

Silent Children's Mission

*Look, my
hands are
clean!*

Hand washing class at
Valle de Los Angeles
Guatemala Medical
Mission 2020



Executive Director's Update

Dear SCM benefactors,

It seems that the photo above taken during one of our many health teaching classes at Orfanato Valle de Los Angeles in Guatemala, was timely, considering these difficult times. As we try to salvage some normalcy amidst social distancing, talk of flattening the curve, and fear of contracting covid19, let's not forget those who are suffering in other parts of the world. God bless you all for your support for the poorest of the poor this past year. We have helped numerous children go to school, have better health, drink clean water, and eat nourishing meals. Most importantly, we let them and their families know they are loved! We continue to pray every first Friday of the month and we encourage you to join us! Send me an email if you would like to be included in our reminders.

It was only a short time ago that our team returned to Canada from our medical mission in Guatemala but other

pressing international health issues have overshadowed our experiences. It's important to share that our team of nineteen including doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, paramedics, and a pharmacist were able to conduct clinics at Valle, the basurero and the indigenous community of Moyuta and care for 490 children and families. We collaborated with other Guatemalan health care professionals in order to provide continuity of care for the children at Valle and follow-up for the most urgent cases at the other clinics. Each person we encountered received the best care we could provide as we recognized the human dignity of each soul, which included the ten-year-old girl, who disclosed sexual assault, and the child who fainted, because she had not eaten in two days, as her parents had nothing to give her. We also gave care to the 50-year-old



Frankie Burg-Feret
Executive Director

“Our annual visit to Jeremy whose mother was murdered when he was very young. Sadly, he is no longer able to walk due to his Muscular Dystrophy. SCM is committed to helping make his life a bit better.”

“...above all, be faithful.”

Sr. Helen Prejean

man, who arrived with severe chest pain; and the 75-year-old woman, who laughingly said, “I have no teeth” after I asked her if she brushed her teeth; all are children of God! Malcolm Muggeridge described the human equality expressed in the care Mother Teresa had for the poor as a reflection of God’s love. He said: “This is the only equality there is on earth, and it cannot be embodied in laws, enforced by coercion, or promoted by protest and upheaval, deriving, as it does, from God’s love, which, like the rain from heaven, falls on the just and the unjust, on rich and poor, alike.” I would like to say that the people involved in the medical mission reflected God’s love and this includes you our benefactors who selflessly provided the funds, medications, vitamins and medical supplies that we needed in order to do the work God entrusted to us. Fr. Gary Caster

said, “We must give, we must spend, we must relinquish, and we must let go. Every saint has known that the things most valued by the world are ultimately worthless. There is one thing of value, one thing alone that is priceless and makes a person rich, and that is love. The giving of self, the spending of oneself, is the glory of our humanity”. The board of directors and volunteers of Silent Children’s Mission are committed to the children and families we serve. Sr. Helen Prejean said, “if you are going to do something for the poor, the abused, or the imprisoned, above all, be faithful. People with broken lives often come from lives with broken promises”. Our mission here is most importantly to let the poorest of the poor know that someone loves them and we promise to continue to do that on your behalf. Peace, frankie

The young boy we were praying over is named Jesus. How appropriate for a child who had suffered all his life and is now in his last days. Although not able to provide him with a physical cure, the team was able to provide spiritual care in a way that had meaning for the family.



“This man is 50 years old. He told us he had never ever been seen by a health care practitioner. Our Humber student was the very first to assess him in his whole life.”



Many thanks to an anonymous benefactor who directs their donations to Valle de Los Angeles in Guatemala. SCM was able to pay for all these children to receive the eye glasses they needed in order to be successful in school. God bless you abundantly!

Spiritual Director's Letter

Sacrifice

In the readings this week we encounter the memorable story about Jonah and the whale. It is an odd story that many of us think is fictitious and so easily gloss over it, missing its deeper significance. The fact that Jesus himself refers to this story however, warrants a second look. This so-called fish story that we are often skeptical about and do not fully understand is the only sign that Jesus says will be given to this generation, that He is the messiah and will be raised in three days. Most of us are familiar enough with the story to recognize Jonah as the reluctant prophet who did not want to preach to the Ninevites, the enemies of Israel. We also remember that, despite his attempt to flee from the presence of the Lord, Jonah voluntarily elects to be sacrificed and thrown into the sea when the storm would not abate.

