



Tales of Raphael

St. Raphael Educational Center Newsletter

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St. Raphael Educational Center is a school for Sudanese refugee children in Cairo run by the Anglican Church. In this issue of the newsletter, we feature stories of some of our students.

Rehab Butrus Ismail

My name is Rehab Butrus Ismail, I am 15 years old, and in grade 6. My parents were unable to find a refugee school with space for me for a few years because all the schools were full, and my family can't afford to pay for private school, so I stayed home. I was waiting for an opportunity to find even an evening school. I also didn't have many opportunities to go to school in Sudan due to war and conflicts in my village. Luckily the administration of St. Raphael School considered my situation, and they admitted me, and now I have a chance to catch up on what I have been missing for years!



The level at St. Raphael is very good compared to other refugee schools. The teachers and administration are committed, and teachers follow up personally with the students. I now think I will be able to chase my dreams after all!

The school is a safe place for me because outside anything can happen, because we live in an area with thugs and gangs. So, I'm amongst the lucky if I can say that. Also, it's common for there to be early pregnancy of girls of my age, especially if they are not in school. Resisting temptation sometimes is difficult when you have bad company and a bad peer group.

My family members are very encouraging; they want me to achieve what they failed to do, particularly my mother, who is working as a cleaner to support the family. However, In a simple family like mine there is still the mentality that education is useless for girls, but, with the help of the school and the parents' council meetings some changes are taking place, especially in my father's mind! My success in school has given some pride to my family, that is why I have the zeal to continue.

Our school is doing tremendous work, but the school needs a bigger space, suitable education tools, labs, a library etc. I pray that God will provide all that we need and are lacking.

Lewis Jamal Hassan Koko

My name is Lewis Jamal Hassan, I'm 12 years old, and I was born in Cairo, Egypt. I am a twin brother; my twin sister is in the same grade as me, seventh grade. My parents have told me sad stories about how war destroyed everything in our village, people were killed, cattle were looted, farms were bunt down by government militia, and how they survived and managed to reach Cairo in 2005.

I started school in a different refugee school which was very poor in term of teachers and the quality of education so my father decided to transfer me into St. Raphael School when it started.

Here I have found my way, and now I am the top of my class and I'm doing very well in my studies with the help of my teachers and my parents. I like to compete and I always want to be number one, even though we are living in a difficult situation. But there is hope at the end of the road and I believe a bright future is awaiting me.

I speak my mother tongue (tribal language) very fluently and Sudanese Arabic very well, but I don't speak Egyptian Arabic very well. My parents want us to learn many things, particularly good ethics and Sudanese values, because it is good to know your roots. Sometimes I feel lost and other times I feel optimistic, especially when I think about being resettled to the USA, as the UN has told us we will be. Dreams can be achieved anywhere if you have the will power for success and support.

Even though the school has limited resources, we still enjoy some sports and leisure time when there is time and the school has money to take us to a field or sports club. Please pray for more space and a bigger building so we can have more room to run and play.



Omnia Nagmalden Abdalla

Hi, I'm Omnia, I'm 13 years old. I went to school at a very young age, starting in kindergarten; and I learned discipline and to be organized instead of only playing and making chaos in the house.

I have finished my Grade 8 exams after the longest academic year in my life! I have finished 10 years of school between primary level, intermediate level, kindergarten and pre-school. I spent these years going back and forth between pain and hope, and a struggle to be proud of myself and fulfill my hopes.



This school year began with a lot of discipline and perseverance and then the year was prolonged because corona virus came, and the year had to be extended till I lost my patience! It was an extraordinary school year; the teacher gave us LOTS of curriculum, and many mock exams to prepare us for the final exams.

I want to be a doctor in the future and will exert all my efforts to reach this goal. There are some challenges as a girl and refugee who needs protection from thugs who harass girls anytime, everywhere, and make life harder. But I have deep faith that everything has a purpose in this life.

I wish our school had a bigger, more appropriate building with more space (St. Raphael takes place in a renovated apartment building). I also wish we had a big library with many story books and scientific ones as well. It's also very important to have a laboratory for science experiments. We also need a computer lab.

Prayer Points

Please pray for St. Raphael Centre and the students and families.

- The school is held in an apartment building and the students need a bigger space that has a computer lab and science lab and assembly hall.
- The school would like to have a school nurse and counsellor or social worker. Please pray that God would provide the right people and funds and enough space for them.
- Please pray for the families as many of them are single parent families that are vulnerable and kids are often home alone while the parent(s) are at work. Many of the families are poor and the children do not eat healthy.