



ICCI DSPR

On a Visit to Galilee

In the far north of Israel there are many small villages, which are settled separately by faith. There are Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Druze villages. And only a few cities are religiously mixed. For me as a German, something new and unusual that people here identify so strongly with their religion. There is the small village Miilya, an Arab village in the Western Galilee, has a population of 3,100 Melkite Christians belonging to the Greek Catholic Church tracing their history to 1st century Christians of Antioch, Turkey. In this village I visited the Christian school Notre Dame. It has just been awarded as the best school in Israel. There I met a German deaconess, with a doctorate in physics, who lives and teaches in this small Arabic-speaking Christian village.

In this school ICCI DSPR offers a leadership training program, which helps the Arab students to see the positive sides of things, to strive for the best, to dream, to set high goals, but also to better understand people with different backgrounds. The headmaster and his team are here with all their heart to provide every student with the best possible education.

I was also able to meet Dr. Shukri Arraf, the Middle East history expert, who passionately tells the story of Melkite Christians in the Eastern Mediterranean, from decades of interreligious tension to regained prosperity, and who advocates interreligious dialogue. This dialogue takes place, among other things, at conferences organized and financed by ICC DSPR. A great job and an impressive person.

I got to know Mary in Acre. She is an incredible woman who has opened a center there where young Arab girls from broken families or about to dive into a criminal environment find a safe place. Mary has a huge heart for all these girls, of whom there are many in Acre. Starting with the domestic policy where Arab families are not allowed to rehabilitate their dilapidated old houses so that at some point they are forced to leave them and they are taken over by Jews, it continues with a rather high unemployment rate, an equally high drug and crime rate among the Palestinians. These girls need a place to help them find their way into life, where someone believes in them and where they can develop a perspective for the future. This project is entirely funded by ICCI DSPR.



The Middle East History Expert Dr. Shukri Arraf explains with passion the Christian history of the Middle East



One of the few play possibilities in Akko. The goals have no nets and are covered with plastic foil.



Mary in the building where Palestinian girls from difficult backgrounds find refuge and help.