



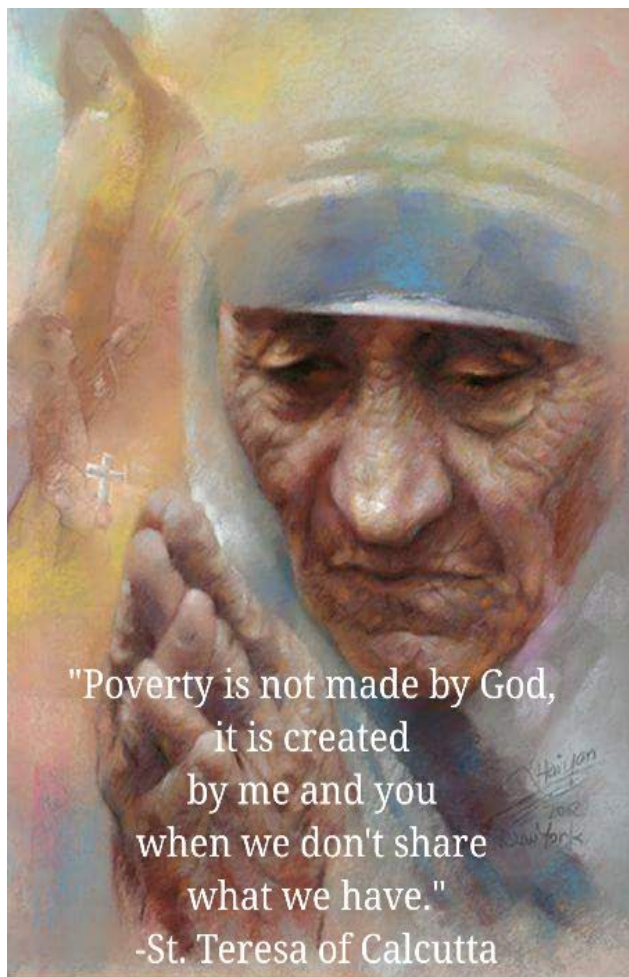
Children at Valle waiting to see the doctors and nurses for their physical exam.

# SILENT CHILDREN'S MISSION

## NEWSLETTER

Spring 2017

ISSUE NO. 17



"Poverty is not made by God,  
it is created  
by me and you  
when we don't share  
what we have."  
-St. Teresa of Calcutta

Dear SCM benefactors,

Saint Teresa of Calcutta had it right when she said poverty is a result of not sharing our wealth. The world is on the brink of a manmade catastrophe because of government corruption, drought, food insecurity and the presence of terrorist groups. On March 11, 2017, UN Humanitarian chief Stephen O'Brien pleaded with the world to come to the rescue of Kenya, Yemen, South Sudan and Somalia. "Now, more than 20 million people across these four countries face starvation and famine. Without collective and coordinated global efforts, people will simply starve to death. Many more will suffer and die from disease." CNN

Silent Children's Mission is a small charity trying to help the poorest of the poor in the spirit of Mother Teresa. At times it can be challenging as we are run solely on volunteers. Our trips are self-funded and our administration costs for 2016 were 3.2%. I admit that number discouraged me but our accountant assured me that our costs are still lower than 99% of all Canadian charities. At our upcoming annual meeting we plan to pray for our benefactors and to discuss how we can make a greater impact for the poor.

Our most recent success is with the support SCM gives as I lead a medical mission in collaboration with Humber College and the amazing Sick Kids paediatricians and GP from Toronto. We also had final semester students from the nursing and paramedic programs. Together with our translators and helpers from Guatemala we were able to provide health care for over 375 children in five rural and urban communities in Solola and Guatemala City especially at Valle de Los Angeles where our SCM chair/spiritual director Fr. Michael lives. SCM supported the mission with the cost of medications and medical supplies.

Thank you so much to all our benefactors for your continued support and gifts of love for the poor!

Frankie Burg-Feret RN MN



## Spiritual Director's Letter



Maritza - so proud in her communion dress



Maritza and Olympia's home

Our recent visit with Maritza and Olympia was a joyful occasion. The work done by the Disciples of Nazareth is inspiring and SCM is happy to assist them.



### New Life

Maritza's story of new life begins a while back when Mercedes, a young woman in a group called Disciples of Nazareth, decided to offer a helping hand. Mercedes had found Maritza, a 13-year old girl, living with her mom Olympia in a run down, insect infested shack filled with garbage. It was obvious Olympia was mentally handicapped as she ranted to herself, was filthy and her home wreaked and was overrun with piles of clothes and assorted junk. While most people just ignored Maritza and her mother, Mercedes was moved and decided to try and help.

One day with the help of her faith group, they went to her home and cleaned it, taking out dozens of bags of garbage, among which they found dead animals, worms etc. After many hours and scrubbing, their home was cleared of all the mess and was livable again. Mercedes did not stop there however, but instead found a doctor to assess Olympia and then a way to get her medicine. With a sustained effort, she was able to administer the medicine and slowly but surely, Olympia began to respond. The results were almost miraculous, as she began to stabilize.

