



SILENT CHILDREN'S MISSION

NEWSLETTER

SPRING/LENT 2014

ISSUE NO. 5

Dr. Simone's Letter

Dear SCM benefactors,

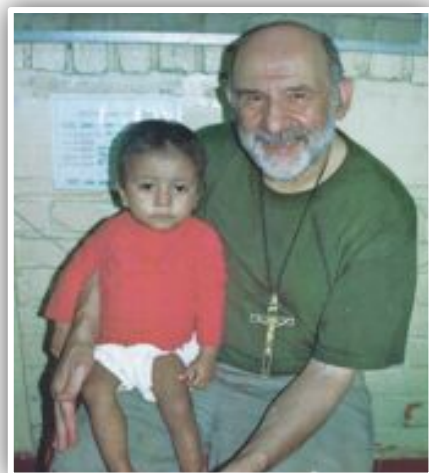
We encounter the Living God through His wounds.

“To meet the living God we must tenderly kiss the wounds of Jesus in our hungry, poor, sick, imprisoned brothers and sisters. Study, meditation and mortification are not enough to bring us to encounter the living Christ. Like St. Thomas, our life will only be changed when we touch Christ's wounds present in the poor, sick and needy.”

- Pope Francis

I have just returned from Peru and El Salvador to visit and be with the poor. May God bless you for your generous donations that enable us to help the children! As we enter the Lenten season may we remember the most vulnerable in our midst as well as those suffering throughout the world.

God bless,
Andrew Simone MD



Who can save a child from a burning house without taking the risk of being hurt by the flames?

Who can listen to a story of loneliness and despair without taking the risk of experiencing similar pains in their own heart and even losing their precious peace of mind?

In short, “Who can take away suffering without entering it?”

Henri Nouwen

Spiritual Director's Letter

Dear benefactors,



Walking in the kingdom of Heaven.

Happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Mt 5:3

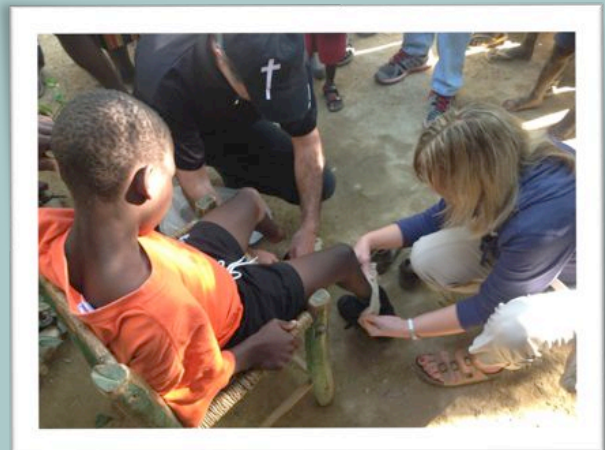
The beautiful smile of a young boy from Haiti by the name of Felix reminds us that while we all desire to be happy, we often look for happiness in all the wrong places. Felix, who is about 11 years old, lives in the mountains of Cerca Carvajal, about 3 hours away from Port au Prince. His brilliant smile is the first thing that attracts you and even captivates you when you meet him. He certainly lives up to his name, which means "happy" in Latin. Only later does one come to realize that Felix is different. Only after discovering that Felix was born without any feet can you see his arms and upper body are over developed. In fact, Felix spent his entire life crawling around and moving about in his stumps until Gerry met him last year. Through SCM, Gerry decided to help by sending a wheelchair and some other items to him in the mountains. What happened next was life changing.

After carrying the wheelchair up to his home over some treacherous rocks, Felix was presented with the wheelchair as well as a pair of sneakers. Grabbing the pair of sneakers he quickly tied them around his ankles. To everyone's surprise, Felix got up and began walking! It was a lesson on how we approach helping the poor. Later, when Frankie arrived a

few months after, Felix was given high top sneakers that offered greater support. Felix's smile doubled as he used them to run around and even play soccer - well!!! He is truly a powerful example of how much we can learn from the poor.

