



When a girl achieves an education, she achieves a better future for her whole family.

Married at Nine: My Story

“She was married at nine and had her first child at only twelve.” Manal Bedwany, Director of Coptic Orphans Canada, relates a personal story about her grandmother, Bedour.

After the death of Bedour’s mother, her father married her off to a much older man. Only a child herself, she struggled to take care of her own children while she slaved each day: she arose before dawn and worked exhausted into the night.

Every day the hardness of life beat at Bedour until she was stretched thin and worn, nearly enough to tear in two. Then, a stroke struck her aging husband with paralysis. Without skills, without income, illiterate, yet a young mother of by now nine children, she had no further choice. She pulled the older children out of school, trading in the future of the family for a few pounds to purchase their immediate survival. For the next ten years, the children slaved in factories while Bedour slaved at

home, managing the household and tending to her husband until his death. “By the time that my grandmother passed on, many harsh and unrelenting years gave her the deep lines of a woman in her eighties. In fact, she was only 56. When Bedour’s father refused her the opportunity for life by pulling her from school, he refused her children and her children’s children that opportunity, as well. Only my mother and her sister broke the cycle of poverty, because only they became literate.”

Child marriage destroys families across generations with poverty. That’s why Coptic Orphans places special emphasis on preventing it. We have graduated 99% of the girls in our Valuable Girl program to the next grade; all in areas where 30% of girls drop out of school. We advocate for them, give them the opportunities and confidence to overcome, and help them pass that same opportunity to future generations of girls.

Quick Stats: Child Marriage

17% - children in Egypt who entered into child marriages.
- Unicef, 2005

29% - “Young brides who have been beaten by their husbands or other relatives”
- BBC, March, 7 2001

99% - At-risk girls in Coptic Orphans programs that have graduated to the next grade.

← Your Story Here

Here, we shared one of our stories about injustice in Egypt. If you also have a story of your own, we’d love to share it with the Coptic Orphans community.

Get in touch with us by e-mail at info@copticorphans.org, or reply with the enclosed envelope.

Save the Date!

Coptic Orphans 1st annual charity benefit fashion show
Sunday, September 23, 2007
Washington, DC

See News on Reverse Page

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

07/07

- Yes! I would love to host an event for a child in need with one of the ideas on the back of this newsletter. Call me to help me get started. The best number at which to reach me is: (_____)_____-_____
- I would like to set up a recurring donation of:
 \$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 Other \$ _____
- Please debit my checking account on the 15th of every month (attach VOID check)
- OR
- Please charge to my credit card on the 1st of every month
 credit card number: _____ exp date ____/____
- Enclosed is my check for a one time donation



Sponsor a child and bring joy and hope on every occasion.

With your help this past Easter, Coptic Orphans Reps distributed over \$17,000—over and above the normal Easter gifts. Here's what some said:

“I am very happy because I got new clothes for Easter ...I'll do well in my studies because of your care”

- From Abdelsayed to his sponsor Benjamin

“Thank you for the \$50 that you have sent her. I have opened a savings account for her with the money. She is so happy and she has bought a toy [a rare luxury in her village]. Thank you for your care.”

- From Hany, a Coptic Orphans Rep

“My dear Mother... Thank you for your love and for caring about me. You take care of my school needs, private lessons, feast clothes, and all that I need. Because of you I can continue my education... Christ is risen! Truly He has risen.”

- From Nermine, a child in Egypt, to Her Sponsor Lilian

Lake Michigan Region Hears about the Plight of Egyptian Children

On June 15th, Manal Bedwany, Nathan and Miriam Hollenbeck traveled to the Lake Michigan area to share the plight of the children in Egypt. On Friday, June 15th, they spoke at the Arabic Bible Conference in Muskegon, MI, and on Sunday, June 17th, at St. Mark's Coptic Church in Chicago, IL.

Special thanks to Ihab and Maggie Riad who showed us exceptional hospitality. They opened their home and their hearts to us and coordinated the presentation at St. Mark's with Rafaat Malek. Without their support, it would not have been possible.

Open Your Home for Children in Need

If you would like to get involved with the children but cannot travel to Egypt, consider becoming a Coptic Orphans representative in your own home. Here are a few ideas:

- Invite your friends and family to your house for dinner and show our PowerPoint presentation. Then, invite them to sponsor a child.
- Host an early morning reading group in your home or at a local coffee shop. Read St. John Chrysostom's *On Wealth and Poverty* together. Then, put what you learn into action and sponsor a child together.
- Talk to your child and his/her friends about how children like them live in Egypt.. Then, throw a party for your child. Have your child help invite people to come and give a gift in your child's name for a disadvantaged child in Egypt.

We'll give you everything you need. Just e-mail Tamara Martin at tmartin@copticorphans.org

Coptic Orphans

PO Box 52033, Laval, QC, H7P 5S1 - mbedwany@copticorphans.org - info@copticorphans.org - www.copticorphans.org

All donations are tax exempt: 879517712RR0001