



SILENT CHILDREN'S MISSION

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2014

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Dr. Simone's Letter

Dear SCM benefactors,

"If our poor die of hunger, it is not because God does not care for them. Rather, it is because neither you nor I are generous enough. It is because we are not instruments of love in the hands of God."

Mother Teresa

The work of Canadian Food for Children and Silent Children was given to us by God in order to share the gifts we have with others. Thanks to all of you who have shared in this mission of love! By providing a meal for the poor, you have provided nourishment but more importantly, you have provided hope to the suffering.

God is good because by sharing our love, we receive immeasurable joy!

God bless,
Andrew Simone MD

Spiritual Director's Letter

"I can say that the most beautiful and natural expressions of joy which I have seen in my life were in poor people who had little to hold on to." Pope Francis – *Evangelii Gaudium*



As you know, the first priority of all our mission trips is to continue supporting those poor children who do not have a voice and are in need of assistance. With the help of your generosity, however, during our last mission trip to Africa (June-July 2014), Frankie and I, in collaboration with the Sisters of Charity in Malawi, and the Franciscan Missionary Sisters in Zambia, were able to go in search of new children who are marginalized, abused, or neglected in order to let them know that they too are loved. We were able to meet with several very special groups of children.

Our first meeting consisted of following up on some 50 children of various ages whom we called together for a day of celebration. We prayed, sang songs, danced, served lunch, and then gave out bracelets and holy cards as well as individual care packages. You should have seen their faces! After a short interview and picture, a few of the children wanted to thank us in a special way and sang for us.

Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth; break forth and sing for joy and sing praises! Psalm 98:4

Our second meeting took place in the rural village of Malawi, where we met with about 70 neatly dressed little children from the nursery school run by Sr. Agnes, one of the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa. This was one of several projects she manages that includes several self-sufficiency initiatives; a mushroom growing program, a new sunflower seed oil press and a bakery. Sr. Agnes also oversees children from poor families, who walk from their homes everyday and remain with volunteers throughout the morning. Some of the children are orphans, HIV positive or have parents with HIV and all are vulnerable. The

volunteer women who help give lessons, sing songs with the children, catechize them and then cook and share a meal if there is enough food. They also allow the children to play with some toys that are in terrible condition. The children presented us with a gift of peanuts and some sugarcane stalks and then burst forth into a joyful song they had learned.

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Another meeting took place in Cheshire, where we were pleasantly surprised to encounter a special group of children at the Cheshire Home Society who touched our heart. Although these gorgeous children were missing limbs and awaiting prosthetics; they were among the most joyful and active children we ever met. They too sang us a song before we left.

Finally we also visited another Cheshire community where many children were awaiting surgery and included a group of mentally handicapped children. They sang two very special songs for us, one an Italian song that one of the Italian sisters had taught them and one in which Frankie and I will never forget. The second song is entitled "Love isn't love until you give it away." It was difficult to leave after that song.

They certainly reminded us of the Pope's exhortation:

"Proclaiming Christ means showing that to believe in and to follow him is not only something right and true, but also something beautiful, capable of filling life with new splendour and profound joy, even in the midst of difficulties." Pope Francis – *Evangelii Gaudium*

Unfortunately not all the children sang; there were also those silent children who we met in the female prison whose frozen and expressionless faces left us sad. We were reminded that there is still much to do. Thank you for your continued support for the work of Silent Children's Mission.

Peace,
Fr. Michael





Executive Director's Letter

Dear SCM benefactors,

Our trip to Malawi and Zambia this past summer was a fruitful one! Thank you for your love and support for the children and their families! We were able to visit with many of the children we support with school fees, food and other important necessities. Unfortunately there is so much need in these countries where 73% of people live on \$1.25 per day (UNDP, 2010). One of the new children we will be assisting is Bertha; Sr. Bernadette brought her to us at the hospital in Ludzi. Bertha is almost seven years old but is growth stunted due to severe malnutrition - she weighs 32 pounds but looks like she is four. Bertha has never been to school but thanks to your help, she is getting the food she needs and she will be attending school! (see picture on last page). The message from the children was consistent – “we are so grateful – please don’t stop helping us!”