Most of us get the story wrong however and do not realize what really happened when the whale swallowed Jonah and he spent three days in its belly. While many of us try to uncomfortably defend how Jonah could possibly have remained alive, the text says something altogether different. A closer look at the text reveals the truth that many do not know. In his prayer, Jonah prays "out of the belly of SHEOL, I cried and you heard my voice". Sheol is the Hebrew word for the underworld or Hell. Jonah then continues to pray; "I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the

Pit". It is clear from the text that Jonah in fact died in the belly. After three days he was then expelled out of the whale's mouth. This is confirmed in the next chapter when the Lord addresses him for the second time, saying "Get up, go to Nineveh". Here the Hebrew word for get up conveys the meaning of arise, or be raised up, the same word used to describe those raised from the dead. The sign of Jonah then is not only that God raised up Jonah from the dead after being in belly of the whale for three days, but that he then witnessed to God in Nineveh and converted 120,00 people. Jonah first and foremost preached with his life. This is very much like St Francis who said preach to everyone and if you have to use words, conveying that we preach best through our concrete actions and with our life. Jesus did the same. He rose from the dead and sent his disciples not just to one city, but to them all in order for them to witness the Good News with their life.

The problem however is how Jonah acts after converting everyone in Nineveh. He is shockingly "displeased" and "very angry"! Why? Although he was willing to sacrifice his life and die for God, he was not willing to live for Him. He did not want to witness his faith to his enemies by his life. He only wanted to please himself and follow God his way and to minister only to those he wanted to. His selfishness becomes all the more obvious when after receiving a gift of shade from the sun, he is said to have become "very happy." While it displeased him to convert his enemies to God, it made him "very glad" to lie in the shade. Jonah sought his own

comfort. So, what does this have to do with us, the poor, and Silent Children's Mission? Unfortunately, we are sometimes like Jonah and want to flee the burning presence of God and find a hiding place in which to seek our own comfort.

Like Jonah, we run away from ministering to those we do not like, namely, the poor; who we may want to avoid. We, like Jonah, may be willing to die for God but are not willing to live for Him and sacrifice our time, prayer, or money to help relieve a people we do not prefer to help. We may be stubborn and hardhearted, blind to the needs of others and refuse to witness with our life the good news that God calls us to. Like Jonah, we may be tempted to only live for ourselves.

Lent is a good opportunity to repent of our self-referential myopic vision. It is a good time to re-choose to live for something greater than ourselves and decide to help those who we may have an aversion to, with concrete acts of charity. Today is a good day to let God choose who we are called to witness to by our actions and put our faith into practice by loving the poor.

Peace, Fr. Michael



Medical Mission Guatemala 2020

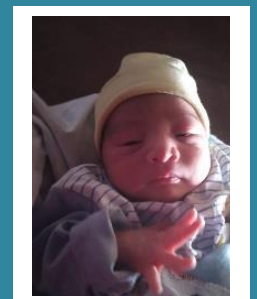


Left is a photo of our medical mission team 2020 in Moyuta Juitapa, a small municipality with a population of 29,000 people mostly indigenous to Guatemala. The access to health care is limited and we met many people who had never seen a doctor or dentist before. Collaboratively with our Guatemalan community leaders and other health care professionals we were able to care for 175 children and families in the two days we were there! Thanks to these beautiful Canadians who gave their time and talents to help others and to our benefactors who collected and donated money, medications, vitamins, hygiene kits and supplies without which this trip could not happen. We especially thank you for your prayers!



I was finally able to visit with Sheily this trip – a graduate from Valle de Los Angeles and a child who SCM has been assisting for many years with the purchase of medications for her debilitating juvenile onset rheumatoid arthritis. She is not able to practice her baking skills at this time as the RA has left her in pain as she waits for upcoming surgeries. We were able to visit her in her home (photo above) and meet her madre and abuela who make tortillas to support the family. We were so grateful for their gift of hot tortillas! Thank you so much for supporting Sheily with the purchase of her much needed medications especially her meds for pain. Frankie

Message from Sandrita in Mayuta. “Let me tell you that the lady with the preclampsia thanks to your instructions (to go for follow up in two days) saved the life of her baby. I gave her the instructions so she could go to the hospital and thank God she did because when she was waiting in line to check-in, she went into shock. Three minutes later and the baby was already coming, he injured his face but thank God he is alive. Thanks to you and your visit she was diagnosed and saved her life and her baby’s. She sends you millions of blessings and feels very thankful. She is already home.”



