

Silent Children's Mission

“These are our treasures. They are Jesus. Each one is Jesus in his distressing disguise.”

Mother Teresa



Executive Director's Update

Dear SCM benefactors,

Christmas blessings to you and your families!

The photo of the infant on the front cover was taken recently in Haiti by our board member Gerry. We don't know a lot about the infant except that the mother is so poor and desperate that she tried to convince Gerry to take her baby. I remember how disheartened I felt the first time I learned about the restavek children in Haiti and at the time wondered how a mother could abandon her child to a life of slavery and neglect. I understand now that we can't stand in judgement because everyone has a reason for their actions. It is never easy for a mother to watch her child suffer due to malnutrition and preventable disease. This understanding doesn't change the fact that today infants are being abandoned because their mothers have no support, and no resources. Haiti is so far away and it is easy to close our eyes to the plight of these people but Jesus calls us to take action! The child in the photo is who Mother Teresa speaks of when she says: "These are our treasures. They are Jesus. Each one is Jesus in his distressing disguise."

This charity was inspired by Mother Teresa and she teaches us to meet our Maker in the poorest of the poor and it is there we will find our salvation. "When we look into the eyes of the hungry, the homeless, and the unwanted, we'll find his eyes looking back."

Thank you to all of our donors! We pray for each one of you and on behalf of the children we want you to know what a difference you are making in their lives. This charity would not be possible without the commitment of so many people especially our board of directors; I would like to introduce you and to thank them for their many volunteer hours that ensure the donations you have entrusted to us are used to benefit the poor.

Mary Filangi is the founder of Women of the Word Toronto, a lay Catholic movement under the guidance of the Archdiocese of Toronto which inspires hundreds of women annually to grow in their relationship with God. She has graciously taken over the newsletter production and works tirelessly to help with numerous tasks.



*Frankie playing
and
loving the children*

“ Love one another; as I have loved you.”

Jn 13:34

Louise Farrugia is a retired Toronto police sergeant, who does the accounting and issuing of tax receipts as well as keeping our mailing list up to date.

Michael Dopp is the founder of the Mission of the Redeemer Ministries, a ministry committed to forming Catholics for the new evangelization. Michael provides us with expert advice regarding bylaws and future changes we must incorporate in order to grow and meet our requirements as a registered charity.

Gerry Brinston is a retired captain of the Toronto Fire Dept., he spends half his year as a missionary in Haiti helping the poorest of the poor. He inspires us and affirms the work we are doing here at SCM.

Fr. Michael Della Penna is a Franciscan priest, and is the chair and spiritual director of SCM. As our spiritual leader, he provides guidance and encouragement to our team as well as to the missionaries we collaborate with in the developing countries we visit annually.

As we prepare for the coming of Christ let us reflect on the words of Mother Teresa:

“At Christmas, Christ comes like a little child, so small, so helpless, so much in need of all that love can give. Are we ready to receive Him: If Mary and Joseph were looking for a place to make a home for Jesus, would they choose our house and all that it holds and is filled with?”

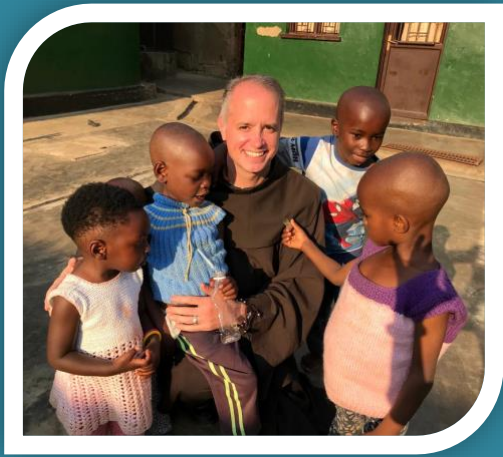
Please continue to support this charity with your prayers and if you are able, with your donations.

Peace and love, Frankie

Sr. Bernadette Densani supervising the construction of some homes for the workers on the Joan and Andrew Simone Centre in Malawi.



Joe Nike visiting nine year old **Michael** who was badly burned. Sharing his testimony of healing and love will provide **Michael** with hope. Please keep him in your prayers.



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Spiritual Director's Update

The Pope's latest apostolic letter, *Admirabile Signum* is an extended reflection on the living gospel of the nativity scene which unpacks the deeper meaning of the simple and joyful proclamation of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, who was born in a Christmas crib. The earliest biography of the life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano explains how St. Francis' fascination with the humility of the God who became man so that we in turn might become one with him, motivated him to recreate the scene in Greccio in 1223. St. Francis was in particular inspired "to bring to life the memory of that babe born in Bethlehem," in order to see as much as possible with his own bodily eyes "the discomfort of his infant needs." Pope Francis too invites us to bring to life again, the spiritual significance of St. Luke's account of how Mary "gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn" (2:7).

Coming into this world, the Son of God was laid in the place where animals feed. Hay became the first bed of the One who would reveal himself as "the bread come down from heaven" (*Jn* 6:41).

