

More and more let us
insist on raising funds of
love, of kindness, of
understanding, of peace.
Money will come if we
seek first the kingdom of
God; the rest will be given.

St. Teresa of Calcutta

Photo: Child receiving food supplement
donated by SCM at the clinic in Malawi run
by the Poor Clare Sisters



Executive Director's Letter

Dear SCM benefactors,

In his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis calls each of us to a deeper understanding of community and shared responsibility to promote the common good. He asks us, how can we re-create our communities so that we honour the dignity of each person? The only way we can do that is to build a community of love and in our small way, Silent Children's Mission endeavours to continue to work towards that goal.

The Catholic Church is approaching the close of a two-year special Synod (October 2023): *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission*. The purpose of synodality is to walk together and listen to one another but most importantly to listen to the Holy Spirit because Pope Francis stresses that without the Holy Spirit, there is no synodality. I don't think it was a coincidence that Salt and Light Television was present filming about Silent Children's Mission at our recent annual meeting and retreat where we invited you, our benefactors, to participate.



Frankie with Raymond and Pauline

The interviewer asked us what SCM is doing to walk closely alongside the children and families we serve and to describe how we are synodal. The three aspects of the synod are communion, participation, and mission. This theme describes our reasons for inviting our benefactors to listen, learn, reflect, and share about our own personal call to serve God's community. The SCM Retreat *Call to Holiness* was able to successfully put a face to the names of the many supporters who donate year after year, and to gather together to build God's community of love. To all our benefactors, we are so grateful for your continued support for this mission and on behalf of the children and families we serve and love, we thank you for your generosity. In this newsletter, you will see the fruits of your love in the reports sent by some of our missionaries around the world.

On a personal note, the retreat brought me great joy! Many of our benefactors have supported SCM children in need for over ten years. As each year goes by, we receive cheques, e-transfers, letters, and cards; but we only imagine what each person looks like or what brings joy in their lives. What a blessing it was to finally see faces and have the opportunity to thank them in person! People came from many different parts of Ontario (Madoc, Oshawa, Port

Perry, Port Elgin etc) and we are so grateful for their time and commitment. Raymond and Pauline (photo on front page) came from Sault Ste. Marie arriving on Friday after a very long journey. Raymond had visited Malawi more than a decade ago and met Sr. Bernadette of the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa and so we had a connection but had never met until the retreat. To further connect with the children we serve, the same Sr. Bernadette provided photos of over 60 children in the poor villages surrounding the Joan and Andrew Simone Farm. Each retreatant wrote a letter to a child and prayed for that child at our annual Mass. Fr. Michael and I will be visiting Malawi in July and we will personally deliver the letters to the children.

Finally, I want to say that our volunteer board of directors (see photo below) are an amazing group of people, and it is with deep gratitude that I thank our Lord and Saviour for their love and dedication to SCM, and for their inspiring witness to holiness. Please keep us in your prayers.

Peace,
Frankie (Executive Director)



SCM Board of Directors with Deacon Robert Kinghorn at our Call to Holiness Retreat – June 3, 2023



Spiritual Director Reflection

Our SCM retreat held at the St. Francis Center last week called “A Call to Holiness”, was a beautiful experience of solidarity, faith and prayer for the over 60 people who attended. During the weekend we were not only able to enjoy being united together in our desire to help make a difference to others but enjoyed gathering socially and meeting those who have so closely supported the charity for so long. We had the blessed opportunity to celebrate our faith together and pray for the marginalized who are without voices and live on the fringes of society.

We gathered the first night before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary and reflect on a collection of profound meditations put together by our very own Mary Filangi. The next day we gathered to watch the latest documentary about St. Mother Teresa called *No Greater Love* and had a chance to speak with Jim Wahlberg about his perspective on the process and purpose of making this powerful film. The film featured never before seen footage and did a marvellous job of presenting a comprehensive view of this great Saint of the poor. We also got to hear a talk about holiness and a fascinating first-hand reflection on the challenges and joys of the street ministry Deacon Kinghorn has been involved in for years in downtown Toronto. The culmination of the weekend was a beautiful Eucharistic celebration that allowed us to gather as a SCM family and remember all of our dearly departed loved ones and benefactors.

