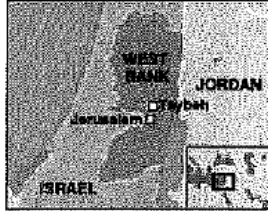


Peace Lamps from the Holy Land from John and Dawn Sullivan

This time two years ago, (November-December 2012), we were on a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. There were 30 people on our pilgrimage, including 5 from South Australia. We stayed overnight in Jerusalem for 13 days, just across the road from the Old City. Each day we set off on foot or by road to different parts of Israel and Palestine.

One of our memorable days was the visit to Taybeh, a Palestinian village inside the occupied West Bank. To get there we had to drive through checkpoints and alongside the separation wall. Taybeh is a small village, with a population of around 1300 Christians. It is about 25 kms from Jerusalem and 14 kms from the capital of the West Bank, Ramallah.



We had been invited to celebrate Mass with the local Christian community at the Church of the Redeemer. Fr. Peter celebrated the Mass in Arabic. His homily was delivered in Arabic, French and English, during which he told us *'there can be no peace without justice and no security without justice'*. He was passionate, to put it mildly, about the diminishing Christian population in the Holy Land and the unjust situations being experienced, due to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



It was here that we learnt about the Peace Lamps project. The making of these lamps provided employment for 20 young men and women, who would otherwise be forced to leave the village because of the lack of jobs and prospects for the future. The Peace Lamp project is an initiative of the Olive Branch Foundation and was launched about 10 years

ago by Fr. Raed, who was then Parish Priest of Taybeh. (website: www.taybeh.info)

The goal of the Olive Branch Foundation "is to place a Peace Lamp in every single church in the world and to unite as many Christians and people of faith in a common prayer for peace in the Holy Land".

In Adelaide, the project is sponsored by the South Australian Council of Churches. Geraldine Hawkes, the CEO of the Council of Churches, was one of the 5 South Australians on the pilgrimage with us. She investigated the possibility of bringing the Peace Lamps and Doves into Australia and now we are members of a small ecumenical group promoting their distribution and sale. All money raised from the sale of the lamps and doves is sent to Fr. Raed, formerly Parish Priest in Taybeh, now Director of Caritas in Jerusalem.

After all Masses this weekend (6/7th December) there is an opportunity to buy a small Peace Dove (\$20) or a large Peace Lamp (\$44). The large Peace Lamp has 'peace' written on it in 10 different languages—English, Arabic, French, Greek, Spanish, Latin, Hebrew, Russian, Italian and German. A red Jerusalem Cross is depicted on the lamp and dove.



We invited parishioners to take up this invitation to purchase a Peace Lamp or Peace Dove—they make good Christmas presents—and join in the call to pray for peace in the Holy Land.

(If you would like further information you can contact John and Dawn Sullivan on 8295 6968).



Mass is over at the Church of the Redeemer
in Taybeh in Palestine