



Photo credit: Ryan Patterson

# SILENT CHILDREN'S MISSION

## NEWSLETTER

Summer 2016

ISSUE NO. 14



Dr. Simone May 2016  
Canadian Masters Swimming Championship  
75+ age group

### Dr. Simone's Letter

Dear SCM benefactors,

I personally do not know anyone as determined as Dr. Simone! He clearly demonstrates the hope and perseverance that St. John Paul II exclaims in one of his most famous quotes:

**"I plead with you – never, ever give up on hope, never doubt, never tire, and never become discouraged. Be not afraid."**

Dr. Simone recently competed in the Canadian Masters Swimming Championship for the 75 years and over age group and won 2 Gold, 3 Silver, 1 Bronze, 3 Fourth place and 1 Sixth place medals!! He just turned 78 years old in May and continues to practice daily.

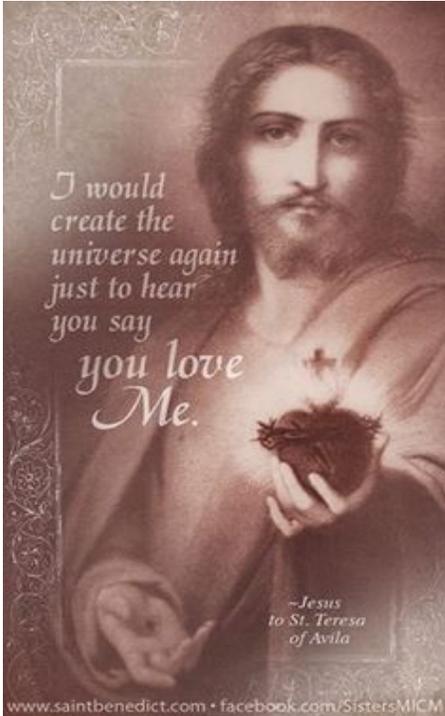
As we write this newsletter, he is in Liberia visiting with those who live in poverty and who suffer with leprosy. There, he can also practice the medicine he loves so much – dermatology. And yet, what is most inspiring is his unwavering love for the poor and his determination to help others.

On behalf of Dr. Simone and Joan – thank you for your continued support for those without a voice.

Without you – we cannot accomplish what desperately needs to be done.

Peace, Frankie Burg-Feret

## Spiritual Director's Letter



During this month of June, the Church celebrates the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a feast that quintessentially speaks of our mission at SCM, especially during the year of Mercy. In his commentary on the feast of the Sacred Heart, Pope Francis stated “the Heart of the Good Shepherd is not only the Heart that shows us mercy, but *is itself mercy*”.

The heart of Jesus reveals a limitless love which assures all that “I am welcomed and understood as I am; there, with all my sins and limitations, I know with certainty that I am chosen and loved.” Most of all it is a heart whose love never gives up, but reaches out to all, especially those who are most distant, those who do not have voices, exposing the “weakness” of his love, which desires to embrace all and lose none.

Pope Francis described how “God himself goes out in search of his sheep and seeks those who are lost, without fear of the risks. He does not put off the search. He does not think: “I have done enough for today; I’ll worry about it tomorrow”. Instead, he immediately sets to it; his heart is anxious until he finds that one lost sheep. Having found it, he forgets his weariness and puts the sheep on his shoulders, fully content.”

It reminded me of a true story about the relentless love of an Armenian father in search of his son. In 1989, an 8.2 earthquake almost flattened the entire country, killing over 30,000 people in less than four minutes.

In the midst of utter devastation and chaos, a father left his wife securely at home and rushed to the school where his son was supposed to be, only to discover that the building was as flat as a pancake.

After the traumatic initial shock, he remembered the promise he had made to his son; “No matter what, I’ll always be there for you!” And tears began to fill his eyes. As he looked at the pile of debris that once was the school, it looked hopeless, but he kept remembering his commitment to his son.

