

Lajee Center's Seventh International Work Camp



You've read about Palestine in the press, you've seen images on the news, you know that this is an important area of the world. Now take the opportunity to come and see the reality for yourself. Two weeks participating in Lajee Centre's International Work Camp will give you a unique opportunity to see Palestinian life from the inside. Live with Palestinians, work with them, talk to them, play with them, sing and dance with them, hear their stories, see their reality.

This is what one volunteer from last year said about the Work Camp: *"It's still difficult for me to find words for the experience with Lajee but life-changing would not be an overstatement."* – Kyle, USA. (For more comments from participants, see Lajee's web site and Newsletter.)

Participants will be provided with accommodation and meals in Aida Camp, and will engage in a variety of activities with the local volunteers and children of the Camp. Our program is designed to give you access to a range of people with interesting and diverse stories, offer you a glimpse into many aspects of life in the camp, and provide you with a variety of ways to help out. English will be the language of the Work Camp.

Activities:

- Our principal activity this year will be to work on the new Centre for Lajee. One floor of a building in Aida Camp has been purchased and needs clearing, painting etc. Work also needs to be done in the land in front of the building.
- creative and educational activities with children
- lectures by local politicians and officials
- cultural activities – *dabke* (traditional dance), singing, music
- visits to families in the Camp
- discussions with women in the Camp
- introductory Arabic lessons or conversation for those interested
- discussions on the history, traditions and current situation of Palestine
- entertainment – swimming (pool in Bethlehem), visits to places of interest (Nativity Church)
- free day to visit other places (e.g. Dead Sea, Hebron. We can help with the arrangements)

Aida Refugee Camp is located just 8 kilometres south

of Jerusalem and borders the city of Bethlehem. It was established in 1950 by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency following the diaspora of Palestinians after the 1948 Arab-Israeli wars and the creation of the State of Israel. It has a population of approximately 4,500 people, over half of whom are children. The Wall encloses it on two sides.

Lajee Centre was set up eight years ago by a group of local volunteers to provide the children of the Camp with constructive, educational and enjoyable activities to help alleviate the difficult conditions under which they live and to assist in developing their skills, knowledge and talents.

What to bring:

- sleeping bag
- work clothes, including work gloves, scarf, sun hat
- sunscreen
- mosquito repellent
- books or DVDs for the new library (optional)
- cameras, notebooks for recording your experiences to share later with friends
- ideas for games with the children
- you might like to bring food and recipes from your own country

N.B. clothes should be cool, comfortable and respectable. No shorts or tank tops, please (we must respect local dress customs)

Cost: €250. This covers accommodation, food (excellent and abundant), local transport and trips to places within the West Bank. Volunteers are responsible for funding their own travel to Aida. They will be met in Jerusalem and taken to the Camp.

Number of participants: 18, plus local volunteers

Minimum age: 18 (no maximum age)

Write to helenp149@yahoo.com for Application Form (also on Web) and further information.

Visit our Web Site: www.lajee.org and read about our previous work camps.

Keep in mind that flexibility is key, given the unstable situation in Palestine. We will keep you informed about what is happening as well as about any changes to the program.

Aida Refugee Camp

Bethlehem, Palestine

2-16 August 2008

