

Letter from the Executive Director



We laid the foundations. We built the bridge. We crossed over to the other side. And we were blessed. And the blessings have come in many forms.

Each day I am reminded of the remarkable resilience that children possess. Beneath a fragile exterior, these children are ready to take on the world. Our successes are rooted in the words of Manga, a 15-year old girl, whose pride radiates out of her smile, when she tells us that she is ranked third in her class at school. Just one year ago this little girl could barely read. She now has, with her ambitions, propelled herself to the top of her class, and she plans on going as far as her aspirations will take her.

Manga's journey has not been an overnight one. It has taken months of hard work. It has taken support from the people around her, namely her Coptic Orphans Rep. It has taken faith and belief in God and in herself. Manga's journey is

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not unlike ours. Our work is far from done, but each day we are given that extra push, each day we take more steps across the bridge, and we know that we can make a difference.

But without that help, without the support there is nothing we can accomplish. Much like Manga; without support she would not have received the education that she has always People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges. —Minister Joseph Fort Newton, mason and minister

wanted. I am left asking myself, how many little girls and boys are out there just like Manga who have this ambitious desire to learn, but are held back because no one will help? How many children are not given the chance to learn because they are taken out of school all too early? Because they are not fortunate enough to think of education as an everyday occurrence rather than as a luxury?

By God's grace we have been blessed in more ways than one this year. A US government grant, which many people believed would be impossible to come by, has been awarded to Coptic Orphans, for the Valuable Girl Project. Promoting the importance of education amongst girls like Manga is at the heart of this project, and it is now a heart that beats all the more powerfully because of this grant. We have much to be grateful for this year.

I would especially like to thank His Holiness Pope Shenouda for meeting with us and blessing our work, Father Bishoy Andrawes and Father Anthony Messeh for their unwavering support, the many bishops who have advised us and prayed for us and to each one of you for your generosity, your kind words and your commitment to the children.

Vernier Riad

Letter from the Chairman of the Board

The year 2003 was a great success for Coptic Orphans, thanks to God. Due to the challenges facing fund raising efforts, the level of individual attention required for the growing number of children assisted, as well as new program development, Coptic Orphans made the strategic decision to increase its staff. We welcome to the headquarters staff Doris Abdel Messieh and Danyelle Ballard. In addition, in Egypt, we welcome Hayam Ragheb, Raafat Bushra, and Happy Anwar.

On the fundraising side, income increased by 20% to \$1.2M and new fund raising efforts, spearheaded by Danyelle, were launched to address the issue of the expansion outside of the Coptic community. The total number of children that Coptic Orphans has made a difference in their lives grew by 25% to over 5,700. This number includes 135 girls and young women that are now being served by the Valuable Girl Project which is the fruit of the tireless efforts of Phoebe Farag.

Coptic Orphans' board was also reinvigorated with additions of Julie Meawad, Mary Sorial, and Sherif Kaiser who bring a range of legal, financial, and children's health expertise to the board.

A torn jacket is soon mended; but hard words bruise the heart of a child.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, poet, educator and linguist

From a strategic perspective, Coptic Orphans is rapidly growing towards a level where we ultimately hope, with God's grace, to reach out and help - in some form or fashion - every vulnerable child in Egypt. This goal will only be accomplished with your continued help. On behalf of the board of Coptic Orphans, we thank every one of our sponsors and donors for your significant contributions and support as we continue to remember those who have no one to remember them.





Coptic Orphans was founded in 1989 because of the desire of one woman to make a difference in the lives of the children in Egypt. Since then, Coptic Orphans has grown to become a well-known and well-respected organization. Starting out with just 45 orphans, the number of children we have served has grown to over 5,700 children. Support for the children has gone from mere child aid to include programs such as the Valuable Girl Project, the Sponsorship Program, 1,001 Tales and the Serve to Learn Program. The message about these children has spread in the United States, and is now reaching donors all over the world. To date Coptic Orphans has offices in the USA, Canada and Australia.