Updates from our Missionaries



Greetings from Fr. Peter Muwanya in Malawi

“Aida Paulo was one of the children who particularly benefited from the donation. This photo shows Aida carrying some of the items that were given to her by using your donation. The photo also shows a grass thatched house where she is living. Aida is an orphan, her mother and father died when she was only one year old. She has grown up with her grandmother who has struggled to raise her for 11 years. Her granny has been caught up by age now and cannot provide livelihood for Aida. At 11 years old Aida has been struggling to get food for herself and her grandmother. She has been struggling to balance her education and her needs and is among the poorest of the poor children that I have ever come across. Thanks to Silent Children’s Mission, she has food, clothes, school materials and a hut to dwell in. Aida is a strong believer and thinks that your intervention in assisting her was inspired by God. Thank you for your donation.”

Gerry remains in Haiti at this time despite the instability politically and economically. SCM continues to support the projects there with his help. We were able to send much needed medication and the anti-fungal creams came to good use in the village of Cerca Carvajal as many children suffer from fungal infections due to the unsanitary conditions they live in. ***God bless you for being the means to do this work.***

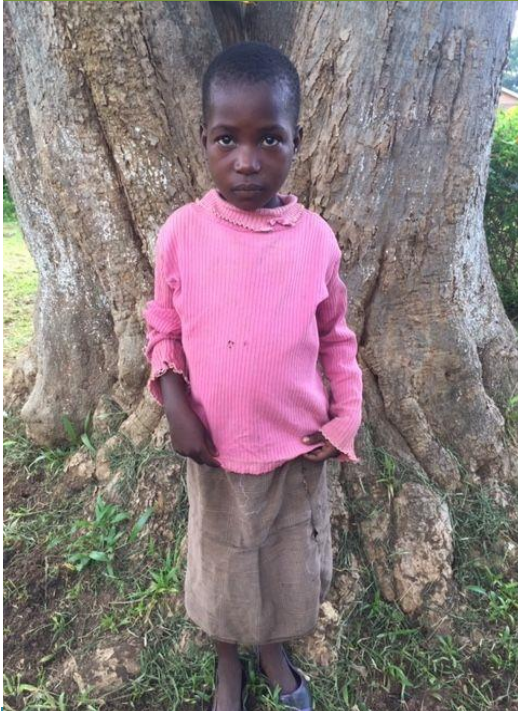


Greetings from Sr. Lubingu Poor Clare Sister in Zambia

“Mama Frankie hello how are you. We are all fine and we think of you all with gratitude. This is what happened and all the kids are set for school. It was a marathon because I combined it with prayer, I needed the help of those two guys John and Mavin. ***You can imagine the joy, comments like, I have never had a school bag, school shoes, cardigan. Look at your children's joy*** and at baby Jesus smiling at your generosity. May the blessings of God reach all the Benefactors as we continue to pray for them.”



Updates from our Missionaries



"Here is the picture and details of a little girl in need of school fees support. Her name is Bernadette Joseph Zulu last born in a family of four. Both parents are alive but separated when Bernadette was few months old. The father was somehow abusive and unsupportive to the whole family in terms of the children's care. The mother has suffered a lot in bringing up Bernadette and the other three children. The father does not help the kids in any way.

Bernadette was born on 6 November, 2013 and is in Standard one. She seems to be an intelligent and focused little girl despite the problems she and her family undergo. I am thinking if she can be one of the kids supported by SCM, she can make a positive difference in the family."

Sr. Bernadette, Ludzi, Malawi

Why your help is so important!



The hands on the **right** belong to a man in Guatemala, who digs for food in the basurero (dump) which has left him with a badly infected finger.

Left is Padre Joaquin with the children; he is the new director at Valle. This Catholic institution helps over 200 children receive an education and a better life.



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 a email money transfer to silentchildrenca@yahoo.com or through Canada Helps (SCM Registration #815949607RR0001) We also have an iTrade account for those wishing to donate shares.

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

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: www.silentchildrenmission.com ,

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

Please share this mission with your family and friends