

In January Father Luay wrote:

*"Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?
For we saw his star in the east and have come to pay him homage".
Matthew 2: 2*

"In our lives, we all look for a star to follow, a star to guide us. In our world, many people are thought to be stars, and many blindly follow them hoping for guidance. Some of these stars are even recognised as such by the community: do we not give actual stars in the Hollywood Walk of Fame for some people and call them our stars. Others are only recognized as stars by their own field or community, such as business leaders, and educators. However, we can learn a lot from the story of the Magi. For the Magi did not look for any star to follow, rather they came to follow and pay homage to the one true star. They found the star of Jesus Christ, and once they understood the greatness of the person that the star was leading towards, they left all others and followed the one. Therefore in this wonderful season of Epiphany may we all follow the one and only star that we need: we are called to follow the star of Jesus Christ. So may we all learn from the Magi, and not look for stars here on earth, but rather keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ since it is his star and his star alone that can guide us on our way.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the **sponsors of our students** who have sent them **Christmas gifts, and cards**. These gifts brought great joy to our students, especially as they meant that someone out there, in this big world knows about them, and is supporting their progress. Therefore, I invite you to pray with me for all the supporters of our beloved students worldwide and to ask our good Lord to bless them all.

As my personal gift to the students this past Christmas season, I bought **three quality smart TV sets that were placed in the boarding house living rooms**, so that our students will be able to better enjoy their film nights, and will be able to be better connected to the outside world. I ask your prayers for our students and their continued development here in the Institute. They are a precious gift given to us by our loving Lord, and it is our **duty to do our absolute best to care for them properly and keep them safe from any harm**, so that one day they will become productive members of our society, and so that when we stand before the great judgment seat of Christ we can be commended for being productive members of God's mission here on earth.

The students are sitting for their **final exams** now. As you may know, for some people exam periods are especially stressful, however, I am happy to report that despite this added stress, **our students are doing well, personally and educationally**. Let us pray, asking for strength for our students so that they can keep their focus during the rest of this exam period. Also, let us pray for the teachers, and tutors who are working hard to help our students excel in their education. It is wonderful to see the added shine in the eyes of our students as they finally find the solution for a maths problem that they have been working on, **or the pride that they have in themselves when they receive their grades and see their continued progress**. We are so proud of the continued progress in the educational level of the school.

We also give thanks to the continued support the Institute is receiving from our international friends world-wide. This month, with a generous donation from **BROT (Bread for the world/ Brot für die Welt)**, and in our continued **endeavour to improve our beloved Institute** and to serve our students and community, the **Audiology Department** bought some new equipment. They bought two **Tympanometry** devices, a device used to test the pressure in the middle ear, and two **Audiometers**. A set is fixed in the department itself, while the other is a portable set, so that it can be mobile, and can reach people in need of our services regardless of where they are. These devices are the newest in Jordan."



Deafinitely Connected

Dear Friends,

Please find enclosed our Winter 2019 newsletter.

It has now been just over a year since Father Luay became Director of the Institute and the reports are extremely encouraging. Father Luay is much loved by the children and is beginning to execute his vision for the Institute and the children within a context of tightening governmental regulation given the political situation in the region.

We remain committed to supporting the school and indeed Tim Martin (treasurer) and I are travelling to Salt in the middle of February to spend time with the children, staff and Father Luay. We are very much looking forward to seeing the changes for ourselves and the impact of the new leadership since our visit last April.

The more astute of you will notice that this newsletter is different in its presentation to previous ones. Our aim is to produce two newsletters of this ilk a year, which we plan to assemble from the more regular prayer letters that Father Luay writes and sends to us. We will endeavour to keep our website and Facebook page more relevant as we move forward. If you wish to receive regular copies of those prayer letters do let me know.

Speaking of digital communications, our Easyfundraising initiative continues to attract support and has recently surpassed £550 raised. As a reminder Easyfundraising is for when you are shopping online – costs you nothing as the registered retailer gives a percentage of your purchase value to your chosen charity. We have now also registered the charity with Amazon Smile (works in the same way as Easyfundraising), so please do look for us there too. We have recently signed up to Give.Net, a Stewardship initiative, where we can be found at the website: https://www.give.net/friends_of_hlid.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and generosity and I wish you all a healthy and prosperous 2019.

