

**THE ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PARISH AVE MARIA GROUP LONG TERM ONLINE APPEAL
IN SUPPORT OF DISADVANTAGED CHRISTIAN CHILDREN IN THE HOLY LAND**



Brief background

The Ave Maria is a group that was established at the end of 2011, by parishioners of the Catholic Church of Mary, Mother of God in Ponders End, following a pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by the Arch-bishop of Westminster in November of the same year. Whilst in Bethlehem some group members and Parish Priest, Father John Sherwing visited the School of Joy, a facility for children with learning difficulties in the little shepherd town of Beit Sahour in Bethlehem. The group was touched by the plight of the disadvantaged children in this community who failed to access mainstream education, health and social care, the things we take for granted in our lives in the UK.

As part of their vocational training, the children make olive wood crafts and embroideries that may help to generate income for them. However, the market for the products in the Holy Land is flooded, with a supply of similar products, outstripping their demand.

The Ponders End Mary Mother of God, Enfield Mt Carmel and Enfield St George Parishioners came together, after the pilgrimage. They agreed to extend a hand of friendship to the School of Joy to support the missionary work already in place by the local church.

Our Vision

To forge friendships and work in partnership with the School of Joy, to empower and enable children with learning difficulties in Beit Sahour, to independently meet personal, education, health and social care needs, by selling their olive hand made crafts and embroideries as well as raising funds for them.

How are we supporting the School of Joy?

The Ave Maria Group is selling a variety of hand made crafts directly from the Holy Land.

They are skilfully handy crafted by the children.

Buying the products enables the children at the School of Joy, to access education thus helping to empower as well as promoting the children's independent living in future. Most children's families are unable to pay for their education as they live in poverty.

The School Of Joy is run by Roman Catholic Missionaries in the town of Beit Sahour, in Bethlehem. Currently the School can only afford to support 50 children. An additional 50 children are on a waiting list. Father Mamdouh Abusada, the Head of the School of Joy requires international goodwill and support to ensure that more children with special needs are enrolled into this school that meets their needs. For further details please visit <http://www.schoolofjoy.org/support>

Why and how can you contribute?

Charity is linked to the commandment of love. For it is in giving that we also receive. This is an opportunity to give by supporting this worthy cause and buying the children's products, engaging in fund raising activities and /or making donations in cash during the Ave Maria Group appeals made from time to time. Following liaison with the Church's programme, these items may also from time to time be on display for sale in the Parish Hall.

For non locals, purchases can be arranged through our contact details below for collection, delivery or postage.

What is Unique about these Products?

The products effectively stand out from similar products in that they are made from the precious olive wood, the type of wood found in the Garden of Gethsemane giving them both their sentimental and ornamental value for Christians.



The products are handmade and come directly from the little shepherd town of Beit Sahour in Bethlehem, where Our Lord and Saviour was born.

What is the range of products?

- Candle holders
- Carved nativities and the Holy family
- Carved angels
- Rosary boxes
- Crosses
- Christmas ornaments
- Embroidery purses and book marks



Contact Details:

Please give us your support. To order, make a donation or join the group contact

Email: avemaria_pe@yahoo.com

Postal Address:

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