While many are fooled into believing happiness can be achieved through the accumulation of material things, Jesus in the Gospel describes true happiness in the beatitudes. Those who are poor in spirit are happy, not because of any material possession but because of their radical dependence on God, which gives them an inner happiness apart from any worldly circumstance. Why? Those who are poor in spirit, that is, the afflicted, the oppressed, the miserable, are meek and lowly and often realize their utter neediness before God. Jesus teaches us how we may find the inner joy and peace that comes from right relationship with God. Felix, despite having been born without feet, exudes this undeniable inner light and peace. Felix's poignant witness speaks dramatically in a world that tends to forget that which we have and instead run after all the things we do not have. As we prepare for Lent, Felix is like a big signpost in the desert, which reminds us that followers of Christ must be meek and depend solely on God for their happiness. As there are no roads in the desert we must seek our own way to journey through it. Our Lord showed us the only credible and sure way is the way of love; teaching us to stand on the solid ground of our faith and walking in relationship with God.

Peace,
Fr. Michael



Executive Director's Letter

Dear SCM benefactors,

"We find Jesus' wounds in carrying out works of mercy, giving to...the body of your wounded brother, because he is hungry, because he is thirsty, because he is naked because he is humiliated, because he is a slave, because he's in jail because he is in the hospital. Those are the wounds of Jesus today."

- Pope Francis

It would be hard to imagine how 2.4 billion people in our world live on less than two dollars per day (World Bank, 2010). Even more difficult to imagine, especially for North Americans, is the reality of living in a slum. In urban Haiti, 3.5 million people live in slums with 120,000 living in little more than half a square mile. When we think of the global poor, we usually think of hunger, disease, homelessness, contaminated water, poor sanitation, substandard housing, illiteracy and joblessness. But most people who live in the slums state their biggest fear is violence – especially for women and girls (Haugen and Boutros, 2014). In the slums, this problem is rampant; acts of violence are intentionally hidden, legal protection is non-existent and violence keeps the poor from ever escaping poverty.

It is easy for us to think that the people in Haiti or any other poor country are different than us – that they can somehow tolerate this better than we can. It is tempting to think perhaps they expect less, care less, hope for less, want less or need less. But this is not the case – they are exactly like you and me – except their severe psychological damage is left untreated (Haugen and Boutros, 2014).

The picture on the following page was taken by one of our missionaries. He had discovered a young woman chained to the bed in a state of malnutrition, mental confusion and filth. Attempts were made to help her but shortly afterward she disappeared. With certainty we can say that she is another victim of slavery and forced prostitution. I am not sure what the answer is to this problem but I do know that Silent Children's Mission is doing our best to help one child at a time.

Our trip to Haiti this past December included some time in the mountains with the poor in a rural village as well as time spent in Port au Prince at Mother Teresa's home for malnourished babies and young children. At the home we were not permitted to take pictures but the faces of the children remain in my mind and heart. I believe it was the sister's prayers that kept their projects going as evidenced by so many signs such as visitors arriving just when help was needed most. I have never seen so many severely malnourished children in one place before. Just prior to our arrival, there had been an outbreak of cholera and many of the children had to be sent to the hospital because they required more acute care. New admissions arrived and the rooms were quickly filled with 150 children again. These innocent and fragile children would peer up at us from between the bars of their crib with sad, brown eyes – often crying out to us with uplifted arms hoping we would choose them to hold. Their bloated bellies, emaciated arms and legs and sparse, discolored hair showed us a lifetime of hunger and neglect.

One afternoon we travelled with the sisters to the slums to assist at a wound clinic for the poor. In the streets were large piles of rotting garbage; the streets were teeming with people who moved slowly, shouting and blocking traffic; it was noisy, frightening and sad. When we entered the area where the clinic was held – the people were already lined up and waiting. As we attended their infected and poorly healing wounds with basic wound care supplies, we witnessed patience and gratefulness in abundance.

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 and with the exception of minimal administration costs – we ensure that your money reaches those most in need. May God bless you for your love.

Peace,
Frankie



Haiti, December 2013

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.silentchildrensmission.com
- If you would like Frankie to speak at your school/function about the poor and the work of SCM, call 416-418-0314.



We visited Luke who lives in a poor village in the mountains where even the most basic health care is often unavailable. He has recovered well from his life saving surgery that was made possible because of the generosity of SCM benefactors. Thank you!