



SILENT CHILDREN'S MISSION

NEWSLETTER

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Dr. Simone's Letter

Dear SCM benefactors,

"Poverty calls us to sow hope.... Poverty is the flesh of the poor Jesus, in that child who is hungry, in the one who is sick, in those unjust social structures." *Pope Francis*

As we begin this Advent season – let us reflect on how we will prepare our hearts to receive Jesus. Our Pope has encouraged us to be welcoming to all people and to share what we have. "When someone needing food knocks at your door, you can always find a way of sharing food; as the proverb says, one can always 'add more water to the beans'! Is it possible to add more water to the beans?...Always!...And you do so with love."

May we *all* wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord!

God bless,

Andrew Simone MD

Spiritual Director's Letter

The Silent Echo of His Thundering Poverty

Perhaps nothing speaks louder than the mystery and power of the poverty of Jesus Christ, Love Incarnate, who refused to cling to any “good” and instead chose to empty Himself completely and make himself poor, in order to make us rich.

Divine Love itself chose to come from Heaven in order to be born a ‘poor’ King, forever challenging us to never forget that true greatness emerges out of what seems unimportant and powerless, small and insignificant. This same lesson is inherent in His surprising genealogy, which includes sinners and Gentiles alike, in order to remind us that God meets us in and through the messiness of our life, affirming that light can even shine through the deepest darkness.

Jesus Christ was born a poor king who is for the poor, in a little unknown town, within a cold cave among the animals, when there was no room for them at the Inn. He was

first recognized and greeted by the simple shepherds, who praised Him and His poor teenage virgin-mother. From this we learn God comes in humility, lowliness, and is hidden in poverty. He comes through that which was thought dead, the stump of Jesse, and issues forth new life.

Christmas therefore is not so much about trying to hear the thundering echo of God’s silent lesson of the Incarnation and His humble birth, but being open to conceive Him anew in the poor stable of our hearts, which even if they are dark, messy, cold or empty are the place God chooses to dwell.

As we begin this Advent and year dedicated to the consecrated life, let us in the words of Pope Francis, be reminded we don’t only have a glorious history but we “also have a great history still to be accomplished” exhorting us to “look to the future, where the Spirit is sending you in order to do even greater things”.

Peace,
Fr. Michael Della Penna ofm



(Fr. Michael with some of his angels at the Orfanato Valle de los Angeles in Guatemala.)



Executive Director's Letter

Dear SCM benefactors,

At our Annual Board of Directors meeting a few weeks ago, Dr. Simone quoted a book he recently read about Edith Stein: "Stein believes that God combats evil through the power of women's maternal love." (Oben). He also mentioned this quote to my daughter who works at the CFFC office, which resulted in some discussion and the following reflection from her:

"As Advent begins I can't help but think of Mary and her agapic love for her son Jesus. But what does maternal love mean? Does it mean providing the physical/emotional necessities of life? Or teaching your children what is right and wrong? For most, it involves both, but what if you didn't have the means or opportunity to do both?

When I was volunteering in Honduras one summer, I frequently visited one project in particular, a kindergarten in the poor illegal community of La Nora de Melgar. The community is located in the flood zone between the capital city Tegucigalpa and the Grande River. Rural migration and extreme poverty are the reasons why about 800 people now inhabit this area. In 1998, the flood "el Mitch" destroyed the community; the survivors and some newcomers rebuilt the community together. There is no light, water, or sewage systems, and the area is underserved by virtually all social services. Their houses are made of whatever they could find, some old plywood boards, cardboard, old wooden fence, if they were lucky they would have a piece of sheet metal for their roof. All of the houses have dirt floors; sometimes they lay down cardboard or a dirty blanket on the ground for their naked kids to play on. One household had 11 people sleeping in one bed.



At the edge of the village I met a young girl of 16 who had three children, she lived with a 65 year old man whom she had sex with for 30 lempira (US\$1.50) a day to feed herself and her children. She had nowhere else to go. She confided to me that when he had sex with her she imagined he was a famous movie star. We found that as we went from door to door stories like this seemed to be the norm. This is just one example, from one community, in one country. How many more stories go untold every day? What was this mother teaching me about maternal love? Is it fair that we are privileged to love our families the way we choose and she is not?" Leah Feret

“John Paul II was convinced of and affirmed that the vocation of woman is one, and it is her greatest calling: to love with the genius of her feminine heart. Woman, in her feminine being (body, soul and psychology), has inscribed in her heart a special calling of self-giving, of self-donation.” Mother Adela

The young mother in Leah’s reflection did not abandon her children but out of desperation did what her heart guided her to do - to provide for her children. So many women, young girls and children are abused and yet we rarely hear their silent cries.

Silent Children’s Mission continues to assist our missionaries to help the poorest of the poor. During reading week in February I will be travelling to Guatemala with a team of two doctors and ten final year nursing students including an early childhood educator. One of our objectives is to provide a health care clinic in the rural village of Solola – you can see a picture of the makeshift homes of the villagers on the previous page. It is our hope to collaborate with the Guatemalan people in order to develop a sustainable project with Fr. Michael and the outreach program he has developed.

Last summer in Zambia we met a cloistered Poor Clare nun when we visited their convent for mass – what a blessing it was to meet a woman so filled with God’s love! She has received permission to correspond with me and in a recent email said that she and Sr. Lilato have taken SCM to daily prayer. Sr. Lubingu writes:

“May the Lord God allow Sr. Lilato and myself to be part of this mission by offering a prayer daily for you all and all our people around the world who are in need. I shared with my sister and we were challenged. Our contribution to this beautiful mission is prayer in our little and hidden way. May God bless you all abundantly!”

Please join us in praying for the most vulnerable and for the work of Silent Children’s Mission – that we may always be His love in the world.

Peace,

Frankie Burg-Feret RN MN

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.silentchildrensmmission.com
- 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.



Your donation will help provide me with an education, nutritious food, clean clothing and maybe a new ball!