The Gift of Peace

Life Care associates are involved in a very special ministry through our annual Operation Christmas Child project. It was encouraging to read in a special report distributed by Samaritan's Purse how shoe boxes are changing the lives of children and adults in war-torn Iraq, for example.

For Iraqi people caught in a nightmare of terror and violence, peace sometimes seems like an impossible dream. But God is using Operation Christmas Child to help people find true peace through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Last year, Ibrahim (not his real name) was so touched by the gifts his children received that he wanted to learn more about Jesus. After listening to a simple presentation of the gospel, he committed his life to the Lord. Before long, he led his entire family to faith in Christ. Ibrahim has since joined the ministry teams distributing gifts in Iraq, and because he comes from an influential family, he has helped them gain access into hostile areas.

One team braved the dangers to distribute shoe box gifts to impoverished school children in an embattled city in central Iraq. "This is the first time in our lives that we have received gifts," one child after another told the team. "Thank you for remembering us." Among those receiving gifts was a group of hearing- and speech-impaired students attending a Muslim school.

Samaritan's Purse ministry partners in Iraq include several churches that have sprouted since the fall of Saddam Hussein. After participating in the shoe box project, all of the new churches reported significant growth in their Sunday schools, and one of them added more than 100 children.

Samaritan's Purse relates that Iraqi believers are greatly encouraged by the spiritual impact they have witnessed as a result of Operation Christmas Child. By building relationships and sharing the love of Christ, they are sowing seeds of peace that they believe will one day yield a bountiful harvest.

And Life Care associates can have a personal sense of satisfaction at the significant role we have played in achieving this outcome.

--Beecher Hunter