With kind regards,

Jonathan Allen
Chair HLID UK

January 2019

Patrons

Lady Jenny Harper
Peter Hinchcliffe CMG CVO
Mrs Archbald Hinchcliffe MBE
Majed Najjar

Trustees

Jonathan Allen (Chairman)
Clare Bird
Henry Hanning
Ursula Martell
Tim Martin (Treasurer)
The Rev Canon Iain Paton
Helen Penfold

Contact



In September 2018 Gerhard Tschanz, Nathalie Wenger and Rafael Graf from the Friends of HLID in Switzerland travelled to the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Salt, Jordan. Here is Gerhard's report:

"During one of our frequent prayer meetings for the Deaf School in Salt we decided to travel to Jordan. We were welcomed warmly by the Deaf children, the staff and Father Luay. Most faces and the daily routine at the Institute were familiar to us and the reunion was cheerful. It is amazing to see and to experience what has been established in Salt for the last 50 years. God has blessed the School and will continue to do so. Since this year, the school is led by director **Father Luay**. He is a Jordanian pastor of the Anglican Church and has known the Institute for many years. We perceive Father Luay to be a caring person, who continuously encourages and empowers the students and staff. **His motto is: The Love of God shall be made visual by our actions.**

Father Luay actively seeks to be in good contact with the children and staff members in order to get to know them and to learn sign language. We often found him taking his time to sit with children and let them show him signs. Regularly he sits at the children's tables for meals and asks them about their well-being and their progress at school. This contact is very much appreciated by the children. Father Luay intentionally delegates responsibilities to the Heads of the Institute's departments. Still, he ensures quality standards by frequent exchange and visits.

Another new face is **Pastor Wadia**. He is a young Episcopal Pastor from Amman, who studied abroad in the US, lives at the Institute, and works as a pastor at the school and in downtown Salt. He is an open-minded outgoing person who is eager to learn. In cooperation with other Christian staff members he is in the process of feeling and hearing how to organize the spiritual meetings in future. **Albair**, a Christian Jordanian, is **Joshua Grossenbacher's** successor as head of the vocational Training Department. He seeks to continue empowering the boys and girls and treats them with esteem. He gets along well with the present staff. The boys and girls learn and work with high motivation, which can be seen. Three young men from the Baptist Church in Salt started to work at the boy's boarding house. The girls are being looked after by **Samar**, a former teacher of the deafblind children, and **Sheima**, the sister of two deaf students. The boarding houses are still led by **Ahlam, Asma' and Ala'**. The heads of the Deafblind Unit are still **Khadijeh and Asma'**. The teachers newly carry out home visits at families with deafblind children.

We found the children and staff to be in a state of serenity, which spreads out joy. I feel a deep connection to the children and staff members of the deafblind Unit. They call me "Kareem", an Arabic name which means "God's provision" or "generosity". A lot of baking with students of the Deafblind Unit and the Vocational Training Department was on my schedule. I also had many deep talks from heart to heart particularly with Father Luay, Pastor Wadia, Albair, **Samira, Jameel** (Christian English teacher), Khadijeh, Asma' and Ala'. **Nathalie** was particularly happy to spend time with the deafblind woman **Hanady**, with **Samar** with whom she has worked at the Deafblind Unit and with **Tamara Hansen**. **Rafael** enjoyed mingling with the deaf children and exchanging memories. He happily recognized that the small boys who he cared for back in the days have become smart and interested young men. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to be there as **Tamara, Joel and Amos Hansen** were preparing to leave and getting ready for a new calling. We enjoyed spending quality time with them. We also appreciated to be in Salt at the same time as **Ria Lammers** (Dutch short time volunteer who regularly comes to Salt). As I stayed for another week, I was able to share thoughts and experiences with another Dutch short time volunteer **Yvonne Bergwerf**. Both women are on the board of the Dutch Friends of the HLID.

The Swiss Friends will continue to cooperate closely with the Dutch Friends. It was a valuable and exciting time for us. Every new beginning needs time! We are not objects which can simply be replaced; no, we are people with hearts and souls who need to be encouraged and empowered. That is what we have witnessed in Salt and we are confident for the future of the Deaf School."



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Archbishop Suheil Dawani treated the children to a Christmas Dinner



The birthday party held for the students with birthdays in September, October & November



The students who excelled in the second month exams receiving their gifts



Deaf kindergarden students playing with a deafblind students



Replacing the broken down boilers so the students will have hot water and be warm this winter



Some amazing achievements our students created in their new free creative time