

LATEST NEWS # 519, June 13, 2008

The following news concerns Armenia.

Registered users of the UBS Intranet can find more news about Bible Societies' work under *Latest News* in the Communications section

Excitement at Easter for pupils at special school

ARMENIA — Easter gifts gave a new joy and excitement to children with little or no sight at a special school in the capital, Yerevan, called simply 'N 14'.

As the Bible Society in Armenia representatives arrived they could see from the faces of the 60 or so pupils attending the presentation that they were approaching the occasion very seriously.

It was not the Bible Society's first visit to school 'N 14'. During a visit last Christmas, Arshavir Kapoudjian, the Society's Projects Director, had promised them he would come back again with a surprise at Easter. Returning with copies of a two-volume Braille Children's Bible, Mr Kapoudjian was accompanied by Levon Erinjakian, a student from Gevorkian Theological Seminary – and Bible Society volunteer – who visits the school every week to give Religious Education lessons.

Later Mr Kapoudjian told an interviewer from Shoghakat, a Christian television station owned by the Armenian Apostolic Church, how much he had enjoyed it.

Describing the Bible Society's visits to the school as "above all a *responsibility*", he added, "It is inspiring to see the children's joy as they get presents. They are encouraged to see themselves as a true part of society. Communicating with different people makes them feel enriched."

Also taking part was Fr Tajat Davtian of the Armenian Apostolic Church who had brought small crosses for the children. He blessed the books before they were given out and led the children in singing a chorus: "Amen, Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

He also spoke about the significance of Christ's Resurrection.

"Christ has risen from the dead," he said.

"Blessed is the Resurrection of Christ," echoed the children.



This was then followed by a kind of catechetical conversation.

“Who was the first to say ‘Blessed is the Resurrection of Christ?’,” he asked them.

“Theresa!” replied eight-year-old Arman.

For a moment the visitors thought he meant *Mother* Theresa – but in fact he meant a classmate called Theresa – acknowledged as the best pupil of all in spiritual and religious subjects.



Then Fr Tajat went on to talk more about the meaning of Easter.

“The Resurrection of Jesus is the feast of God’s constant presence with people,” he told the seven-to-16 year olds. “We have brought blessings and gifts for you. A blessing is an expression of gratitude for how good life is – despite all its difficulties. Life is good because God is with us!”

After he had spoken, the children’s choir sang while others played their instruments in accompaniment.

The teachers, including the literature teacher and the teacher of Braille, a graduate from the same school, expressed their deep gratitude for the visit.

The most exciting part of the occasion came at the end. The priest handed the recently published Children’s Bible and the small crosses to the pupils. They were confused, touching their crosses and rushing to sit down and read the holy book with their fingers while saying excitedly the words aloud. Soon the hall was entirely filled with joyful sounds of reading. The Word of God was penetrating the hearts of all those present.

This report refers to project 71145.

*Photos (Bible Society in Armenia):
ARM08DJ-2*

Theresa, a pupil at school N 14 for visually impaired children in Yerevan, reads a passage from a Braille Children’s Bible she has just received in an Easter distribution by the Bible Society in Armenia.

ARM08DJ-3

A little boy at school N 14 for visually impaired children in Yerevan eagerly reads a Braille Children’s Bible that he has been given at an Easter distribution by the Bible Society in Armenia. Crosses of the kind he is wearing were given out on the same occasion.

ARM08DJ-4

Excitement shows on the face of a little girl at school N 14 for visually impaired children in Yerevan, Armenia. She is talking to Levon Erinjakian, a Bible Society volunteer, on the occasion of an Easter distribution of Braille Children’s Bibles.

For further information please contact comms@ubs-wsc.org