After St. Francis had made all the preparations of gathering the crib, the hay, the animals etc, a miracle occurred in Greccio, attested to by many who witnessed a marvelous vision of the Baby Jesus himself lying in the manger.

The striking photo of the child in swaddling cloths on the cover reminds each of us about the sad reality that the poverty and discomfort our Lord embraced is agonizingly repeated again and again by far too many children. This provocative image powerfully embodies Pope Francis' and St. Francis' attempt to challenge us to "feel" and "touch" the poverty that God's Son took upon himself in the Incarnation." Pope Francis states the crib "summons us to follow him along the path of humility, poverty and self-denial that leads from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross.

It asks us to meet him and serve him by showing mercy to those of our brothers and sisters in greatest need (cf. *Mt* 25:31-46)." How can I allow the Holy Spirit to move me this Advent to extend love to those most in need?

The Pope also reflects on how the poor shepherds, precisely because they were not distracted by all the periphery goods of the world, "become the first to see the most essential thing of all: the gift of salvation." The many poor children we have visited in Malawi, Liberia, Rwanda and other places almost always have this in common: a propensity to be present to others. It is no surprise then that the poor and humble, in having nothing else to ground their security on are able to "greet the event of the Incarnation." How often am I lured away by consumerism and unable to see the presence of God all around me in my family, work and friends? Pope Francis then points out how the customary addition of symbolic figures "like the beggars and the others who know only the wealth of the heart", are "a privileged part of this mystery; often they are the first to recognize God's presence in our midst."

Pope Francis also articulates something profound in writing the poor "have every right to draw near to the Infant Jesus; no one can evict them or send them away from a crib so makeshift that the poor seem entirely at home." This tender insight reminded me of the humble children we would see in shacks who if they had been at the nativity scene, would not have been scandalized by His poverty, nor perhaps have even noticed, but rather felt in solidarity with baby Jesus, who was more accessible and unthreatening in His poverty.

He states "The presence of the poor and the lowly in the nativity scene remind us that

God became man for the sake of those who feel most in need of his love

and who ask him to draw near to them."

This reflects well Pope Francis' desire of having a poor church for the poor. Jesus, after all, was born in poverty, and led a very simple life in order to teach us "to recognize what is essential and to act accordingly." The nativity scene is a warning that reminds us not to be fooled by wealth and riches and the fleeting promises of happiness. He states that "By being born in a manger, God himself launches the only true revolution that can give hope and dignity to the disinherited and the outcast: the revolution of love, the revolution of tenderness. From the manger, Jesus proclaims, in a meek yet powerful way, the need for sharing with the poor as the path to a more human and fraternal world in which no one is excluded or marginalized." This has been the main thrust of SCM for years now and with your help will continue to be so.

Surprisingly however, the Pope omitted a beautiful detail I came across about the swaddling cloths mentioned in the gospel of Luke which prefaces the discovery of the babe in swaddling cloths by stating "And this shall be a sign unto you". This of course begs the question, how could swaddling cloths be a "sign" if all babies were wrapped in this way? Why would these bands be a sign? The answer is that there is an ancient tradition that holds the shepherds who were near Jerusalem were those who provided the "lambs without blemish" used for the temple sacrifice at Passover. In order to protect these first, new-born lambs from blemish (as it was required to be by the Law), the shepherds it is said, would wrap them in swaddling cloths and even place them in a food trough apart from the other sheep. This tradition spoke to me of our call to clothe, feed and love those poor who often go without, recognizing them as the precious 'lambs' they are who are so often tragically sacrificed up to the selfishness of the world. Peace, Fr. Michael

Updates From Our Missionaries



"Emmanuel is 18 months old. He is living with an old lady the father and mother died with HIV."

"Simmons's father passed away and the mother is also sick. She can not pay for school. She does not have work due to her sickness."

"Harriet's mother and father are both dead. She is living with grandmother who is not able to help her with school."

"Over 51 children in Kitwe, Zambia receive basic needs, healthcare and education. Over 250 are helped by the feeding program. Children who were not able to attend school now do. Some who had no food or clothing are able to have food and clothing. Some babies who were left with no parents and were sickly are now looking healthy and they can even smile. This was all achieved by your generosity."

Sr. Laetitia Longolongo in Zambia

Zambia update from the Poor Clare sisters in Lusaka

"Mama Frankie Happy Independence of our beloved country Zambia. After 55 years of independence it looks like we are still under the yoke of slavery. We still learn under this tree and don't have uniforms and proper books and bags to carry our books. No school shoes and we have to pay to have tuitions. We are happy children and thank God for you. The sisters are preparing that next year January 2020 when we open school we shall look like school children all because of your generous hearts and the love you have for God and us. We pray for you in a special way every 1st Friday of each month. But this month of Our Lady we say a rosary for you. We love you all. God reward you." Sr. Lubingu