Thanks to a generous SCM donor, two years ago Sr. Bernadette was able to purchase 70 acres located near Mkanda where the Sisters of Charity have their formation house. After two years, the transformation is amazing!! Where there was once barren and overgrown land, there is now rows and rows of corn, banana and mango trees and all kind of vegetables! There is also a mill to grind corn, a well, water tanks and a building with pigs! The progress is incredible and was done by the people who live in the nearby villages! This project has created jobs and given nutritious food for the poor children! Helping the poor is the charism of the Sisters of Charity and it is with your help that we can continue to assist them in their work! Sr. Bernadette has requested our assistance to help them purchase chickens that will provide much needed protein for the children – it entails building and purchasing materials. If anyone would like to support this project – we need your financial help!



“Andrew” the pig in Malawi

One of my most memorable moments happened on the way back from the prison to where we were staying in Zambia. The men's prison was designed for 400, however 1100 men reside there in horrific conditions. Sr. Josephine, a Franciscan Sister, and some Secular Franciscans prepared a meal for all of the prisoners for both the male and female prisons – a gift from Joan and Andrew. Before serving the meal to them - we learned that we were able to enter the area where the prisoners congregate and that Fr. Michael was able to address the prisoners! What a miracle! I believe Fr. Michael's message was inspired and I remember afterwards that I had no words to describe how I felt. While in the van driving home, Fr. Michael informed me that one of the prisoners had passed him something and he reached into his habit and pulled out a folded piece of paper. I fully expected it to be a begging letter as I have received quite a few of those in the past. Instead, the letter thanked him for speaking and explained how his words had given him HOPE!! I believe that is what Silent Children's Mission is about! This moment of affirmation filled me with joy!

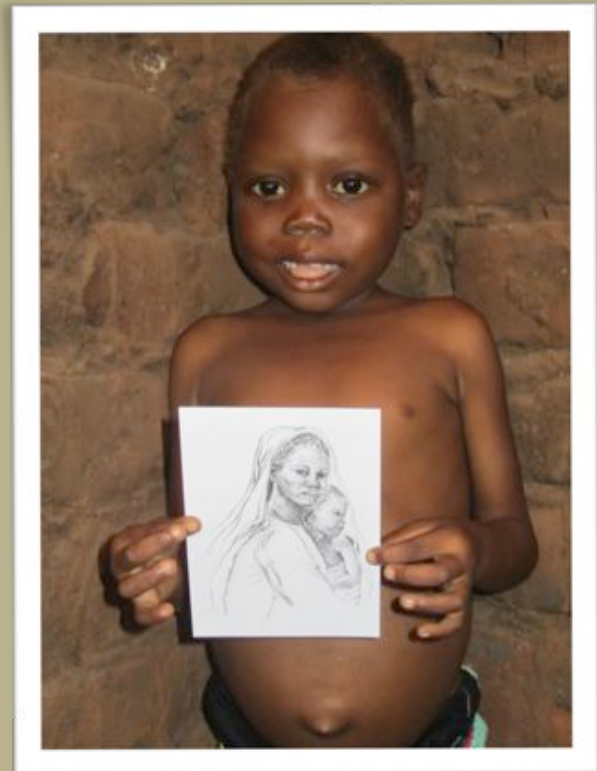
In the women's prison, I had the opportunity to speak with the young women – some with small babies. They shared with me that all they were given to feed their babies and toddlers was nsima (corn porridge). There was no milk and no protein and they worried that their children were malnourished. SCM has committed to providing food to feed these babies and children! The Secular Franciscans in Lusaka have adopted the prison ministry but they are poor themselves and have no money to purchase milk and food for the children. Will you help us to bring hope to these mothers and children?

Please assist us in reaching the poorest of the poor in collaboration with the missionaries who lovingly dedicate their lives to this work. Each trip we make on behalf of SCM is self-funded.

Peace,
frankie

How You Can Help

- You can make a donation by sending a cheque written to:
Silent Children's Mission
and mailed to:
RR#1 16060 Concession 8
Schomberg, ON L0G 1T0
(Make sure to include your mailing address for a tax receipt.)
- You can also donate online through **Canada Helps**.
- Question? Write to us at silentchildrenca@yahoo.com
- Look for us online at www.silentchildrenmission.com
- If you would like Frankie to speak at your school/function about the poor and the work of SCM, call 416-418-0314.



Bertha holding a picture of Our Lady
drawn by Sandra van Raay