



## NEWSLETTER

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

April 2010

### *News from around the Diocese*

#### **St. Andrew's Church hosts Music Night with Strathclyde Choir**

Tuesday, 13 April 2010 – St. Andrew's Church, Ramallah, hosted the Strathclyde University Choir from Glasgow, Scotland, and students of the Episcopal Music School in Ramallah for a Music Night in the church hall. The varied program which alternated instrumental music of the Music School students and the vocal excellence of the Strathclyde Choir attracted a large audience of Ramallah residents.



While the University Choir inspired students to persist in their music and improve their skills, the music students illustrated the heart and passion of music and learning. The combination made for a wonderful evening to remember. The exchange, meeting people with a common love of music through the international language of music, made the harsh local realities of life personal for the touring Choir.

#### **A landmark in the life of the church in Zarka, Jordan**

During a recent visit to Jordan, Bishop Suheil Dawani visited Zarka. Sunday April 11<sup>th</sup> was an important landmark in the life of Savior Church, Zarka, Jordan. As part of the regular Sunday service, the Bishop re-dedicated the church after recent renovations. It was a great occasion and the Bishop took the opportunity in the service to confirm eight young candidates from the congregation. These young people were an important sign of the next phase in the life of a growing congregation and Christian presence in Zarka.

The church, which was founded in 1950, met in what has become the Aloudi Club. In 1960, the church moved to the current building and was showing its age before the renovations. Following the consecration in August of that year, the church became an important part of the city of Zarka. Currently, the church serves 50 families with a total of 191 in the congregation.



The activities range from Women's meetings, Youth and Sunday School to a successful New Parents Group where approximately 26 couples attend.

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2010, Deacon Fursan Zomot will be the serving Clergy in Zarka and will seek to continue and develop the work already started in this area.

### **Princess Basma Centre for Disabled Children hosts Bishop Chapman of Ottawa**

April 12 2010, Mrs. Betty Majaj, long time Director of the Princess Basma Centre for Disabled Children, Jerusalem warmly welcomed Bishop Chapman of Ottawa, Canada, on his first visit to the Diocese. Following the visit of Primate Fred Hiltz of the Church of Canada and the model of the Diocese of Washington in the capital city of the U.S., Bishop Chapman came to explore a Companion Relationship with the Diocese of Jerusalem.

Bishop Chapman's first visit was the Princess Basma Centre in Jerusalem. Mrs. Betty Majaj provided a full tour of the facilities, explaining the importance of empowerment of women and people with disabilities in this region. The Princess Basma Centre excels at both.



For young children with disabilities, the Basma Centre runs a specialized training program for mothers and children. As the child receives early intervention, the mother resides at the Centre for up to two months learning how to be the physical therapist for her child, providing ongoing assistance and maximum development for the child.

When it became apparent that these children were left out of normal education opportunities, the Basma Centre started a school, mainstreaming children with various disabilities with normal neighborhood children. Having earned a reputation for excellence in rehabilitation, the Basma Centre School began to win over conservative, reluctant parents afraid of the effect of mainstreaming on their normal children. The school is proud of its now 700 students with the first 12<sup>th</sup> grade graduation planned for next month.

## Diocesan Women Meet in Bethlehem

23 April 2010 – Women and clergy from the diocesan churches located in Israel and Palestine gathered for a day long regional meeting in Bethlehem. Two hundred and twenty women came with their priests by chartered buses to enjoy a day of spiritual enrichment and refreshment and reach out to children in need.

The main focus of the meeting was the importance of spiritual pilgrimage in their land, the Land of the Holy One. Father Ghader from the Latin Patriarchate, widely respected as a spiritual leader, was invited to be the key presenter. In addition to small group discussions which empower each participant, Bishop Dawani, his wife and other diocesan women's leaders addressed the group.



Bishop Dawani encouraged the women to meet on a regular basis and encouraged these large group pilgrimages to Holy Sites within their own land. He also encouraged the women to connect to our diocesan institutions. The women agreed to collect funds and buy suits for the boys in need who are graduating from our Schneller School which serves boys who are orphans or live in families struggling with extreme poverty. These graduation gifts will enable these boys to graduate in suits with their peers and with interview clothes so important for finding professional employment.

## St. George's Day at St. George's School

24 April 2010 – St. George's School in Jerusalem celebrated St. George's Day with an educational and cultural festival. Patron Saint of Palestinians, St. George's Day was chosen to honor the common cultural heritage of all Palestinians, Christian and Muslims.

Beginning with music, songs, speeches, and traditional dances performed by students, St. George's Day engaged students and parents for the entire school day. The Opening Ceremonies were capped with a Greeting from Bishop Dawani who spoke of St. George to the assembled crowd of parents and children, most of whom are Muslims who appreciate the teaching style and education offered at our Christian school.



Some elementary students displayed their carefully constructed science projects in the newly created science room, a promising addition to a school that did not have one.

High school students enjoyed a day of sports, cultural music, plays, and talks concurrently with an impressive science fair. At least one student studied under a doctor to be able to teach his friends and conduct health tests on students and visitors.



Upper school projects included a self designed and constructed remote control robot, and studies in electrical, magnetic, and chemical experiments each carefully demonstrated to visitors.

With minimal staff and modest facilities, St. George's School demonstrated its commitment to excellence and honored Palestinian culture and commitment to education in an inviting, informative St. George's Day.

### *Thanks and Prayers*

The work of the Diocese continues but it does so with the help and support of many around the world. We are grateful to those of you who come to visit, the financial support that many of you give but most of all we appreciate the prayers that are offered for the life, work and witness of the Diocese.

We ask that you continue to pray particularly for the following:

- For Bishop Suheil and Shafeeqa, for safety in travel as they travel to the Synod in Canada.
- For the Diocese and those who serve in it.
- For those who come to visit that they will experience life in the Land of the Holy One.
- For the Parishes and their ministries that all may be done for the glory of God.
- For peace in this troubled region.

*For more stories and information, please visit our website at [www.j-diocese.org](http://www.j-diocese.org)*



The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, a diocese of the worldwide Anglican Communion, extends over five countries, including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Israel, within the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. There are 27 parishes that minister to the needs of their communities, centered on the Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr in Jerusalem. The church supports 33 institutions, which include hospitals, clinics, kindergartens and schools, a home for the elderly, and educational and vocational training programs for the hearing impaired, vision impaired, physically disabled, reaching out to interfaith neighbors in mutual respect and cooperation.

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