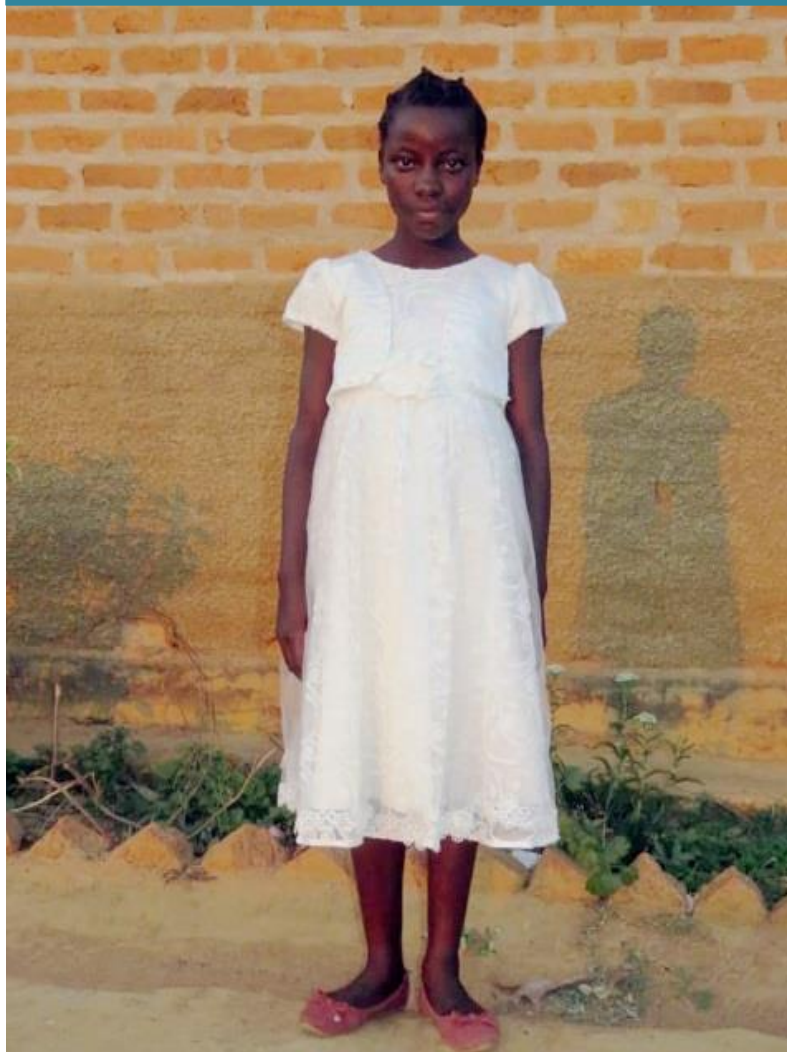
"You have given me a chance to restore my dignity as a person. Thank you"



Mama Frankie, we have been working hard in the field such that even the silent children join us in cultivating the land for maize. We have a problem of no rains and we are praying that we are spared from the draught. Starting 21st will be big days of the children trying their shoes receiving the receipts from school already paid for 2020 1st term. Others like Wayne will be in good time for school, all is prepared and he was given the reading glasses. We love you and pray for you. Blessed Advent

Poor Clare Sister Lubingu in Lusaka Zambia

Updates from our Missionaries



Greetings from Sr. Charity in Chilubula, Zambia

“Gift is a ten year old girl doing her fourth grade at Chilubula Primary School in Kasama, Zambia. She is a victim of sexual abuse. She was discovered to have been abused by her late father. The sisters who are working with the women in the community got wind of the story. But it proved very difficult to access the truth based on the beliefs that such taboos should not be made public. After some medical intervention by Sr. Charity Chishimba (Dr), it was discovered that the child was truly sexually abused. At that stage Sr. Charity decided to withdraw the girl from her father and place her in a foster family for reintegration. The family has accepted the child and she is now growing as a normal child. Her performance in school which was below average has improved. Her tendency to withdraw has vanished. We thank the efforts of Silent Children for the continued support in helping such children. It is the support from Silent Children that is helping in supplementing the efforts of the foster family in providing for basic needs. The girl has a sense of belonging and feels loved by those surrounding her.

“Cordial greetings from Mzambazi. Thanks for always remembering the poor and needy people of Mzambazi, the beneficiaries really feel loved and cared for by the people of SCM.

This is Mphaso, she is 12 years of age and in standard 5. She lost her mother who died in 2017 January. The child is HIV positive and on ART drugs. She is living with her grandmother who has nothing to take care of her grandchild. The donation was given to this family and it made a great change. Her health is in good shape and she thanks God everyday for this love she gets from SCM.” Sr. Florence





Invite Frankie to speak at your school, church, group, club or fundraiser.

Please see contact information below

Why your help is so important!



These three Haitian girls were extremely malnourished. SCM provided basic needs and healthcare however one child did not survive.

Jeremy's mother was murdered and SCM continues to support him with your generous donations and his mother is remembered in our First Friday prayers and fasting.



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)

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.silentchildrensmmission.com ,

Please share this mission with your family and friends