.

Following the establishment in October 2008 of a 24-hour medical service funded by Norway at the Al Muqassed Clinic, the Camden Clinic continues to have a role, because its doctors have specialisms not found elsewhere in Abu Dis and because they can also treat patients who do not have Palestinian health insurance. CADFA are helping them to subsidise the cost of some basic medicines.

In 2009, the main effort of the health links group has been to raise money for medical supplies for Gaza, during and following the massive Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip. This money has been sent through the Abu Dis Committee to Support Gaza, which buys medicine from Palestinian medical manufacturers in the West Bank and sends it to Gaza with Palestinian Health Relief.



A checkpoint in the Separation Wall

A Doctor' Story

Today 23/05/2006 Mr. Shehadah Ahmad Mohsen 52 years old , as usually every Tuesday he wanted to go to Al Makassed hospital in Jerusalem for follow up because he has diabetic foot (he is diabetic , and has hypertention and ischemic heart disease), but all the ways and gates were closed. He tried to go through Shek Saad check point, but the soldiers who were there stopped him and started hit him by there guns over his head .He started to bleed and then he died .

Shehadah Mohsen was a poor man, have boys and girls, his faults was that he wanted to have treatment in his hospital that lockated over his city Jerusalem.

Dr. Abdullah Abu Hilal

Abu Dis

23/05/2006

To all concerned about the plight of the Palestinians, and of special interest to all who recently participated on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, you are invited to a showing of the film

La Terre Parle Arabe (The Land Speaks Arabic)

This award-winning, dramatic documentary tells the graphic story of the background and build-up to the expulsion of the Palestinians from their ancestral villages, now in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank from the beginning of the 20th century until 1948.

The showing will be on Monday July 6th in the Parish Centre, St Peters Catholic Church, Jewry Street, Winchester at 7.30pm. There will be refreshments and discussion. All welcome.

Afghanaid . . update . .

The money you raised for Afghanaid's programme of girls' literacy, health, rights and vocational training has now been received by their head office in Afghanistan, and they are gearing up to start the groups you are helping to fund (more information in the next Promise). Here, **Melanie Brown** provides a quick reminder of the important work the peer groups do.

"When I recently visited peer groups in Samangan, I asked the children, "What are your aspirations and hope for the future?" One child responded, "We must serve other children by educating them and by encouraging other children to go to school and get educated. We wish to serve the nation in the long run."

For each child in a peer group, at least one further child and an adult generally receives indirect training. The adults who have become involved are now influential supporters of Afghanaid's work and of children's rights. This was the case for Awlad-d-Hazarbigm who is a leader of the 'shura' (traditional council), and whose four children attended the peer groups. After initial reservations, he changed his views when he saw the project's positive impact on the lives of children, and he is now an active supporter and advocate for the project. He now attends all the training sessions and has even donated a room in his house to be used by the group.

One of the major tangible achievements of the project has been involvement of the project's graduates, boys and girls aged 18, in Community Development Councils, a democratic local governance body elected under the auspices of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development's National Solidarity Programme, as well as taking leading roles in Afghanaid's development activities such as Women Resource Centres and Self Help Groups.



Out of school children often have to labour from an early age. Peer groups help communities understand the importance of educating children.

A number of the peer group graduates have found employment with the government of Afghanistan and other international and local NGOs. Additionally, four peer group graduates have been admitted to universities in India and Afghanistan, with financial support provided by the government of Afghanistan. Najeebullah, Ghulam Husin, Nasir, Geta are all currently on the way to obtaining their Bachelor's degrees: Najeebullah and Nasir are studying computer science and economics respectively in India, Ghulam Husain and Geta are enrolled at universities in Afghanistan."

You will also find this issue of the *Promise*, in full colour, on the Parish website: www.peternet.org.uk

Emmaus Hampshire Community comes alive

On Tuesday 3rd March the Emmaus Hampshire Community at Bar End opened its doors to the public for the first time, just two weeks after the keys were handed over to Alison Thompson, Chair of Trustees, by the builders. The event was attended by Terry Waite, President of Emmaus (UK), and an estimated 600 people came to see for themselves the stylish but simple design of the Community buildings. All departed impressed.

Within a week the fourth member of the Community Management Team had joined bringing with him the first three Companions - the Emmaus name for formerly homeless people. These three came from other Emmaus Communities (there are now 19 open in the UK) and their experience is proving invaluable in helping to prepare Emmaus Hampshire for trading. By Easter the number of Companions had increased to eleven, including the first local homeless people new to the Emmaus movement.

The recently acquired van (below), funded by the £11,000 raised by our Covenant With the Poor in 2007, can now be seen buzzing around the area gathering in donated goods destined for resale in the Community Shop. By early May there was enough stock available to prompt the opening of the Shop and its integral Green Roof Café. Thereafter ongoing donations of furniture, clothes, bric-a-brac,



Terry Waite speaking at the opening

books, media (CDs, DVDs and videos), musical instruments and sheet music will be vital to the ongoing success of the enterprise.

Emmaus Hampshire is springing to life!

The Emmaus van funded by our Covenant With the Poor



Kindly donated by the Catholic Parish of Hampshire Downs