



A Not Alone mother consults her child's Rep (on the right). Mothers in the program become more self-sufficient through workshops and Rep guidance.

Escaping The Trap of Dependency

"I never bought anything before. I simply don't know how to buy things..." Mona, a mother of five *Not Alone* participants in Edfu, expressed powerlessness about purchasing clothes for her children.

Widowed mothers in Egypt like Mona are often trapped. They face a society that expects widows to consign themselves to a life of idle and hopeless dependency: bearing shame in public for being a widow, and bearing poverty in private with passivity. Many never learn to accomplish simple tasks that most of us take for granted.

Mona's husband died, leaving her and her children alone, poor, and illiterate. Mona was totally dependent on her husband. But while other orphaned families move on to total dependency on the Church or a charitable organization, Mona's children became participants in the *Not Alone* program.

The *Not Alone* program enables children to access basic rights such as food, clothing, nutrition, health, and literacy, but the greatest benefits are often intangible: like the discovery of one's true potential for self-sufficiency.

Mona's Rep encouraged her to take her own first step towards self-sufficiency: "none of us know everything; we have to try." He accompanied Mona and her children downtown to pick out and purchase clothes. Mona returned excited.

"...I cannot believe myself. To tell you frankly, I was dead and now I am alive."

Mothers like Mona also discover self-sufficiency at workshops and seminars. They learn to budget for each month and prioritize family income. They share techniques for child discipline, managing adolescence, healthy communication, and other issues. They can plan nutritious meals so that they can keep away the anemia from which nearly 40% of Egyptian children suffer.

Just this past month, 144 mothers at workshops throughout Egypt discovered that they can encourage their children to acquire skills that they don't have themselves. After the workshops, the mothers said that they realized that they are not powerless, but have the strength to accomplish so much.

Once mothers discover that, they courageously break themselves and their children out of the dependency trap: starting their own businesses to support their children's education, learning to read, and nurturing their children's God given potential in the face of adversity and difficulty.

That's the path that Mona has now stepped onto. And together, we can help more orphaned families break out of the trap of dependency. After all, our greatest victory comes when find that our help is no longer needed.

His Grace Blesses New Facility



On Friday, May 9th, Metropolitan Bakhomious blessed a new building for the St. Mark Center for children with

special needs, one of Coptic Orphans' partners on the ground in Egypt. The children at the St. Mark Center will learn new trades and handicraft skills that will equip them to gain greater self-sufficiency in the new building.

"I talk about Coptic Orphans wherever I go," Bishop Bakhomious said as he thanked Coptic Orphans for supporting the project through a generous anonymous contributor.

The Diocese of Shobra El Khema and its vicinities thanks Coptic Orphans for all its efforts to support orphans: financially, socially, and spiritually, in coordination with volunteer Reps from the Diocese. Also, Coptic Orphans always seeks to develop the volunteer Reps and mothers of orphaned children.

May God reward your hard work and bless everything you do.

-Bishop Morcos of Shobra El Khema and Vicinities, June 9, 2008

Save the Date: Saturday, October 18th



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

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