

"First Step" Aleppo – fourth year of the Program!

Each of us has heard about the tragic earthquake that hit Turkey and Northern Syria in February. The effects of the earthquake also affected the families of children participating in the Program, hence it can be said that in the face of these events, "First Step" gained a new importance. For people who have lost the roof over their heads and live in constant uncertainty about the future, the awareness of obtaining constant support for their children is the priority.

We visited Aleppo twice this year. During our April stay, funds were distributed and a moving meeting with the families took place. Children and their parents approached us, took photos, thanked Poles for being with them and for their support.



Before the second visit, which took place in July, the Latin Parish, as every year, prepared backpacks filled with stationaries for students from the Program. This time, however, due to the situation after the earthquake, backpacks full of school supplies were given to all children under the care of the parish, i.e. 1,400. This was provided thanks to the generosity of Polish people.

Thanks to this, we not only relieved household budgets, but also brought many smiles to children's faces in this gloomy time.

The main distribution took place in July during our visit, and the parish made sure that absent children received their backpacks later, before the start of the school year.

Another deeply moving experience was the opportunity to spend time with a team of parish volunteers. They are struggling to make basic money for living but still they are there to help others. It was hard to believe when one of the volunteers said that she earned about USD 15/month while working in a private company.

We also met Nadine and Ibrahim, our new coordinators in Aleppo, appointed by Father Bahjat to work with us on "The First Step" and "Solidarity with Aleppo" (all our other projects, i.e. reconstruction of the destruction after the earthquake, support for jobs, etc.)

