



Iman, a widow from Southern Egypt, is proud to have found a way to provide for her family. Iman defied village mores to start a successful business, and her daughter now has access to an education.

Expanding when the world contracts

We are celebrating here at Coptic Orphans. Because of our loyal supporters, we achieved our financial goals for 2008.

We were able to do this though the grace of God, and through sound fiscal planning. Corporations may be cutting back. In fact, one of our corporate partners "downsized" their commitment with us as a result of the economic times we live in. But we don't have the option of "laying off" our children. We always plan ahead to be able to weather any financial storm. We have not scaled back in our giving, and much to our joy, neither have our donors.

Even when faced with their own hard times, our donors are making sacrifices to keep their sponsorships going. It's easy to give from a place of excess. But now we will have the chance to practice expanding when all around us is contracting. Now we can choose to receive the blessings that come from "giving until it hurts."

Thank you and may God bless you.

- Nermien Riad

Dependence on Charity Not Option for Assuit Mother

In Iman's village near Assuit in Southern Egypt, it is not considered acceptable for a woman, let alone a widow, to start a public business. But for Iman, depending on charity to support her family was not an option.

Since her husband's death, Iman had struggled to provide the basic necessities for her family. She rarely had money left for the books and uniforms that her daughter, Mary, needed for school. When Mary enrolled in Coptic Orphans' Not Alone Program, Iman began participating in the trainings offered to the mothers to provide them with the skills and resources they need to become self-sufficient providers. Soon, she was ready to start her own business.

Iman set up a makeshift stand with crates for selling vegetables in front of her house. One by one, Iman's neighbors started to accept the situation. Soon, she was earning enough income to support Mary's education. But it wasn't long before Iman recognized an opportunity for growth.

Her strategy involved a simple blue wheelbarrow that she purchased with the support of Coptic Orphans. Now she doesn't sit around waiting for customers to come to her. Each day, Iman walks the small streets of Manfalout, pushing a load of fresh coriander, tomatoes, cucumbers, turnips, and other vegetables. Her door-to-door service gives her a strong advantage in the local vegetable vending market.

Iman is just one of many widowed mothers who refuse helpless dependency

on the Church or charity, but struggle in the face of illness, social pressure, and poverty to make a better life for their children. For example, further down the Nile, Coptic Orphans was able to help another widow purchase a sewing machine so that she could make simple dresses and other clothing items. A few months later, this remarkable woman actually turned down financial assistance when her son became ill.

"I already bought the medicine from my sewing money," she told Coptic Orphans. She continued to purchase her son's medicine from income that she made from her own work until her son recovered.

Iman is also on her way to self-sufficiency. She makes close to 100 Egyptian pounds a week from her wheelbarrow rounds: more than her entire monthly government widow pension, and just a few coins away from the global poverty line defined by the World Bank. What may not be as readily apparent is the change that has slowly overcome the village since Iman first set up her vegetable stand in public over a year ago. Other mothers in the village are following her example, with more and more of them trying their hand as bread-winners, selling things like appliances and clothes from makeshift shops.

By supporting Coptic Orphans, you enter into a partnership with thousands of courageous widows like Iman, and their children.

your resources + their resourcefulness = a better future for Egypt.

Coming soon to a town near you...

Do you live in Texas, Florida, or California? Keep your eyes open in 2009 for an invitation to a Coptic Orphans "Fundraising" Dinner! Join the Coptic Orphans family for an evening of inspiring stories of lives transformed, plus a chance to make new friends at home and in Egypt. *Make sure we have your email address!*

Quick Facts: Sponsorship

Of the 6,500 children in the *Not Alone* program, only slightly more than 1,800, or 28%, have sponsors. When you sponsor a child, you not only build a special relationship with a certain child, but touch the lives of many more children through your heartfelt support of the program as a whole. Your ongoing commitment allows us to commit to meeting the needs of a growing number of children who want to participate in the program.

Coptic Orphans

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All donations are tax exempt: 54-1637257

"So that in this and in all things Your great and holy name may be glorified ..."

01/09

- I want to make a contribution in the amount of:
 - \$500 \$200 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____
- I want to sponsor a child at the **monthly** amount of:
 - \$100 \$75 \$60 \$50 Other \$ _____

- I want my contribution to help mothers become providers.
- I want my contribution to go wherever the need is greatest.

Payment Info

- Please find my check enclosed. (**note: not for new sponsorships**)
- Please debit my bank account for the amount specified above. (**Attach a VOID check** for authorization)
- Please charge my credit card. **credit card number:** _____ **exp:** ____/____/____

For New Sponsors: I authorize Coptic Orphans to set up a monthly contribution using the information that I have provided above. **Signature:** _____ **date:** ____/____/____

Donate Online
(and help save administrative costs)

www.copticorphans.org

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Keep me in touch with monthly updates. My email address is: _____