

# Harvest



*Bringing hope to Syrian children through education, one child at a time*





# About the "Little Heroes"

Our ground-breaking work with displaced children has now helped 1,200 across Syria.



Little Heroes in Safita, Central Syria, July 2016

The conflict in Syria has now lasted for five and a half years and no end is in sight. Violent sectarianism, combined with a fundamentalist understanding of Islam that despises diversity, has torn the country apart.

4.8 million people have left Syria for safety elsewhere, but the great majority remain. Within Syria, over 6 million people have moved to comparatively safer areas within the country. Those inside Syria have gone to stay with family and friends, they have made new lives for themselves, they have been taken in by churches if they are Christian, or they have ended up in refugee camps.

A great deal is being done by nations and charities around the world to help those in the refugee camps.

But we wanted to help those not in the refugee camps who are almost invisible to the outside world. In particular, we wanted to help the children of one of the most persecuted minorities in the Middle East: the Christians. You will not

find Christians in the refugee camps because their faith makes it too dangerous to stay there.

Thousands of Christian children have been taken by their families away from their homes and from everything they knew. These children must try to make a new life in their new home. But they are scared, they have lost hope and they see no future for themselves.

In 2015, our Little Heroes programme helped more than 200 displaced Syrian children, aged between 6 and 12, of every denomination, giving them a new hope and a new energy to live their life without fear. This has enabled them to build new bridges of respect and understanding with children of other faiths that they meet in their new homes and schools. In a very meaningful way, these children have become little Peacemakers.

This year, thanks to the generosity of many individuals and churches, especially the Old Royal Naval College Chapel and Emmanuel Church Wimbledon, our Little

Heroes programmes helped children in Lattakia in the West, Safita in Central Syria, and As-Suwayda in the South, close to the Jordanian border.

Last year we helped over 200 displaced children; this year we helped nearly 1,000. Among this number were local children who are also in great need of support and encouragement. As a result, the children are much more integrated due to the time they spent together.

As before, we could not have done this wonderful work without the enormous help of young leaders who had participated in our Ambassadors for Peace programme. We are really blessed to find such eagerness to help in the midst of deprivation and conflict.

**This year, Bishop Demetrios, the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Bania, invited us to lead our Little Heroes programme in his Diocese. He was so generous with his time and his hospitality, as you will see on pages 6 and 7.**



Group photo: Leaders and Little Heroes outside our host church, the National Evangelical Church of Lattakia

# Little Heroes in Lattakia

Over 160 children were joined by 40 volunteer Leaders for three days to learn about "God the Father".

We welcomed more than 160 children to our second Little Heroes programme in Lattakia, on the Mediterranean coast of Syria. Many of the children who attended our first programme came back, plus we were joined by a good number of newcomers.



As this was a special follow-up event, we chose a theme that would help the children move on in their faith; for many children, the phrase 'Allahu Akbar', which is just Arabic for 'God is the greatest', has left them fearful of God the Father. The children now associate the name of God with

sectarian acts of violence, cruelty and destruction.



Over three days, we worked with the children through Bible study, hymns, stories, games and crafts. Each day had its own theme. The first day was God the Creator, day two was the God of love, and the final day focussed on God the Merciful.

Each day, the leaders began with prayers, and we finished each day with an evaluation - both to see how the children were doing, and to support our many volunteers. The feedback we received was wonderful.

One of our volunteers said that the children were smiling again, and another reported that the children had thanked him for helping them to get to know God the Father as a friend again.

At the end of the Little Heroes programme, we were joined by the Church Scouts band for a celebration.

The three days went really, really well, and we were very happy with the results. The children left us enlightened in every sense of the word, their faith reinvigorated, and with a new sense of positivity and hope clear for all to see.





“This will stay with me forever.”

“I will tell everyone about Little Heroes.”

“I am not weak any more.”



*“We worked with the Awareness Foundation to turn our children into Little Heroes, to enable them to challenge the difficulties they face in life and not to give in, because their strength comes from God who conquered everything, even death, and who gave us eternal life. In my name, and in the name of the children who came from many parts of Syria, thank you to the Awareness Foundation and to all who supported them for bringing back smiles to the faces of the children, giving them happiness even in the difficult time through which Syria is passing. The three days were more than wonderful; it was most effective and very important to the children. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts; our doors are always open to the Awareness Foundation. “*

*“Behold, how good and pleasant it is, when brothers dwell in unity!”  
(Psalm 133:1)*

**Bishop Demetrios Charbak, Bishop of Baniyas**

*(Pictured above with Huda Nassar)*





أبطال صغار  
LITTLE  
HEROES



“I learned a lot!”

“We met new people here.”

“We built new friendships.”



“I want you to  
come back!”



# Little Heroes in Safita

Our first programmes in Safita reached almost 500 children!



Group photo: Leaders and Little Heroes gather en masse at the Essam Freij Centre in Safita

For the first time, this year we held two Little Heroes events in Safita, near the border with Lebanon. This was made possible through the generous collaboration of the Greek Orthodox Diocese and the local churches.

Our first event began in the last week in July and ran for three days. More than 350 children attended - a record for us! The children came from Safita, Kafroun, Al-Bitar, Hawash, Al-Juwaikhat, Marmarita, Al-Mishtaya, Al-Yazdiyeh, Ein Eljern, Treiz, Oyoun Alwadi, Mashta Al Hilu, Haba and Al-Sisniyeh. Bishop Demetrios was our host, and he stayed with us throughout the programme.



