

NOTES FROM SYRIA: PLEASE PRAY

Mon 20 February 2017



From 27 December to 7 January, Archdeacon Carol Wagner was part of a team that went on a short-term mission trip to Syria, through an invitation extended to Father Dave Smith from Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Dulwich Hill, to bring a delegation of clergy to Syria. The purpose of the mission was:

- To bring encouragement to Syrian Christians, praying with them for peace, restoration and renewal.
- To establish supportive relationships between Syrian and Australian communities.
- To give Syrian Christians the opportunity to tell their stories on video through the media team.
- To take in much-needed medical supplies.

Following the trip to this war-torn country, Archdeacon Carol Wagner has requested prayer for the great difficulties facing those who remain in Syria.

Particular difficulties include:

- Aleppo is still very unstable, with various terrorist groups encamped only a few kilometres from the town in the surrounding hills.
- There are power rations right across the country.
- The water in Damascus has been poisoned by the terrorists; the only water available now comes in tankers and bottles.
- The people of Aleppo who have remained have been confined to their homes for as long as five years, and have been given meagre rations, mainly lentils, on which to survive. Only recently have they been 'allowed out', and now have to find a way to sustain themselves and their families.
- No produce or supplies of any kind are allowed into Syria because of the sanctions. The people are eking out a living on what can be produced locally.
- Because of the sanctions, no aid whatsoever is being allowed in. There is no help on the ground at all, anywhere in Syria. The only help has been a very occasional project via UNICEF – such as being allowed to vaccinate a few thousand children in Damascus for polio last year.
- There are no medical supplies. Medical equipment is sparse, and what remains is breaking down. There are no drugs available for treatable diseases. What is so tragic is that Aleppo once had a thriving medical industry; world leaders in the manufacture of drugs and

advanced medical equipment. The terrorists have stripped and dismantled medical equipment in hospitals and the manufacturing sector and sold it across the border to Turkey. The journalist in our team sustained an injury while researching material for a documentary on Aleppo, and spent a week without being able to receive medical help or find any pain medication. She has had to wait till her return to Australia to receive treatment!

- Money is not allowed in or out, other than what is legally permitted on the persons of those allowed across the border. This avenue though, has been utilised. Through the Greek Orthodox Patriarch, our team has been provided with details to the

Greek Orthodox Church bank account in Beirut (unaffected by the sanctions) and their church leaders are able to bring in money personally as they regularly come across the border.

- Please feel free to contribute via this avenue if you/your church is so moved. The aid goes straight to the needy. Bank details can be provided.

A report on this mission trip is available through www.naroomaanglican.com, on the Syria Mission tab.

Thanks for your prayers for this troubled nation.

by Archdeacon Carol Wagner

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