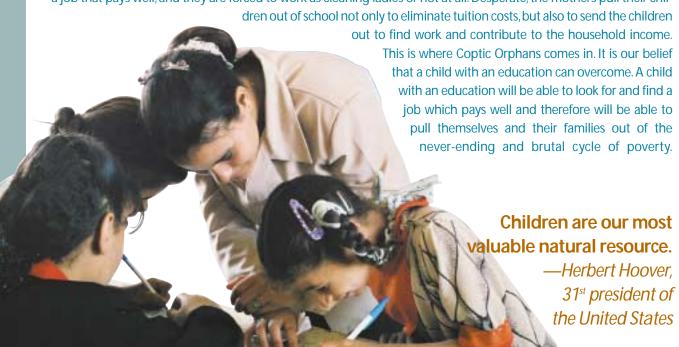
Our Mission: Coptic Orphans exists to improve the lives of orphans and other vulnerable children in Egypt by providing basic needs, education, and mentoring so that they may realize their potential to become productive members of society.

Coptic Orphans also exists to raise awareness about poverty in Egypt and promote cultural and religious tolerance.

Our Vision: To see every vulnerable child of Egypt confidently face the future with a renewed sense of hope and a life enriched with education, health and equality.

Child Aid Program

Coptic Orphans' flagship program is the Child Aid Program – it is this program that has allowed us to provide direct assistance to over 5,700 children. For the purposes of Coptic Orphans, the term "orphans" means the children whose fathers have either passed away or abandoned them. These children live with their mothers, and what may have already been a very difficult life, becomes an almost unbearable one with the absence of he who was the bread-winner. Often the mothers are uneducated and consequently illiterate which means that it is impossible for them to find a job that pays well, and they are forced to work as cleaning ladies or not at all. Desperate, the mothers pull their children out of school not only to eliminate tuition costs but also to send the children



Child Aid: Coptic Orphans in Egypt



Coptic Orphans, through an extensive grassroots network of representatives (Reps) all over Egypt, reaches out to these children and monitors their schooling and basic needs from the moment they are entered into the Child Aid program. Our Reps are servants of the church who have been nominated to us by the bishop in whose diocese both the Reps and the children live. The Reps are required to directly report to area program managers (APMs) as well attend quarterly meetings. This network has allowed Coptic Orphans to extend its programs and services from Alexandria to Aswan, and with God's grace and the benevolence of our donors, Coptic Orphans will one day be able to reach every child in need.

Success Stories

Every year, Coptic Orphans is fortunate enough to witness the success and accomplishments of many of the children in the program. Although we are proud of every single one of the children, two cases in particular stand out this year.

Moheb: from School Dropout to Xerox Accountant

Moheb joined the Coptic Orphan's program in 1998. His family was in need of all the help they could get with Moheb's mother devoting most of her time to either taking care of her handicapped son, or trying to earn a living for her family by cleaning houses.

The conditions in which the family was living were sub-human. Home was a dark, dank room under the staircase, with floors covered in sewage. Moheb's father died after a long battle with stomach cancer, and they were forced to sell all of their possessions. At the age of 12, following his father's death, Moheb was torn between pursuing his education and working to support his mother and handicapped brother.

At that time, Coptic Orphans came into Moheb's life, and he no longer had to choose between doing what was right for him or what would help his family. Witnessing the harsh conditions in which Moheb and his family were living, Coptic Orphans provided the family with all the necessities, needed to improve the dismal circumstances in which they were living.

Coptic Orphans paid for a hygienic water system to deal with the drainage problems in their home. For Moheb, Coptic Orphans' assistance meant that he was able to continue with his education, graduate from high school, and then go on to the High Cooperation Institute, where he received very good grades. Moheb's ambitions didn't end there. He took computer programming courses after graduating from the institute, and he now works in the accounting department of Xerox.