A team of Ambassadors for Peace from all of the denominations in Lattakia (pictured above with Huda

*Nassar, our Director for the Middle East*) travelled to Safita to lead the Little Heroes programme. In addition, every area sent volunteers to help run the event.

Each day had its own theme: "A Little Hero is the hero who prays", "A Little Hero is the hero who is obedient" and "Little Heroes are not afraid because 'I can do all things through Him who strengthens me' Philippians 4:13".



Each group of children developed their own chant, which reflected each day's theme, and we hope that these chants will stay with the children in the future as words of encouragement.

The children sang, they watched Bible stories which were acted out

by our young team of leaders, they used their hands to create paper flowers and butterflies, and of course they played. The programme was designed to engage all of their senses to help them to release their negative experiences, to believe in themselves and to become real Little Heroes.



The children were keen to learn, and they were enthusiastic and brave - just what Little Heroes need to be!





in the West. Over just three days for each group, we were blessed to have been able to give them a new certainty and a new hope.



We thank God for all those who gave time or money to bring the Little Heroes to Safita. Special thanks are due to the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Baniyas for hosting us, to our own Ambassadors for Peace (*photo, above*), and to the Scouts of Safita (*below*) who provided such great support throughout the two events.

We learned that many children had been unable to attend in July so, at the end of August, eight of our Lattakia Ambassadors for Peace travelled to Safita for a second event. They were led by Rana Hanboursy, a talented Sunday School teacher who has been part of this programme since its earliest days.

Above all, the children were now stronger. This experience should stay with them always, making a difference in their own lives and the lives of those they meet.

It was worth coming back: over 110 children were waiting for us, eager for their chance to take part and become a Little Hero.

These events are life-changing for the leaders and for the children themselves. It was a wonderful experience for us to see the smiles return to the faces of children who had lost everything. When they had arrived, the children had been very shy and almost fearful. Life in the Syrian conflict had taken away the certainties that we take for granted



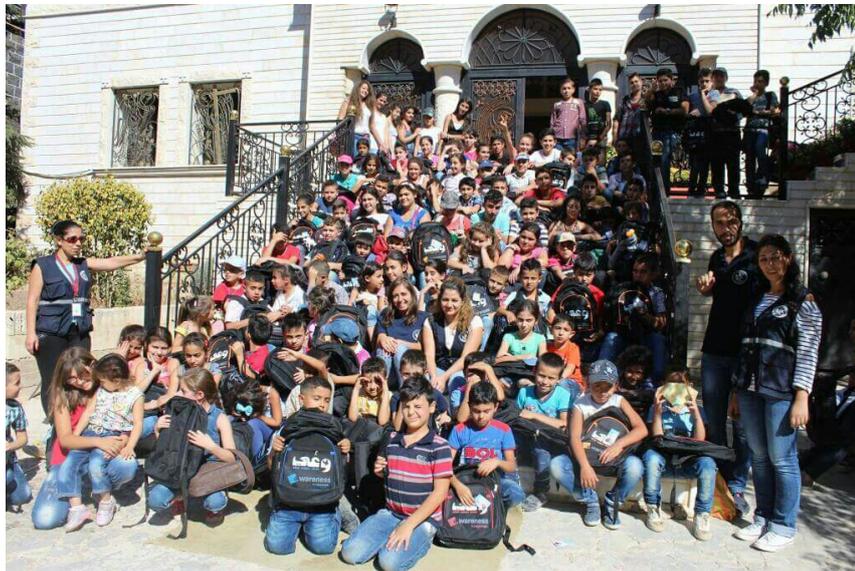
We repeated the themes and activities from before, and the children loved every minute of it. Some children told the leaders that they knew more about God than before, and others said that they had made new friends and that they felt closer to their neighbours.





# Little Heroes in As-Suwayda

Bringing a smile to 350 children's faces in Southern Syria.



In collaboration with the Awareness Foundation, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Bosra, Horan and Jabal al-Arab and the IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities), His Eminence the Most Reverend Metropolitan Saba hosted three days of educational activities for 350 displaced children in As-Suwayda, Izra and Daraa.

The children took part in games, sport and Bible study. A lunch was laid on for all of the children. At the end of the day, each child received a schoolbag donated by the Awareness Foundation, with stationery provided by the IOCC.

We believe that bringing a smile of hope to each child will give them a great boost as they begin the new academic year. Many thanks to everyone who made this possible.

## Gala Dinner 16th November 2016

We shall be holding our **Annual Gala Dinner** at the Cophorne Tara Hotel London in Kensington on the evening of **Wednesday 16th November 2016**.

We can promise you good food, a great speaker, a fun raffle with loads of prizes, an auction and some great entertainment. Your presence will be greatly appreciated,

**Please book your tickets - or tables - either on our website or by calling our office.**

**Tickets are £85. Last year we were completely sold out, so don't leave it too late!**



*"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*  
2 Corinthians 9:7

**Please Support Us**

**GIVE BY CHEQUE:** Please send **cheques**, made payable to the Awareness Foundation, to: Awareness Foundation, Lodge House, 69 Beaufort Street, London SW3 5AH. Please mark your cheques "Little Heroes".

**OTHER METHODS:** Please contact us if you would like to make a gift **online** using your debit/credit card or PayPal, or **electronically**, directly from your bank.

**Gift Aid:** If you are a UK taxpayer, please contact us as Gift Aid could add at least 25% to the value of your gift.

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