

**PARISHES OF CROOK, WOLSINGHAM, TOW LAW, WILLINGTON**

**AND LANGLEY MOOR**

**FR. EJAZ – PAKISTAN FUND**

**REPORT FOR QUARTER ENDED - 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 (up to 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2018)**

In the November Issue of the "Northern Cross" Mr Gerry Loughran (Retired Foreign Correspondent) published an article about the persecution of Christians in the world today. He quoted the Society known as 'Aid to the Church in Need' saying, "Persecution of Christians is worse today than at any time in history". He further quoted from an organisation known as 'Open Doors' which also supports persecuted Christians saying that, "The rising tide of murder, torture, abduction and penal restrictions has increased for the fourth year in succession". Open Doors published a World Watch List of 50 countries, where to be a Christian, is to risk death, violence or some form of repression.

On reading Mr Loughran's excellent article, we were quite horrified to note that in 2017 the five most violent countries were (in order), North Korea, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sudan. We can only imagine the fear and anxiety which is part of the everyday life of our Christian brothers and sisters in these countries. We know from Fr. Ejaz how careful they need to be in practicing their faith without breaking or transgressing any of the draconian laws which surround them. They need to be constantly aware of the dangers and always to act carefully and with discretion. The same applies to the running of the orphanage, especially when you remember that the girls are being educated alongside the boys.

Unfortunately, in recent months, external pressure has caused the name and place of the orphanage to become more prominent and as a result of this, additional safety precautions had to be put in place, e.g. the external walls of the orphanage are now topped with rolled razor wire and there is a guard on the gate of the compound in which the orphanage is situated. Fr. Ejaz and the governors of the orphanage have officially registered "Nazareth House" under the Pakistan Societies Registration Act XX1 of 1860. They have been inspected and accepted and thus (for example) they can now call upon official protection if they become a target of the extremists.

On a more positive note, we can say that the orphanage continues to flourish with more and more children needing care and support. It is difficult to take in all of those who apply because it is always difficult to find safe accommodation for those who are ready to leave. (Again, especially the girls). The children in the orphanage are indeed the "lucky ones" and Fr Ejaz speaks of the many, many more children whose lives are blighted by extreme poverty and need. (We should mention that the photograph of children shown in this year's Christmas Gift Card, showed children attending a class in the street after their homes had been demolished in 2014/15. This photo was chosen at random from the many which have accumulated in the office.)

Unfortunately, the carefully made Christmas Cards, signed by the individual children in the orphanage arrived by email virtually on Christmas Eve and we could not print these in time for a Christmas display. We will try to show, some sort of current display in each church in the near future. However, we can say that the sentiments of love and gratitude expressed by the children are heart warming and humbling to read.

Fr. Ejaz is recovering from a bout of Typhoid, (luckily, he had sufficient money to buy medicines). He assures us that he is much better, but again, we realise that he works in a parish which is very poor and deprived. However, he constantly speaks about the faith and goodness of his people. Their devotion is expressed by their generosity to each other and the huge congregations attending Holy Mass and other services held for special feasts. For example, 13 days of special devotions to 'Mother Mary' in October and traditional services, Holy Masses, and Grave Blessings held for the feasts of 'All Saints and All Souls'. Father was so busy the Arch Bishop had to send him two extra priests and two deacons to help cover Masses and Services at Christmas.

This week Father told us he is arranging an "Old People's Day" (over 70s). The Arch Bishop will attend but he has asked whether his invitation is because he is the Arch Bishop or because he is 73 years of age!! Up to 2000 people are expected to attend!

Finally, we give below a brief resumé of our finances in the last quarter. We cannot express sufficient gratitude for all the effort and almost unbelievable generosity which these figures represent. In his email for the New Year, Fr Ejaz says to **All** parishioners, "I, on behalf of the children; Sohail and Sharma (the orphanage managers) wishing you happy New Year and pray to God that Almighty God bring hundreds and thousands of blessings and graces in your lives in this New Year 2018. Happy New Year, thank you and God Bless you, Fr Ejaz Hayat. That message is more eloquent than we can be.

**PAKISTAN ORPHANS' FUND**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

**JANUARY 2018**

		£
<b>BALANCE AT 30<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017</b>	c/f	821.35
<b><u>Income:</u></b>	Standing Orders and Cash Receipts (from our <b>5 Parishes</b> )	1949.90
	Fund Raising – Afternoon Tea and Auction	656.82
	Bonfire Night	252.90
	Sale of Christmas Donation Card	205.00
	Saved five pences and pennies	40.08
	Donations - Cash and Cheques	390.00
	St Joseph's, Tow Law (Christmas)	100.00
	St Thomas, Willington (Christmas)	100.00
	Private and Anonymous	<u>2000.00</u>
		3744.80
		6516.05
<b><u>Less:</u></b>	Transfers to Pakistan	
	8 November 2017 – Maintenance, School Fees and Christmas	2500.00
	7 January 2018 - Maintenance, School Fees and help with vehicle exchange	<u>2500.00</u> (5000.00)
<b><u>BALANCE 7<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2018</u></b>		<b><u>£1516.05</u></b>

*CM Hetherington January 2018*