He began to concentrate on where he walked his son to class at school each morning. Remembering his son’s classroom would be in the back right corner of the building; he rushed there and started digging through the rubble. As he was digging, other forlorn parents arrived, clutching their hearts, saying: “My son!” “My daughter!” Other well meaning parents tried to pull him off of what was left of the school saying: “It’s too late – they are dead!” “You can’t help – go home!” “There is nothing you can do – you will make things worse!”

To each parent he responded with one line: “Are you going to help me now?”

The police came and said, “You’re angry, distraught and it’s over. You’re endangering others. Go home. We will handle it!” To which he replied, “Are you going to help me now?” No one helped.

Courageously he proceeded alone because he needed to know for himself if his boy was alive or dead. He dug for eight hours...12 hours...24 hours...36 hours...then, in the 38<sup>th</sup> hour, he pulled back a boulder and heard his son’s voice. He screamed his son’s name, “Armand!” He heard back, “Dad! It’s me, Dad! I told the other kids not to worry. I told them that if you were alive, you would save me and when you saved me, they would be saved. You promised, “No matter what, I’ll always be there for you!” “You did it Dad!”

“What’s going on in there? How is it?” the father asked. There are 14 of us left out of 33, Dad. We’re scared, hungry, thirsty and thankful you’re here. When the building collapsed, it made a wedge, like a triangle, and it saved us.”

“Come on out, boy!”

“No, Dad! Let the other kids out first, because I know you’ll get me! No matter what, I know you’ll be there for me!”

Such is a heart that never gives up and always seeks out. The Pope concluded: Those after the heart of Jesus do not stop when disappointed and do not yield to weariness. Indeed, they are *stubborn in doing good*, anointed with the divine obstinacy that loses sight of no one. They constantly *go out of themselves*. The epicenter of their heart is outside of themselves.

Let us be relentless in seeking out those on the fringes, those on the margins, so that we may carry them back home.

Peace,  
Fr. Michael Della Penna ofm

## Executive Director's Letter

### GUATEMALA UPDATE:



Fr. Michael with Paola and friend – June 3, 2016

Many of our supporters will remember Jeny, the young woman who was murdered two years ago leaving her son Jeremy an orphan. At the time - SCM was helping Jeny to get an education in order to break the cycle of poverty for her and her family until tragedy struck. We have not given up on this family! Jeny's sister Paola (20 years old) is now half way through her program to be an accountant where she hopes to get a good job in order to support her young son and her extended family. She wrote the following:

“A year ago I wanted to continue to study to be an accountant but I had no money to pay the large debt I had from the other school. Even though I was pregnant, it did not stop me from wanting to continue my studies. Thank God, SCM gave me the opportunity to pay my debt and continue and I am now studying in my last year. I prayed alot and I asked God to help me and my prayers were answered! I am so happy and grateful. In September I begin to work at a bank as an intern. I know that not everyone has this opportunity and I want to give all my best in order to be a better person, a great mom and a good accountant.”

Supported by Humber College, Ryan Patterson and I produced a documentary entitled “Cultural Humility” that provides a chronological account of the medical mission trip last February as well as describing the experiences of the student's journey to a deeper understanding of cultural humility. (medical supplies and diagnostic tools donated by SCM benefactors). You can find it at this link:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=yLBsDwwwMKU&feature=youtu.be>

### MALAWI UPDATE:

SCM supports 54 children in the village of Ludzi Malawi where we work in partnership with the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa, with Sr. Bernadette Densani as our SCM representative. We have been supporting many of these children since 2004 prior to becoming a registered charity. We are very happy to share that we now have many high school graduates, 4 graduates from teacher's college, 1 graduate from a tailoring program, 1 graduate from a carpentry apprenticeship, and 5 in College and University programs!! We travel to Malawi and Zambia at the end of July and will share more stories and pictures. Please keep this mission in your prayers.