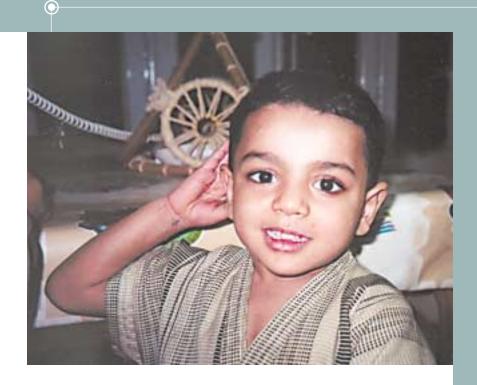
Moheb's family is very proud of him – not only has he gone on to finish his education, he now has a good job that helps him provide for his family that was so desperately in need.



William's Dream

William was one of many ambitious children in school, always receiving good grades, with dreams to go on to medical school. But because of his family's impoverished situation, it had seemed that this dream would not be possible for him. William would be resigned to the fate that many children had sadly succumbed to before him.

Thankfully for Dr. William, as he is now called, this has not been the case. He has earned his pharmaceu-



tical degree, his future is looking bright, and he will be able to lead the kind of life he had long dreamed of while he was facing one hardship after the next in his difficult past.

His father died of renal failure, leaving behind a family with no source of income except for a monthly government pension of only 100 EGP (\$16.67), which did not come close to covering the costs of bread for a mother and four children.

Of William's three sisters, one died of heart problems at the age of 18. His mother had dedicated her life to raising her children well; ensuring that she was doing whatever it might take to guarantee a good upbringing. But with these devastating losses to the family, things took a turn for the worse and life became plagued with difficulties.

William has gone farther than many children in his situation often can - completing his high school degree. His final grade granted him admission into one of the most sought after university faculties, medicine or pharmaceutical science, but grades alone were not enough. William's mother could not afford the expense of sending her son to university, and so it seemed his dream had come to a sudden end.

While visiting William's family, Coptic Orphans learned of his ambitions, and so William's life once again took a turn this time for the better. Coptic Orphans provided William not only with his tuition fees, but his sister's school fees as well, while helping support the family until William graduated from university. He excelled throughout his university career, receiving once again excellent grades, and upon graduation, he found a job in a well-respected firm.

William is now able to support his family and lead the life he and his mother had hoped for.

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The Valuable Girl Project: Bridging Religious Differences



No one benefits from religious intolerance. Anger and hatred towards someone of a different religion has often been the source of violence and destruction. Children in Egypt are growing up watching wars and violent conflict on television, and internalizing inaccurate ideas about people who are different from them. At a time in Egypt when world events are heightening religious tensions, where does one begin to make a change?

For Coptic Orphans, the Valuable Girl Project is the best place to start building bridges across religions. In the program, girls in high school and college are trained to be academic mentors to girls in primary

school. Through one-on-one tutoring and mentoring, these "big sisters" read stories and do homework and other academic activities with their "little sisters." They meet twice a week throughout the academic year, to develop a strong bond of mentorship between the older and younger girls. The "little sisters" receive a positive, educated female role model; the "big sisters" receive a sense of responsibility in their new leadership roles. Both Christians and Muslims participate as "big sisters" and "little sisters" in this program.

He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward him for what he has done.

— *Proverbs* 19:17



Did you know that the company you work for may have a policy to match each and every gift you make to Coptic Orphans? Please contact the relevant personnel at your place of business to find out if your company does this. Also you can contact Coptic Orphans with the name of your company and we will tell you if the company has a matching gift program, in addition to advising you on the procedure to initiate that gift.

Let your heart feel for the afflictions and distress of everyone, and let your hand give in proportion to your purse.



The Valuable Girl Project emphasizes respect and empathy for others. The project training includes modules on active listening, respect and tolerance for different religions and cultures, positive reinforcement, and conflict resolution. Participating "big sisters" put these concepts into practice during training, through games, role playing and hands-on activities. Most importantly, they continue to practice them during their tutoring sessions with their "little sisters." The "big sisters" are not just role models of educated young women. They are models of a peaceful way of interacting with people, of a respect for differences, and of a transformed way of dealing with disagreements.