Reflecting on the retreat, which was inspired by Pope Francis’ exhortation, I certainly felt challenged to be a saint and not to settle for what He called “a mediocre and bland existence” but rather to embark on the beautiful journey of holiness that God invites us into. Leon Bloy, a French novelist goes as far as saying that the one tragedy, the one failure and the one sadness in life is not becoming a saint. Saint Mother Teresa reminds us that holiness is not the concern of a privileged few, but rather the simple duty of every Christian. Pope Benedict XVI boldly stated that while the world offers us comfort; we were not made for comfort, but rather we were made for greatness. One of the most beautiful images in Scripture is the risk that Zacchaeus takes in climbing a sycamore tree, making himself vulnerable to ridicule, in order to see Jesus. We too are all called to go out on a limb in order to draw near to God. The letter of Saint James even promises us that if we do so, God will draw near to us. Two of the Saints that make this sound even remotely possible are St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Maximilian Kolbe. St. Thomas Aquinas when asked how one can become a saint answered with the brief quip that one must “will it”. St. Maximilian Kolbe offered a simple formula to holiness. $W = w$, which stands for God’s will must equal our will. What seems most encouraging and consoling, however, is Pope Francis’ definition of holiness from his exhortation *Gaudete Et Exsultate*, which states that holiness is an encounter between our weakness and the power of God’s grace. This is certainly a definition that I can grab onto and feel motivated by. While some depictions of the great saints can serve to discourage us, as they are presented as being so far above us, it gives me hope to know that my weakness can actually be a resource in my journey to God. Our weakness and coming into a deeper understanding of our own limitations and powerlessness can, in fact, help us to grow in greater dependence and trust in God. It is only in this way that we can come to understand Saint Paul’s beautiful and insightful passage which states that it is “when I am weak then I am strong”. This paradox gets to the very heart of the truth of our theological anthropology, and allows us to embrace our own humanity and thus our need for God. Bishop Sheen gives us great hope in sharing that the only difference between a saint and a sinner is their attitude towards sin. The one persists in them and the other weeps bitterly for them.

I will end with what gave me great consolation. Jesus in addressing Saint Faustina stated:

Jesus: My child, know that the greatest obstacles to holiness are discouragement and an exaggerated anxiety. These will deprive you of the ability to practice virtue. All temptations united together ought not disturb your interior peace, not even momentarily. Sensitiveness and discouragement are the fruits of self-love. You should not become discouraged, but strive to make My love reign in place of your self-love. Have confidence, My child. Do not lose heart in coming for pardon, for I am always ready to forgive you. As often as you beg for it, you glorify My mercy.

Peace,
Fr. Michael (Spiritual Director)



“Dear friend Frankie and missionary friends of SCM:

A cordial greeting from **Honduras** and my best wishes.

Thank you for the message and we continue in the task of finding ways to love and serve children who are not valued or appreciated in the world. They are the favorites of the Lord.

Thank you very much for your prayers and we will continue united in the tasks of the Kingdom. Jesus always accompanies us with his love.

United in prayer and mission.”

Padre Patricio Larrosa

Photos: The delivery of school supplies in the rural areas of Honduras to children in need.



Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD
and will be repaid in full – Proverbs 19:17

From Sr. Mary Frieda, Immaculate Heart of Mary Convent in **GHANA**:

“I wish once again to thank you for your love and concern for our less privileged children and the sick we are able to reach through your assistance. You have really helped us to help our needy ones. I wish to thank you especially for Andrew Bright whom you have helped all this year. This child came into our care at seven years old and could not talk, crawl or walk. Through your funds, I was able to send him to hospital and a lot was done for the child. He was baptized and we continued the treatment but as God will have it, he gave up the spirit last September, 2022. Thank you so much for what you did for Andrew and the poor mother who is still with us because she has no able parents or anyone to come for her.

Atta, a physically challenged young man was introduced to me by the Aunty, when she heard we care for sick children especially the physically challenged. We visited this young boy many times and provided all we could medically and provided him with care. He was given a prosthesis to wear and a pair of crutches to help him get up from the floor as he had remained for four years on the floor. He was injured when he fell from high coconut tree where he was harvesting coconuts. A year and a half now, he has been put on his feet and he has been sent to learn shoe making and has completed. He is now with his pair of crutches and with his prosthesis he can move to wherever he wants to go. Your funds have helped!”



Report from Sr. Philo, Franciscan Clarist Sisters at Seraphic Convent in **Mzuzu MALAWI**:

"First of all, we are glad to inform you that we received the funds send by you in the month of September 2022 in our bank. We would like to thank you and all donors of Silent Children's Mission. We do remember each one of you and your services in our prayers with gratitude and joy.