### SCM UPDATE:

In 2015, SCM assisted 36 missionaries in eleven under-resourced countries: Malawi, Tanzania, Guatemala, Ecuador, Honduras, Haiti, Philippines, Zambia, Liberia, Ghana and Kenya. Our missionaries are mostly sisters (50%), priests (36%) and laity (14%). We communicate regularly with our missionaries, as we believe in a sustainable, ongoing relationship where the people from the countries we serve identify *their* needs.

Our administration costs continue to remain under 3% of our total operating revenues and no one receives payment as office space and labour is offered freely.

However - we need your assistance in order to continue to help and serve the many children in need!

Please consider:

- Telling your friends about us and sharing your newsletter with someone who may be interested.
- Share our website where the most recent information can be found in our newsletter posted quarterly.
- Invite us to speak at your church, school or informal group.
- Send us stamps in order to save in administration costs.
- Send us a monetary donation – we would be happy to direct your gift to a specific country or mission. For example – on the following page we share an urgent request from Fr. Samuel in Liberia.

May God bless you for sharing your love with the poor!  
Have a wonderful summer!

Peace,  
Frankie





#### LIBERIA UPDATE:

Left - Fr. Samuel at a school for abused children in July 2015 – photo by Frankie  
SCM has been assisting Fr. Samuel in his mission since we returned from Liberia and Dr. Simone has assisted with two containers. We ask you to please consider helping with this project.

Dear Frankie,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

I write to kindly ask for help in my new mission here in Monrovia. I guess Frankie you may well remember your last visit to Liberia, where you visited the Catholic Queen of Peace School where I am teaching. There is nothing to write home about, it is still the same. In fact the only difference now is that it is more dilapidated and we have been asked by the landlord to

move with a court order. We desperately need your help. The school has been operating in this rented building since the civil war in 1993 as a remedy by the Catholic Church to educate the poor and refugee children in the Banjor community. Liberia, like any developing country is in dire need of donor support as we are still emerging from 14 years of brutal civil war and an ebola crisis.

The limited access to quality education in Liberia is gradually becoming a growing problem as the population of children continues to increase especially in rural communities. Interventions to address this growing problem have been ad hoc and uncoordinated to a large extent. The problem has continued to increase thus accounting for many of our school aged children not attending school. Both boys and girls who ought to be in school are found on the highways and major roads filling potholes for meager pay by road users. Sometimes while doing these jobs, they are exposed to different kinds of abuse such as kidnapping, rape, trafficking and other forms of abuse.

Our goal is to provide affordable access to education for up to 300 children each year and we want to assist especially the ebola orphans, refugees and physically challenged children. We would like to provide an enabling environment for quality learning.

The proposed school construction will be located in the Banjor community as we have a plot of land where the parish is currently located. With the help of generous people and friends the preliminary construction has begun but we need much more in order to complete our goal.

Our hope is to construct a 12 classroom building, with a six sitter toilet facility with proper hygiene and a hand-pump water well to provide safe and clean drinking water for our pupils. We also hope for a library and a computer/science lab with reading supplies and furniture.

This program is planned and implemented by the St. Paul Catholic Parish Project Team in Banjor community. We would appreciate any assistance you can give us.

Rev. Fr. Samuel Von Tucker CSSp

**“17,000 children under five die each day due to poverty and “they die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world.”**

UNICEF Progress of Nations Report, 2013

### How You Can Help

- You can make a donation by sending a cheque written to: **Silent Children’s Mission** and mail it to: RR#1 16060 Concession 8, Schomberg, ON L0G 1T0 Canada (Make sure to include your mailing address for a tax receipt.)
- You can also donate online through **Canada Helps** or we gladly accept post-dated cheques.
- Question? Write to us at [silentchildrenca@yahoo.com](mailto:silentchildrenca@yahoo.com)
- Look for us online at [www.silentchildrensmmission.com](http://www.silentchildrensmmission.com)
- If you would like a speaker at your school/function about the work of SCM call: 416-418-0314