Not only has the Valuable Girl Project begun bridging the religious divide, but it has expanded in 2003 to include a new site and more girls. Valuable Girl is now being implemented in urban Cairo and in a rural village of Upper Egypt. Over 135 girls are participating in the program. The enormous success of the program in 2002 is demonstrated by the feedback of the project participants. "The best aspect of Valuable Girl is that it fulfills my goals and made for me a future, a personality, and made me want to continue my studies so I can be a teacher," one participant said on her project evaluation

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

—Romans 12:10

form. "In the beginning," one "big sister" wrote, "the girls did not respond to me when I explained. But after some time we created a relationship and then the girls started to understand." Another "big sister" explained that her favorite part of the project was the "exchange of love" between her and her "little sister."

Clearly, the Valuable Girl Project broadens the horizons for participating girls. It encourages the development of goals, ambitions, and drive in the girls. It builds confidence and self-esteem at the same time that it builds strong relationships as participants help each other. Through the Valuable Girl Project, these girls are changing their communities by actively promoting girls' education and planting seeds of peace and tolerance.





Sponsoring a Child: Building a Bridge across the Continents

Currently over 700 children are being sponsored by people who have chosen to reach out to them from Australia, Brunei, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the USA. With God's grace more and more people from all over the world will reach out to the children.

Imagine losing your father, not having enough money for food, for clothes, for school and not having clean, running water in your house. Now imagine that suddenly, from across the other side of

the world, you hear that you have a new friend; a new somebody that has promised to help you, to cherish you and to pray for you. Becoming a sponsor means just that. It means becoming a hero to a child that may never see you, but who has created a special place in his/her heart just for you.

It has been Coptic Orphans' experience that the sponsor benefits almost as much as the child does. The advantage to being a sponsor are the hand written letters from the children saying "thank you for the gift you sent and I promise

None of us has gotten where we are solely by pulling ourselves up from our own bootstraps. We got here because somebody bent down and helped us.

—Thurgood Marshall, former U.S. Supreme Court Justice

to pray for you," the personalized five piaster note, the picture of the saint and the carefully drawn pictures. Sponsorship builds a very special bridge between the donors and the children.

Marium's father passed away leaving behind a wife, five children and an enormous debt incurred by his illness. Since



joining the program, two of the children have graduated from commerce high school. Marium was not doing well in school. Now, thanks to the support and the encouragement of her sponsor, she is doing much better. Not only has she started taking private lessons, which have been an immense help in passing her tests at school, she also now has a brand new desk where she sits to study. She lives in a home that, until recently, was on the verge of collapse. Now the home is renovated and safe to live in. According to Marium's Rep, "She now feels safe and secure as she gets whatever she needs," thanks to Coptic Orphans and her sponsor.

Following his visit with Marium, her sponsor, Sameh, told Coptic Orphans; "I was very touched by this experience and was glad I could help in any way. I hope to be able to help Marium and her family get out of the conditions that they are in."

Marium recently sent a letter to her sponsor. In it she said;

He is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done.

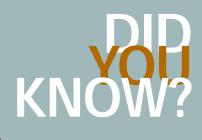
—*Proverbs* 19:17

My dear father Sameh,

Thank you very much for caring about me and for asking about me. I would like you to know that I attend liturgy every Saturday at St George Church and I also go to Sunday School. Now I am doing very well in school. Two years ago, I got high grades in school but in the fifth grade I got only 295 out of 350 because I was ill during the exams. I am doing well in school thanks to you. In the meantime I am taking lessons, thanks to you and your care. I love you very much.

Thank you.

Your daughter, Marium



Did you know that the Coptic Orphans Reps are non-paid volunteers? All the Reps that work with and visit the children receive no compensation for their service. They are spurred on by their love for Christ, their ambition to help God's children and in some cases their first-hand experience of being an orphan and knowing how it feels.

