



## Christian Education Resource Center

&

## Women's Studies

Dear friends and partners in Christ,

It is with praise and thanksgiving that I would like to share with you about our Theological Training Seminar for Lay leaders coming from Iraq. The theme of this training seminar was “**The Bible, God’s Word To Us and For Us**”. This training seminar was held between October, 14-18, 2013 at The Near East School of Theology.

Our participants, who were 17 in number, came from the Presbyterian Church in Baghdad and the Presbyterian Church in Karkouk. And another Iraqi participant came from the Armenian Evangelical Fellowship in Baghdad and was sponsored by the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East.



## A brief overview of our Program

We started our day with worship and meditation which was led by the participants working in groups.



## Sessions 1 - 4

The first four sessions were led by Rev. Dr. Ghassan Khalaf and dealt with the following topics:

- a. **How the Bible Came to Be?**
- b. **Inspiration, Authority and Canonization of the Bible.**
- c. **Old Bible Translations and New English Versions.**
- d. **Arabic Translations.**

It was essential that we start with these four foundational topics so as to have a firm basis for the sessions that followed concerning the importance and use of the Bible in their ministries in Iraq.



Rev. Dr. Ghassan Khalaf and the Iraqi Group



## Sessions 5 - 6

These two sessions focused on ‘**How to prepare Bible Studies**’ and a practicum in small groups, where they were given a passage from the Bible and worked in groups to prepare a Bible study and then present what they had prepared. These two sessions were led by Mrs. Hala Bitar Khoury.



Mrs. Hala Bitar Khoury



## Session 7

The topic of this session was, ‘**Christian Education in Traumatic Situations**’ led by Mrs. Patty Ford.

Mrs. Patty Ford is a Christian Educator and is serving with her husband, Dr. Peter Ford in the NEST Community. She focused in her session on what is Christian Education and how Christian Education can be of great source of help while ministering. She also helped leaders to think creatively when preparing lessons.



Mrs. Patty Ford and her translator Ms. Mathilde Sabbagh, an M.Div student from NEST



## Session 8

Our 8<sup>th</sup> session was led by Rev. Suhail Saoud on the topic of **‘What does the Bible Teach about Ministering’**. He is the pastor of the Synod Presbyterian Church in Ras Beirut.



Rev. Suhail Saoud



## Session 9

This session focused on **‘Preparing and Leading Worship Services’** by Mrs. Anna Artin Bosnoyan Ghantous. The speaker led an interactive session as she talked about what worship means and how do we prepare for worship services.



Mrs. Anna Artin Bosnoyan-  
Ghantous

## Session 10

This session's topic was '**Spiritual Renewal in Times of Crisis**' led by preacher Najla Kassab. It was a session where participants were encouraged to learn of ways to be renewed in their spiritual life as well as help others especially when they are living in traumatic situations.

Preacher Najla Kassab



## Between Sessions



## Trip & Dinner

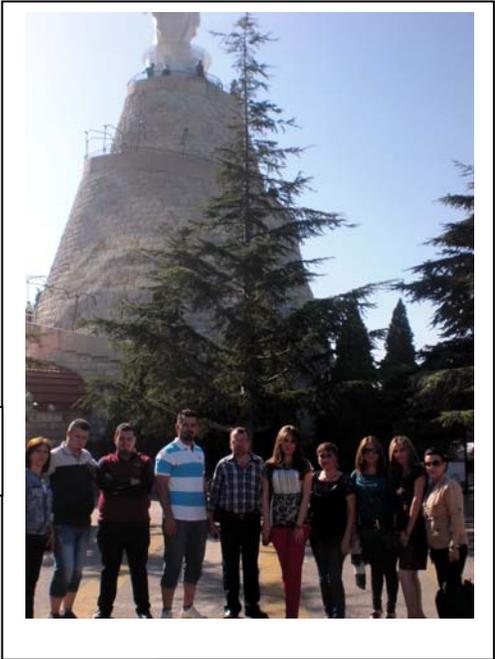
For this training seminar I had to schedule two trips as one group came a day earlier and left earlier because of travel schedules. The groups visited historical sites like Harrissa and Byblos (Jbeil). Both groups also visited the headquarters of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon in Rabyeh, Lebanon and met with the current General Secretary, Rev. Fadi Dagher.



With Rev. Fadi Dagher



Harissa



Byblos (Jbeil)





Sharing a meal



I do thank God that this basic theological training for lay leadership was made possible and it had such a foundational impact on the participants so that they can share with their church members what they learned and also put it into practice as they minister to others.

I also would like to share with you how our participants were here in Lebanon, yet news of car bombs exploding in their home areas was really hard. Our participants as well as the churches in Iraq need our constant prayers.

I thank you dear friends and partners for your continual support and encouragement so that we are enabled to provide such training seminars for the churches in Iraq.

May God bless you and keep you.



The Iraqi groups says **THANK YOU**

Shake` Geotcherian  
Instructor in Christian Education  
Director of the Christian Education Resource Center

Near East School of Theology  
P.O.Box 13-5780 Chouran  
Beirut, 1120 2070  
Lebanon

Tel: (961-1) 346 708 or (961-1)349 901 ext. 144 or 121  
Fax: (961-1) 347 129  
E-mail: [shake.geotcherian@theonest.edu.lb](mailto:shake.geotcherian@theonest.edu.lb)

October 29, 2013

