

Silent Children's Mission

*Not all of us can do
great things. But
we can do small
things with great
love.*

Mother Teresa



Frankie Burg-Feret
Executive Director

Executive Director's Update

Dear SCM benefactors,

Although 2020 had challenges, we are very grateful for the many donations we received. We were able to provide school fees for hundreds of children, support feeding programs at churches and schools, help provide health care for mothers and children in under-resourced communities, help grow our two self-sufficient farms in Haiti and Malawi, and provide spiritual care, all via our religious and lay missionaries.

In his Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde* (With a Father's Heart), Pope Francis has proclaimed 2021, the Year of St. Joseph. Several months prior to this proclamation, we received a call from a benefactor wanting to know if a donation could be accepted with the provision that it be used for a project in honour of St. Joseph. Her timing was Providential for

everyone involved, especially the children her generous donation will be serving. A letter accompanied her donation which included: "When I spoke to you, I asked about the cost of a borehole (well) and you gave me a cost of \$5000.00. That is exactly the amount of money I promised St. Joseph. Prior to my phone call, and as I was praying to St. Joseph and asking him which charity I was to pledge to, your newsletter arrived in our mailbox – the only piece of mail for that day. I read it from cover to cover and felt that St. Joseph was answering my prayer...". We are pleased to share that the well will indeed be named "St. Joseph's Well" and the children will learn about the goodness of this special saint through this inspired project. The well is in the

process of being dug in the VOA camp, a permanent makeshift camp in the suburbs of Monrovia, Liberia in West Africa where Fr. Michael and I visited in 2016. St. Joseph's well will provide safe, clean drinking water for the children attending a school in this under-resourced community (see page 5). We are blessed to collaborate with missionaries who are dedicated to building the kingdom of God through loving service to those in need.

Pope Francis describes how St. Joseph teaches us "the value, the dignity, and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one's own labour" (Patris Corde).

There is a need for us to understand the importance of dignified work and how our brothers and sisters in many countries do not have the opportunity to experience this, especially during this time of pandemic. Current demographic trends show that one in five young people in the world will be born in lower developed countries, by 2030. As the world recovers from the pandemic, it is these countries that will suffer profound long-term effects as many workers experienced workplace closure, making it increasingly difficult for parents (UN, 2020). Advances that were made in relieving world poverty have been lost due to the pandemic and recovery will be

challenging. That is why assisting children to meet their educational, nutritional, physical, and spiritual needs is so important in helping them to meet their potential, develop self-worth, experience dignity, and have the opportunity to develop their souls.

Thank you to all of our benefactors, who like St. Joseph, are unnoticed and discreet in their giving, but generously make a profound difference in the lives of so many.

Please continue to support this mission with your prayers and financial donations, because without your help we can do nothing.

Peace and all good, Frankie

Report from LUSAKA, ZAMBIA



"How are you Mama Frankie? We have been busy here. At the farm, the floods swept our seedlings of tomatoes, soybeans and maize. Too much rains and now I am back in the monastery. We don't know what to do. Many farmers especially the poor people are deeply distressed. But we shall not give up hoping. All the children are in school despite the Covid19 circumstances. It looks like they are coping with the situation. Please continue to pray for us."

From Sr. Lubingu, Poor Clare Nun

*SCM sent funds to the Poor Clares to help them in their many projects with the poor. These projects include school fees for children whose parents lost their jobs due to the pandemic, as well as feeding programs for the children lacking adequate nutrition.

Report from PILI, PHILIPPINES

"We are very blessed to be able to reach out to our poor people in the mission in our locality through your support. We are deeply grateful for your generosity and though it is pandemic and hard for us to travel around, God's helping hand lead us to make it possible to reach out to our poor children here. God is good to have people like you who extended help for us here in the Philippines specially to our poor little ones. We buy extra rice to be distributed every time they knock at our door. May God reward your love for the poor children and may you and the mission help more and more poor children in the world. God bless."

From Sr. Ella Escultura, Daughters of Mary Mother of the Church

Spiritual Director Report

The cost of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world's poorest countries



"... He sowed seeds of peace and walked alongside the poor..."

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti

This article is a summary of some of the impact that the present pandemic is having on poor people all over the world. Although it is difficult to know the full impact, we do know that for the first time in 20 years, poverty is likely to increase significantly.

Covid-19 does not strike at random—mortality is much higher in elderly people, poorer groups, and ethnic minorities, and its economic effect is also unevenly distributed across the population. Growing child poverty, homelessness, and food poverty will lead to an unprecedented rise in infant mortality, mental health problems, and falling life expectancy,

especially for women in the poorest areas and cities. The economic fallout is likely to be felt for years. Leading UN economists say that the pandemic is likely to cause the worst economic crisis in decades among least developed countries. "The COVID crisis is leading least developed countries to their worst economic crisis in 30 years, with per capita GDP for the group expected to fall by 2.6 per cent this year." (Mukhisa Kituyi, UNCTAD).

The world faces a greater challenge than ever before as the pandemic threatens to undo years of progress in poverty eradication while exacerbating pre-existing inequalities and exposing the fragility of our systems. In 2019, the UN estimated 700 million people lived in extreme poverty with average earnings per capita of \$1,088 compared with the world average of \$11,371. These countries have a weak infrastructure and reduced financial means to withstand economic shocks.