Serve to Learn: Bridging the Cultural Gap

"They were kind to us," one child said. "I didn't think Americans would be that way." He was talking about his summer English teachers. In July 2003, six young women and men traveled from the United States and Canada to teach English through Coptic Orphans' new volunteer program, Serve to Learn. Serve to Learn 2003 truly built bridges between these Egyptian children and the American and Canadian youth that spent their summer with them—at a time when such bridges of understanding are sorely needed.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

-Mark 10:45

Serve to Learn volunteers taught a dynamic summer English program at various schools in Egypt. In 2003, volunteers went to the Upper Egyptian towns of El Fashn and Matay. For three weeks they taught special classes for orphans in the mornings, and in the afternoons for anyone else interested in taking a summer English course. In the evenings, the volunteers visited orphaned children in their homes.

"I was deeply touched," said one volunteer, "at the realization that although the children did not have much, they were happy and content with what they did have; their joy was not dependent on possessions. They were elated to have us over, unashamed of their living conditions, which sadly reminded me of the shallow existence many of us live in today ... At the same time, we aren't called to have pity on those stricken with poverty ... God has placed them in our path to teach us." This volunteer's words demonstrate the purpose of the Serve to Learn program: to give the volunteers an opportunity to learn through serving their brothers and sisters in Egypt.



The Many Voices of Coptic Orphans

Donors & Supporters

I am very proud of your organization based on what I have seen over the past few years and my interaction with some of your members. It is impressive to see a grassroots organization evolve into a polished and very viable charity. Many times good ideas have just turned into clubs or some informal hobby. The strength of this organization seems to be its follow through and its ability to effectively use different mediums ... to communicate with the Coptic community and the rest of the world.

— John Mikhael, New York City, NY

I pray that God will continue to bless the labor of your hand and the conviction of your heart as you continue to serve the children.

—Nadia Kist, New York City, NY

Blessed are those who can give without remembering and take without forgetting. -Elizabeth Bibesco I am very happy and thankful to God that I have come to know about the existence of Coptic Orphans. I thanked God that there was somebody out there with enough love for these unfortunate children - somebody that really cares! Since finding out about them I have been an avid follower of their news through their annual reports and their website. Their work for orphaned children in Egypt is so impressive and deserves all our support and recognition! I have become so much engaged and now feel compelled to help out and take part in this great and blessed endeavor! What better way to spend our time and energy, caring for our younger brothers and sisters, who do not have somebody to remember them, and who are unable to help themselves. In doing so, we allow them their human rights to survive and succeed and to give glory to God who came to rescue them in their afflictions! Also, when we accept to sponsor one of these children we accept Jesus himself, and whatever we offer them, is an offering of love to our Lord himself. I really hope the day will come, when every family accepts to sponsor one of the children in the name of Jesus. Then, Jesus will find a place in each of our homes and hearts.

lacksquare

—Anonymous, Mississauga, Ontario

Upon thanking His Grace for his support, he replied by saying "it is I that should be thanking Coptic Orphans for the great work they do."

— Bishop Moussa, Bishop for Youth, Egypt

Representatives

When asked what the deciding factor was in choosing to join Coptic Orphans, one rep replied; "My feeling that these families actually need me and that I put a smile on the lips of every orphan - it is a service for me personally."

— Tharwat W. Azmi, Rep

My incentive to help the children is the passage from the Bible that tells us that "pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). I learnt that orphans

are NOT the children who have lost their mothers and fathers but rather those that have no one to ask about them.

—George K. Adly, Rep

I want to compensate for the loss of a father's love.

—Anonymous Rep





Children

Dear Coptic Orphans Staff,

We would like to express our deep appreciation to you all for everything you do for us. We feel deep love and respect for the hard work and the efforts you do to supply us with our needs such as school equipments, clothes and food. We are so happy that you are always there to help us. Thank you so much.

