

Holy Land Institute for the Deaf

In 1964, the first school for disabled Jordanian children was founded in Salt, a small city near Amman. On a tranquil campus which includes dorms, a playground, a lovely chapel and much more, the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf continues to set the standard for educational opportunities for deaf, deaf blind and deaf blind and mentally disabled children and adults.

HLID, led by the visionary and tireless Brother Andrew de Carpentier, currently serves 140 deaf children in nursery school through high school plus vocational training for 80 more and a deaf blind program for 10. In addition, their outreach programs in three other communities bring services to about 500 more.

They celebrated their 50th anniversary in 2014 by opening a new facility in the Jordan Valley, overlooking the Galilee. This rural area was completely unserved.

Last year, HLID responded to the acute need among refugees coming into Jordan from Syria. While the UN and others attended to the basic needs of almost 1 million refugees in Jordan, there were no resources for disabled refugees. HLID sent an evaluation team, audiologists, therapists and hearing aid technicians to address the needs of this displaced and neglected population. They continue with this work as funds are available.

And in an important initiative this year, HLID is expanding its capacity to address the complex needs of deaf blind children. HLID is the only source for deafblind education in the entire Middle East region, emphasizing quality of life and self sufficiency, maximizing the potential of each child. The expansion would allow several more children to benefit from this intensive residential care.

The Holy Land Institute does a good job of connecting donors with specific children they can support for a number of years while they are in residence.



In addition, given the Institute's location between the Allenby Bridge and Amman, it's not only possible to visit, it's a richly rewarding experience. You might meet Toqa who is a cheerful, polite child of 7. She was born profoundly deaf but her parents didn't discover her disability for several years. As she is the only deaf child in her family, there was no one to teach her to sign. So



she became isolated. She's now a boarding student and her mother is hoping that she will learn to speak.

Or you may meet Seifeddeen who is now 17 and both deaf and severely visually impaired. He experiences tunnel vision and night blindness from a progressive disease which will leave him blind at some point. Seifeddeen did not arrive as a boarding student until he was 9 and could not speak or write. His extended family of 7 people lives in two rooms. He's a bright boy and with glasses and much help, he now uses sign language and is improving rapidly academically. When he finishes the academic program in two years, he will "graduate" to one of the onsite workshops to learn a trade.



There are many other stories and many other lives to impact.

Imagine a playground with dozens of children running and playing, but not a sound. Imagine a chapel service with hymns "sung" to drums vibrating the pews so the children can sign the words together.

Experience this and your heart will be touched forever.

The cost of full scholarships for one of these students is \$1000 a month. But most donors provide partial scholarships. With support from several funders, these children will have a place in the world.

The Holy Land Institute will be happy to provide pictures and letters from students receiving scholarship aid.

