The residents of the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors were very much part of the excitement of the Opening of the second Home on the 28th of April. Some were dressed up for the occasion and were waiting well ahead of the beginning of proceedings. There was a special sense of excitement of being part of something bigger than just their own room and environment. This lovely new facility means that other lonely and needy Survivors will find a home and enjoy the attention, the security, and a genuine family atmosphere that they have been enjoying these past months.

They joined the assembled visitors as the Chief Rabbi of Haifa and other dignitaries and the leadership and staff of the ICEJ gathered on the small street that links the complex of the Home. Speeches were said, the mezuzah was attached to the post of the main door and then everyone enjoyed a celebratory meal together to mark this joyous occasion.

A few days later on the 2nd of May, Israel’s Memorial Day for victims of the Holocaust, the Home held its own solemn ceremony, also attended by several children of the school situated across the street from the Home. The Survivors sat quietly each with their own unspeakable memories but linked to one another by a common understanding.

During their more ordinary routine, the Survivors continue a warm togetherness as they take part in activities, share a game, chat over a meal or sometimes assemble together for a special event.

Such an event was the visit of a Christian Choir called Laudamus Te ('We praise you’ in Latin). The choir is from Stuttgart in Germany and numbered seventeen. Conductor Monica Vasques said, "It was such a wonderful experience to be with the Holocaust Survivors and to spend time with them. It was deeply touching and impacting to the members of the choir.” Shimon Sabag, Director of the Home, was impressed not only by the quality of singing, but also by the singers as they lovingly mingled with the Survivors which was an obvious joy for the residents.
An update on developments

The second Home has a residential floor providing accommodation for more Survivors. The ground floor will be used for a medical clinic and will operate under the auspices of the local hospital which has given equipment worth over $400,000. A doctor and nurse will be on call 24 hours a day. A dental clinic will operate for the benefit of Holocaust Survivors, both residents and those living in the area. The basement will double as the bomb shelter and a clubroom, while the top floor is the dining and recreational area.

The media coverage of the opening and the Home has been enthusiastic and awakened many in Israel to the love and support of Christians for the people of Israel.

"I am so excited. I did not expect even 70% of what you have here. They prepared such beautiful rooms. I didn’t have rooms like this in the Land..."

This was the reaction on Josef F. on seeing his room into which he will be soon moving!

One resident told ICEJ AID’s Yudit Setz at the Opening, that although it sometimes felt as if they have been living in a ‘building site’ because of the renovations, any discomforts experienced have not outweighed the blessing of having a loving family to live with and people around to talk to, laugh with and who care about them.

An inspiring DVD of the story of the Haifa Home including the recent Opening has been produced and is available in 6 languages (German, Czech, French, Finnish, Danish and English). Please write for a copy or view the English footage here:  

http://vimeo.com/23291495

CAN YOU HELP US GO THE FINAL MILE?  
WE NEED SOME URGENT FUNDS SO THE SECOND HOME CAN HAVE ITS ELEVATOR WORKING AND THE FINAL RENOVATIONS COMPLETED.  
MARK DONATIONS: HAIFA HOME RENOVATIONS  
icejaid@icej.org