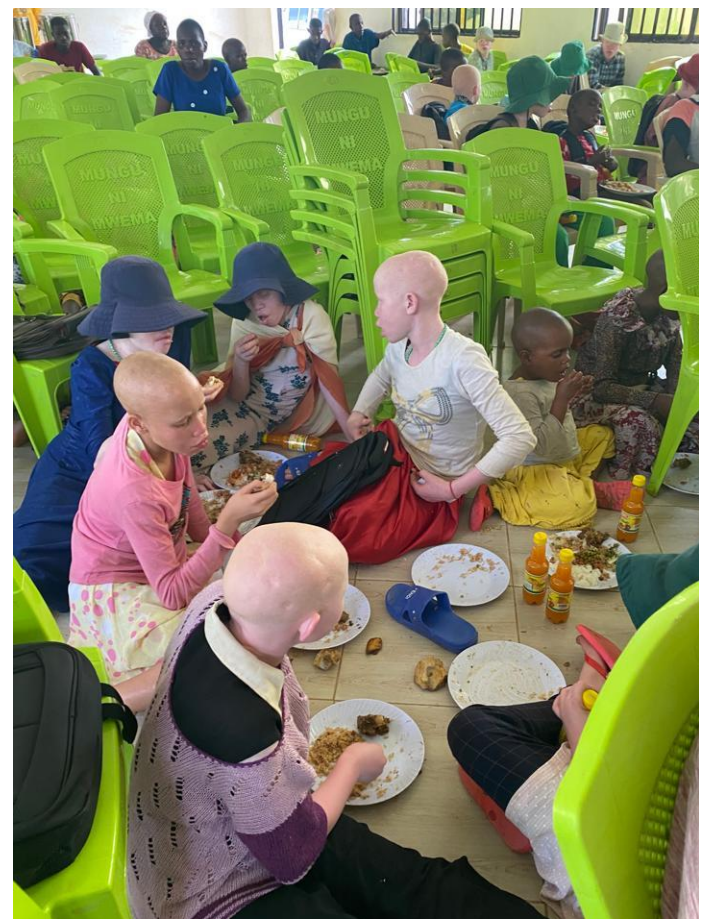
We have spent the funds for our health program and for learning materials for the Sunday school children of our mission area. We conduct a mobile clinic in different outstation churches of our parish which are mostly in the remote areas. We are able to see many poor people living in the hilly areas as they do not have a proper health facility and are unable to travel. We do an outreach program twice in a month in two places, which we have found to be very helpful for the children and the elderly. Usually, we provide the following services: general health care for adults and children, under-five clinic for children (including vaccinations), and feeding the malnourished and disabled children. We do provide free medication for all clients and Likuni Phala (food supplement) for children. We provide all these services from the support of Silent Children's Mission. We remember you in our prayers. Thank you for the loving support and effort you render to this mission area."



From Digna Thomas at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Parish Buhangija Albinism Centre in **Shinyanga, TANZANIA**:

"First of all, on behalf of myself and the Buhangija Centre in which you have been supporting for some time now, kindly receive heartfelt appreciation for the generosity of the SCM donation to the centre. Each year you touch lives and make an impact at the centre through the SCM donation. In particular, this past year the SCM donation was even more needed following the fire accident which left the center in a devastating situation.

Last November 23, there was fire accident at the Buhangija center and regrettably it took the lives of three children all of them girls who were blind. It left the centre with huge property damage including the children's dormitory and some children lost all their belongings. To date, the centre struggles with a shortage of beds to accommodate the children comfortably. Since its establishment in 1965, this was the first devastating incident to occur to the Buhangija centre. The government of Tanzania has assisted to repair the dormitory but some children are still struggling to get back the essentials they lost. These include bed sheets, blankets, bags, clothes, shoes, exercise books and reading books. This year the SCM donations helped some children to cover their loss but with limited funds the need for help is great."



Guatemala



Update from Juan Carlos in Guatemala City:

In our previous newsletter we shared the beautiful story of a family transformed by the love shown to Karen, a child of a poor family living in zone 3 near the basurero (Guatemala City dump).

Karen continues to make dramatic improvements in her health and well-being. The doctor feared that her legs would be contracted but it is not the case. Her right leg can be stretched to 90% and her left leg to 75% indicating that there is hope she can recover and learn to walk. Karen has started physiotherapy (photo left) and she is on a specialized nutrition plan where she is regularly monitored. We are happy to share that she has gained eight pounds.

It appears that Karen has an understanding of what is happening to her. Her family has seen changes; she now will sit up for long periods of time when her usual behaviour was to lie unmotivated in bed for most of the day. She makes gestures towards her brother and has a greater awareness of all the people around her.

These miraculous changes are happening because of the love Juan Carlos has shown the family, their loving response, and the love and generosity of SCM benefactors. Thank you

We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta

How you can help

MAKE A DONATION: By sending a cheque written to: **Silent Children's Mission** and mail it to: RR#1 16060 Concession 8, Schomberg, Ontario, L0G 1T0, Canada (Make sure to include your mailing address for a tax receipt) *Please note: tax receipts are sent quarterly with the newsletters*

DONATE ONLINE: By sending us an email money transfer to silentchildrenca@yahoo.com or through Canada Helps (SCM Registration #815949607RR0001) Please remember us in your will.

QUESTIONS? Write to us at silentchildrenca@yahoo.com or call us at 416-418-0314

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: www.silentchildrensmmission.com

INVITE FRANKIE TO SPEAK at your school, church, group, club or fundraiser.

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR TAX RECEIPT? Write to us at scmtaxreceipts@gmail.com

PRAY FOR OUR CHARITY and its benefactors. We pray and fast for you every First Friday of each month. Unite your intentions to ours!

Please consider sharing this newsletter with your family and friends