We are the daughters of the late Nabil A. Thanks to God and thanks to you, we are now pursuing our education in the university in good colleges. Mervat, is in 4th year of Arts College, history department. Manal is in 3rd year of Arts College, English department. Nabila is in 1st year of Education College, English department. Without your support, we wouldn't have become what we are now.

— Mervat, Manal and Nabila.

Charity sees the need, not the cause.

—German proverb

Our accomplishments for 2003

Coptic Orphans is so pleased to be able to announce that with God's grace and many blessings, we have passed several successful milestones that we would like to share with you.

- □ 1,146 children were added to the Child Aid Program;
- 600 out of 700 children poised to be dropped out of school because of an inability to read, are now reading and consequently are still in school;
- ☐ To date, Coptic Orphans has seen 829 children graduate from high school and 174 graduate from university;
- 688 children in the Child Aid Program improved their circumstances and no longer need assistance;
- ☐ The Valuable Girl Project has prevented 98% of girls participating from dropping out of school;
- ☐ A brand new program was established this year; 1,001

 Tales (Kissa) gives the children an opportunity, many for the first time in their lives, to own their very own book and at absolutely no cost. The book fairs allow for the children to choose their very own book to keep;
- Coptic Orphans received its very first grant from the United States Embassy in Egypt. The grant is for the Valuable Girl Project;
- Coptic Orphans was granted a television interview on Channel 9 News - it was an excellent opportunity to tell the community about our work;
- Rutgers University in New Jersey hosted a banquet to raise awareness about orphans in Egypt. At the banquet Coptic Orphans was presented with an award from the Coptic Orthodox Fellowship who also managed to raise over \$11,000 for Coptic Orphans at the banquet.

As the purse is emptied, the heart is filled.

—Victor Hugo, poet, novelist and playwright



Who We Are

U.S. Office

Director of Development: Director of Public Relations: Operations Manager: International Program Manager: Administrative Assistant:	Doris Abdel Messieh Lisa Basta Phoebe Farag
Australia Office	
Program Director Australia:	Sophie Georgy
Canada Office	
Program Director Canada:	Alexander Sidhom
Egypt Office	
Egypt Director : Office Manager Program Associate Public Relations Manager	Hayam Ragheb Happy Anwar

Executive Director: Nermien Riad

Board Members

Chairman of the Board:	Robie Samanta Roy
Members:	Julie Meawad
	Mary Sorial
	Sherif Kaiser
	Sawsan Said Hanna
	Nermien Riad



Did you know that Coptic Orphans has helped families build better homes? Often times a child has difficulty studying because of the conditions s/he is forced to live in. Coptic Orphans recognizes that a clean environment is pivotal to a successful learning environment. Because of this, Coptic Orphans has built new homes, renovated existing ones, installed new water pipes and created access to a clean water supply as well as brought electricity into the homes.

Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor.

—Psalm 82:3

Financial Page

COPTIC ORPHANS SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2003

Assets	2003
Cash	65,579 9,411 419,198
Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities Total Liabilities	
Net Assets	1,195,839
Total Net Assests Total Liabilites and Net Assets	

Your overhead is very minimal. In considering the proverbial "bang for the buck" I'm certain that Coptic Orphans outshines the majority of nonprofits not only in Egypt but in many places in the world.

—Jennifer Brinkerhoff, associate professor, Public Administration & International Affairs, George Washington University

COPTIC ORPHANS SUPPORT ASSOCIATION Statement of Activites • December 31, 2003

Public Support	
Contributions	
US	1 111 785
Canada	22.176
Australia	
Gift-in-Kind	
Total Contributions	
Grants	
Grants	5,330
Total Grants	
Total Public Support	
Revenue	
Investment and Interest	11 634
Total Revenue	11,634
TALIBAR CONTRACTOR	4 004 050
Total Public Support and Revenue	1,221,858
Operating Expenses	
Program Services	
Program Activities	691,968
Total Program Services	691,968
3	
Supporting Services	
Management and General	43,866
Fund raising Total Support Services	41,738
Total Support Services	85,604
Total Operating Expenses	777.572
Excess (deficit) of Public Support & Revenue	444.007
over Operating Expenses	444,286
Non-Operating Revenues (expenses)	
Fund balance, beginning of year	732,746
Fund balance, beginning of year Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	18,807
Net Assests, End of Year	1,195,839

