

JOY

MINISTRY AMONG MUSLIM REFUGEES EUROPE



[For personal safety reasons, Joy has asked that we not use her real name, and that we not even mention the country in which she ministers.]

In the 1990s, as a Christian, Joy escaped from a Middle Eastern country when threatened with being the victim of an honor killing by her strict Muslim family. She left the next morning with her young son. They arrived, crossing mountains in snow and with no money, in a European country where they were helped by a refugee organization. Therefore, no one knows better than Joy the problems faced by the many refugees who have come to that city after her. Ultimately, she worked for this refugee organization as an interpreter and later had her own ministry to the community from her home country. She is currently with a major sending organization, but her situation is unique. Since she has no financial support from her home country, as do missionaries from America to a foreign country, her financial support has been a continuing challenge. Through no fault of her own, it has become less and less through the years. Our church has been her major supporter the past 12 years, with only modest support from one or two other churches and individuals – “One man who has sent me 30 Euros (\$36) monthly for years and I do not even know him.”

The only pension Joy has is from the government: 864 Euros (\$1047) monthly. Thus, she lives “hand to mouth.” She said, “I think many times these days about the people in concentration camps. They were having clear soup once a day. I have food to eat. I have a ceiling to stay under. I’m so thankful to God.” Joy chooses to eat one meal a day in order to be a good steward of her small income. Nonetheless, when she visited the refugee camps during Europe’s migrant crisis from the Middle East 6 years ago, she would take food to them and when refugees were bussed into the city she would take them to McDonald’s to buy them food.

As a citizen now of the country in which she lives, the government provides for the majority of her healthcare—except some medicine, 50% of her dental bills, and glasses (which need to be replaced at 800 Euros or \$971).

Joy said, “Sundays I receive the online church service. Everything is online—teaching and preaching. I do my ministry online and with phone calls. God has opened new doors for me to do ministry. Right now I am teaching and ministering, not preaching, to people in other countries from my small apartment. I thank God, even if I have lost so many things—I cannot see my family in (*former home country*). But here, everybody’s looking out for everybody else. I’ve had younger people shopping for me from church. Now it is much more effective to see those people who are sitting in the darkness. You meet the light of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. Not only the US, but all the world is upside down. I pray God will open heavy hearts.”

Birthday: January 24

Contact her liaisons John and Georgia Spencer