The World Bank now projects 88 million to 115 million *more* people will be forced into extreme poverty by the year's end, with that figure potentially reaching up to 150 million in 2021. For those living in extreme poverty, the biggest concern is not the virus, but hunger. The World Food Programme has warned that

the number of people facing food insecurity would double as a result of the pandemic without adequate measures. "Covid-19 is potentially catastrophic for millions who are already hanging by a thread" (Arif Husain, WFP).

This information can serve as motivation for us to continue to support efforts to alleviate poverty worldwide. **YOU can, and are, making a difference.** Looking ahead, Pope Francis warned us that our worst response after the crisis would be for us to "plunge even more deeply into feverish consumerism and new forms of egoistic self-preservation." (Fratelli Tutti). His hope is that we will no longer think in terms of "them and those" but only as "us".

As Mother Teresa once said:

"If you can't feed just a hundred people, then just feed one."

Let us be part of the solution, and along with our prayers, let us continue to fight the battle and help our brothers and sisters who need it most.

Fr. Michael Della Penna ofm

Updates from our Missionaries

Report from GUATEMALA



Padre Joaquin (Franciscan priest), the new director at Valle de Los Angeles sent us these beautiful photos that speak to the success of the programs at Valle! The children who come from under-resourced communities in Guatemala, benefit from the programs at the boarding school. Valle offers these children a chance out of poverty by learning sewing, baking and gardening skills. They are also able to learn about God through many faith-based activities. Due to the pandemic, we were not able to provide a medical mission this year but we continue to support them with our donations and prayers. Thank you to our benefactors for helping to make this possible for the children!



*Padre Joaquin with the children
from Valle de Los Angeles*



Updates from our Missionaries

Report from MONROVIA, LIBERIA



We are grateful to our benefactors and people of good will in Canada.” Fr. Samuel Von Tucker, Spiritan priest

“With gratitude to God, through the benevolence of SCM in Canada, who donated the St. Joseph's Water Well to the needy and deprived community of the VOA camp, a permanent make-shift camp of more than a thousand families of different backgrounds, in the suburb of Monrovia, Liberia. The VOA camp got its origin in the 80's after the two Civil wars of Liberia and her neighbour Sierra Leone. Displaced people and refugees made their way to hide in these deplorable, dilapidated houses as a permanent home for them until today. It is also home for those who cannot afford the high house rent in the capital city due to low or no income. The St. Joseph's well will provide safe drinking water which will prevent water borne diseases, as hygiene is a big challenge in the VOA camp. Here is a photo of the children at the school located in the camp who will benefit greatly from St. Joseph's well.”

Thank you for your generous donations, because of you SCM is able to help many children and families in need.

Report from MERU, KENYA

“One of the purchases from your donation was this water tank for our school, the Irene Vocational Training Centre for the Blind. We were very grateful, We don't know how to express ourselves but the God who see in secret will reward all of you.”

Sr. Lucy Chepngeno,
Franciscan Sister of St. Joseph



Updates from our Missionaries

Report from CERCA CARVAJAL, HAITI



“We are giving women in need the opportunity to create a better life for themselves and their family by building a bakery on the farm thanks to SCM benefactors. With the completion of the bakery we are hiring a licensed baker to teach the woman an apprenticeship program and when they complete the training they will be given a job baking bread. The bread then will be used for the feeding program and school program along with the peanuts, honey, eggs, and chicken produced on the farm. Our goal is to be a self sustaining community taking care of the needs of those in dire circumstances. There is a Haitian proverb:

*We only want help to reach the first branch of the tree, once there,
we can climb to the top on our own.*

The bakery is that lift to the first branch.” Gerry Brinston, Board Member at our SCM self-sustaining farm

“Silent Children’s Mission is to relieve the suffering and neglect of those who do not have a voice – especially women, children and their families. The goal is to let the poorest of the poor know someone cares – that God has not forgotten them but loves them. “ (quote from SCM mission statement)

Updates from our Missionaries

Report from XALAPA, MEXICO



“Josue lives with his mother Albertha and three other siblings. Albertha is a single mother and she and her oldest children have survived with temporary jobs however it is more difficult to get these jobs and bring food home because of the pandemic. Your donation helps them to survive during these difficult times. On behalf of Josue and other families you assist with your donation, thank you.”
Daniel Riveros, lay missionary

Report from KITWE, ZAMBIA



“Here is a photo of our feeding program at the Marcheselli Nutrition Centre. Fifty-one children were also provided with masks, soap, and buckets during this pandemic. God bless your good work for our poor people.”

Sr. Laetitia Longolongo, Franciscan Sister of Assisi

Report from SUMBAWANGA, TANZANIA

“Praised be the Lord Jesus Christ! A particular child who benefited from your donation is Collins. Born at the year 2016, his mother died two years later in 2018. His father, although is alive, is incapable to run the life of Collins. He suffers a lot from leprosy; therefore, he can produce nothing. The last donation was used to support him to buy exercise books, to pay for health insurance and therefore to make him feel that he is created in accordance to God’s image. For sure your support makes him a very happy person. Thank you SCM because through your support Collins knows that God is with him. I wish you God’s blessing.” Fr. Sospeter Lyela, diocesan priest



Send a Card



Thanks to a SCM benefactor, we have new “In Memory” and “In Honour” cards!

If you would like to give a gift in honour of someone’s birthday/anniversary or in memory of a loved one who has died, helping others in need is a beautiful way to do that!

We would be happy to mail a card to the person directly or to you.

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) We also have an iTrade account for those wishing to donate shares. 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.silentchildrenmission.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