

# Coptic Orphans

...transforming generations

## Journey of a Sponsor: A Wake-up Call



*Oliver Abadeer in Egypt with two of the children he corresponds with as a sponsor.*

When I first started sponsoring a child through Coptic Orphans in 2002, all I did was send my monthly contributions. In the beginning I thought that Coptic Orphans was just another charity, just giving out food and clothes. Then everything changed.

I originally lived in Australia, but a few years back I settled in the UK with my wife to pursue my career and to travel. With every career advancement, we sponsored more children as our way of sharing God's

blessings. But I didn't have an attachment to any of the children, and it wasn't until I got to the UK that I even started to read the letters that the children were writing to me.

***"These kids are not about the money, they really want a personal relationship."***

***Oliver Abadeer, sponsor***

As I went back and read the original letters, I realized that my children were upset with me for not responding to their letters. It struck me that these kids are not about the money; they really yearned for a personal relationship. From then on I knew I had to get more involved, so I decided to go to Egypt to visit the children. It was a phenomenal experience.

First of all, I realized I didn't really understand how my money was being used. It was going to much more than just food and clothing. I learned that every sponsored child had to be literate and stay in school to stay in the program. I learned how the volunteer Rep sits down with each child and his or her family, and sets individual goals and follows up with them. They get tutoring, they attend workshops, they go on field trips. What I saw on the ground in Egypt—how the little amount I was giving was being used to make such a huge difference—it changed the way I looked at my own life.

When I came home, I was numb for a while. Everything around me, all the things I worried about—the kind of car I'm going to buy, my next promotion—it was nothing compared to what these kids struggled for. You quickly realize that we place these superficial burdens in our lives that have been conjured up in our heads. These children, they don't do that. They are so much happier and thankful, despite the very little that they have, and I would say closer to God than I was. That was the wake-up call for me.

Since the visit, I'm much more involved with the children. The letters I read went from "I like this," and "I like that" to "I wish you could come back and visit. I'm doing much better in school." And now I write back. My wife and I both sponsor children and we consider them part of our extended family. I can be that person to encourage him, coaches him through difficult periods, and celebrates special occasions with him, even if we're in different countries.

With Easter coming up, I'm thinking about ways to get more involved. Besides sending gifts, I wanted to share my story and hope that everyone who reads it will get more involved with helping the children, not just with their money, but with their hearts. I want to encourage more people to become part of the extended family of a child in Egypt by becoming a sponsor. If each of us does just one thing this Easter for a child in Egypt, then not a single child there would feel alone.

### Easter Compassion, Easter Gifts

Oliver's story (left) really captures something about the sponsorship relationship that I wish everyone could experience: When you sponsor a child, it is not just the child's life that is transformed, it is your own. Over twenty years ago, I was moved to try to help a few children have a better life in an orphanage. Little did I know that God would transform this simple gesture into a new lifelong passion and calling. I am the one who is indebted to the children, because they have given me new eyes, new ears, and a new heart in this journey.

I heard that the price of meat in Egypt is hovering around LE40.00 per kilo, about half of a typical widow's pension for an entire month. When you give with your heart this Easter, I guarantee you will receive a greater gift, just like Oliver and I did.

- Nermien Riad

### 1,000 Children in Need of Sponsors

Of the 14,000 children whose lives Coptic Orphans has touched, there are nearly 7,000 children currently participating in the Not Alone program with Coptic Orphans. But only about 2,000 of them know the joy of being sponsored. We want 1,000 more of them to know that joy this year. Can you be a part of a child's extended family? Do you know someone else who can? Call us at 1-800-499-2989. Tell us how you can help.

### Serve to Learn Deadline Coming Up

Be sure and contact us immediately if you or a loved one wants to get in on the Serve to Learn journey this year. The application deadline is April 1. Serve to Learn is June 27 to July 18th this year.

### Coptic Orphans

P.O. Box 2881, Merrifield VA 22116 703.641.8910  
or 800.499.2989  
info@copticorphans.org www.copticorphans.org  
All donations are tax exempt: 54-1637257

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

03/09

- 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- This contribution is an Easter gift for my sponsored child..
- This contribution is an Easter gift for any child that needs it.

#### Payment Info (kindly note that direct debiting helps us reduce administrative costs)

- 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 I provided above.  
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Donate Online**  
(and help reduce administrative costs)

[www.copticorphans.org](http://www.copticorphans.org)

**Coptic Orphans**

P.O. Box 2881  
Merrifield, VA 22116

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