COPTIC ORPHANS SUPPORT ASSOCIATION

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Statement of Functional Expenses • For the Year Ended December 31, 2003

	Program Services				Supporting Services			
				Total	Management		Total	2003
				Program	and		Supporting	Total
	Education	Literacy	Basic Needs			Fundraising	Services	Expenses
Subsidies	\$226,279	\$56,570 .	\$94,283	\$377,131	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$377,131
Grants to other agencies	13,120	0.	13,120	26,240	0	0	0	26,240
Equipment	3,699	925.	1,541	6,165	1,233	822	2,055	8,220
Supplies	12,429	3,107.	5,179	20,715	4,143	2,762	6,905	27,620
Telecommunications	2,446	611.	1,019	4,076	1,087	272	1,359	5,435
Postage and Shipping	2,371	593 .	988	3,952	988	14,819	15,807	19,759
Advertising and Public Education	1,097	274 .	457	1,829	0	5,050	5,050	6,879
Printing	1,342	336	559	2,237	17,894	2,237	20,130	22,367
Salaries & Program Management								
Taxes								
Occupancy	10,919	2,730.	4,550	18,198	1,213	809	2,022	20,220
Travel	3,916	979.	1,632	6,526	653	5,873	6,526	13,052
Bank charges	201	50.	84	335	3,015	0	3,015	3,350
Total Expenses	\$412,557	\$99,859	\$179,552	\$691,968	\$43,866	\$41,738	\$85,604	\$777,572





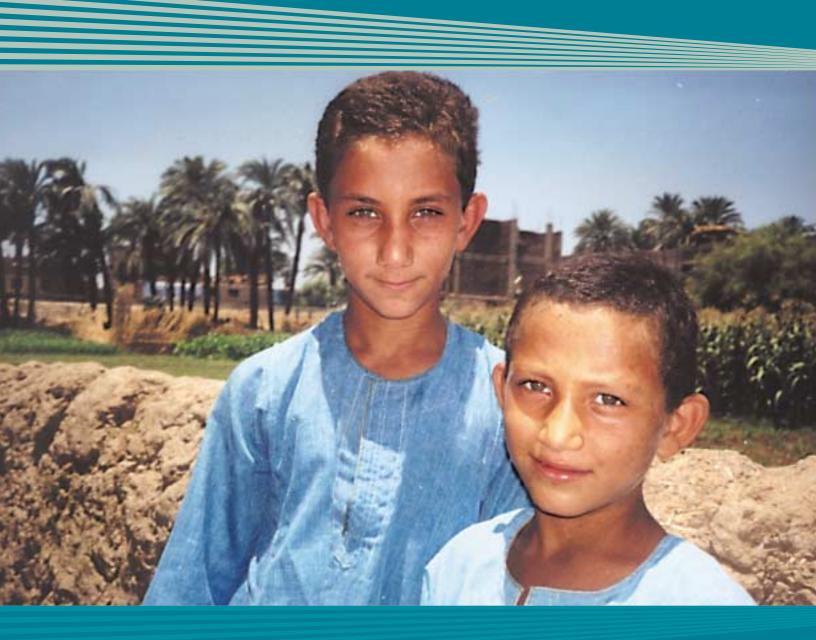




I KNOW THAT THE LORD SECURES JUSTICE FOR THE POOR AND UPHOLDS THE CAUSE OF THE NEEDY —PSALM 140:12;

2003 ANNUAL REPORT

www.copticorphans.org



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