



Love in action...

In the Egyptian Orthodox Church Easter is celebrated a week later than in the UK. As we continue to reflect on the true meaning of Easter, celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus, we're reminded once again of how God didn't just use words to reconcile the world to himself but costly actions; Jesus died on the cross.

'Words and deeds', 'faith in action', 'walking the talk' – all sorts of phrases have been used to urge Christians to follow Jesus' example of practical action.

An example of one of our Partners showing this very practical outworking of love and care is the Diocese of Egypt, who work within a huge geographical area in North Africa and run health, education and community development projects.

Anglican missionaries first arrived in Egypt in 1825 and the first Anglican Church was built in 1839. In 1945, the Diocese of Egypt, North Africa and the Horn of Egypt was formed, covering a huge geographical area. The missionary organisations in the Middle East at that time recognised there was already a Christian presence and that the ancient Coptic Orthodox Church was the natural means of witnessing to the Gospel.

Overt evangelism would have complicated political and business relationships, therefore mission took place through the form of service, and these traditions have continued today.

Today the Diocese of Egypt works with a whole range of projects in the region, including the Deaf Unit, Refuge Egypt and the Harpur Memorial Hospital. It also supports schools for Sudanese refugee children, rehabilitation projects, vocational training for women and children, literacy classes, prison ministry, youth clubs, micro-enterprise programmes, nursery schools, and care centres for the elderly.

This practical outworking of God's love speaks powerfully to many people across Egypt, in the array of projects that the Diocese run. We often hear stories of how the care and acceptance that people experience at the Diocese's projects mean their hearts are more open to God's transforming love. (Our Overseas Partners the Deaf Unit, Refuge Egypt and Harpur Memorial Hospital, are some of the Diocese of Egypt's projects that BibleLands also supports individually.)

Loving and costly actions and not just the 'right words' are often a struggle for us – it's easier to 'talk the talk' than truly 'walk the talk'. But this Eastertime, let's take our cue from the staff of the projects that the Diocese of Egypt run, who, following Jesus' example, know what it's like to put other's needs first, to tenderly serve and care for the poor, victimised and often-forgotten members of society, showing God's love in their practical care.