Maritza was also admitted to a doctor's care and, while heavily arrested in her development, was found to be without any mental handicap. When SCM visited, Maritza shared her great desire to receive first communion. Soon after, money was sent to buy her a dress and prepare her for the special day.

The smile on her face and the joy in her eyes lit up the church, as she came dressed looking, in her words "like a princess!" Her attention during the mass was laser focused, as Mercedes sat across from her crying. Maritza could not contain her elation and smiled brilliantly throughout the whole mass.

Lent is a time of change. The change God wants however is not just exterior change, but a change that goes much deeper. It is not just about peripheral cleaning, or rearranging the furniture. It is about deep and lasting interior metanoia; it is about healing our hearts and redeeming them in order to experience the new life Maritza received at her first communion. Let us choose to take the medicine that can heal our hearts and experience His love anew.

Peace,  
Father Michael Della Penna ofm



## Executive Director's Update



**HAITI UPDATE** - from our SCM board member Gerald Brinston who travels to Cerca Carvajal, 4 times per year: "Hi Frankie, Thank you for the fungus medication – the problem has been spreading. The other day we had a young girl who was told she could find help at the farm. She had a broken collarbone – we took her to the hospital a 1 ½ hour motorcycle ride, we had x-rays done and waited all day to see the doctor only to be told they only do broken bones on Tuesday. The food program is going really well as well as the hygiene kits – the only problem we are having is the children are eating the toothpaste – hunger is a problem right now. We had difficulty this trip as they would not let us bring our car into Haiti and we had to unload the car and carry all the supplies across the border and take several different means of travel to the farm, which is a 12-hour journey. We had no way of charging the phone so sorry we couldn't communicate sooner."

**ZAMBIA UPDATE** – from Sr. Letitia Longolongo (right – one of the many pictures and letters sent by Sr. Letitia from the children under her care – below a quote similar to the many requests we receive at SCM)

"Many greetings from Chibote! Thank you very much for the work done by SCM for our poor people. We are seeking help for two children – one whose parents have died and is living with someone who has offered to care for him but cannot pay his school fees. With the other child her mother was not stable and threw the 5-year-old child in the pit latrine – she is now in prison. The father is dead and the child is now living with the mother's sister who is not well."



greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope you are okay and my family is very much well. I like to thank you for the money which you sent to me. I use this money for buying school shoes, uniforms & bag, clothes, books and food, so that I can grow very well. Continue to help me so that I can finish my schooling without you I can't manage. May God bless you  
Yours Faithfully



**KENYA UPDATE** – from Sr. Lucy Chepngeno, Director

"The Irene Centre for visually impaired girls/orphans are very grateful for your loyal and faithful support for our missions among the people of Africa. We all know that without you, our works of evangelization, training visually impaired youth with disabilities in knitting, agriculture, and baking would not be possible. Our work continues especially among the children of Meru, Isiolo, Samburu, Kisii, and Kericho in Kenya who depend on people of goodwill every day. All of our trainees are living in poverty and have few if any opportunities for future. All it takes is a few dollars to provide a trainee with daily meals, skills learning, medical care, therapy and most of all hope for a brighter future! Thank you and God bless you!"

(left: the girls showing off their creations!)





## GUATEMALA MEDICAL MISSION

We are so grateful to the doctors who volunteered their knowledge and time to ensure that the poorest children were given excellent healthcare. It was a blessing to work side by side with the people of Guatemala especially the Indigenous leaders who welcomed us so warmly into their communities. It was truly a learning and sharing experience for all who participated! Many children's health issues such as dental problems, poor eyesight, asthma, poor nutrition, physical and sexual abuses were identified and are presently being followed through with our partners in Guatemala. Several children require extensive follow-up – we welcome any financial contribution you can offer for the needs of these identified children.

**HONDURAS UPDATE** - from Fr. Alberto Gauci Franciscan friar of the Immaculate Conception Province

Riccy Mabel's story: "Her father was killed and she never knew her mother. She was brought to our orphanage in Juticulpa, Honduras when she was 4 mths old – that was 17 years ago! Fast forward to when SCM became an intimate part of her life; St. Francis intervened when we started receiving donations to help feed our orphans and to assist Riccy with her education. Time goes fast and this past December Riccy graduated from grade 13 which means a lot for these kids since very few make it that far. Since she has no father or mother, I was there for the whole ceremony and when they called her name to receive her diploma, she looked at me with her eyes filled with tears of joy! Here in Honduras, an important part of the graduation ceremony is when the girl dances a waltz with her father. Riccy looked at me – to tell you the truth I had never danced! We danced and danced and I must have stepped on her toes a couple of times but she was the happiest kid on that dance floor and I was the happiest "Father" around!"

(right: Padre Alberto with the children)



**Please join us in prayer on the 8<sup>th</sup> of every month – our intentions are for the poorest of the poor – especially the children SCM serves. We will be offering mass for our benefactors at our SCM Annual Meeting in March.**

## 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 via **Canada Helps** or we gladly accept post-dated cheques or e-transfers.
- 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 or have a question, call Frankie at: 416-418-0314