



FRAGMENTS FROM THE MISSION

Easter, April 2023

Dear Friends of the Mission,

I want to wish you all a Happy Easter, with all the joys of living the stupendous gift of God as we seek to understand ourselves, through his passion, death and resurrection!

Lent has been an amazing time of mixing the extraordinary with the ordinary things of everyday. I think that this is best illustrated by the fact that we are in a 'normal' situation of drought, and at the same time have face the flooding of the River Shabelle. In the space of a few hours during the night, the gentle flow of the river suddenly morphed into a raging beast (to coin the terms given it by our prefect Fr Angelo), which flooded our year old diesel pump. Fortunately the pump was well secured onto a concrete base and yesterday we managed to have it repaired whilst we figure out a new position for it.

The fact that we now have our 'floating pump' has eased the situation, for without it, we would have been hopelessly lost without the use of the diesel pump. We now use the diesel pump for times when the electricity is not powerful enough or when completely absent. With the now hopeful advent of the availability of solar panels in the country we are looking into this possibility Whatever, in this country I have learnt that one source of energy is never enough! The compound has literally exploded into life! The day centre now receives 23 women and 36 children on a daily basis Monday to Friday, with all the confusion and noise that is inevitable.

Bethlehem is as enthusiastic as ever and her contribution, especially, (but not only) to the children is a precious gift. She is always looking for new ways to help the children learn and grow, and I am so



grateful that she is particularly attentive to their growth as persons and not just their intellectual development. On the other hand, I am delighted to see the children discover the world of words and numbers as they become more literate on a daily basis. It is clear in their joyful pride when they seek me out in the compound or call me into their classroom to show me their tentative beginnings in writing and numberwork. It is a huge consolation to have Betty as a co-worker in this task of laying down foundations for the work of the mission.

We joyfully received Blanca again for a few months. This is her third time here in Gode (she was the first volunteer to come in 2021) Blanca insists on learning the language which not only gives her more autonomy in the apostolate but also allows her to have direct contact with the children who look on her as a friend/teacher! At the moment Blanca helps the teacher in KG 2 to develop creativity in her teaching methods and also help with the discipline. Being three of us around the women and children really allows us to take on a little more (which is why we have increased the numbers), and also helps with ideas of how to manage practical aspects.

While I was shopping, recently, one of the shopkeepers asked me to go and see a man who



had been paralysed two weeks before. Girma, is 87 and is known in the town as the man who arranged goats/sheep/and cows for the ‘hotels’/and restaurants. Two months ago he suffered a stroke, and had been taken in by the lady of the restaurant. We found him lying on his bed, in a darkened room with the television on full blast surrounded by numerous young people. The mixture of noise, darkness and sweaty bodies made me think of scenes of ‘Les Miserables’!

We sat and spoke with Girma, and I asked him what he wanted to do.... he was still able to speak and although his speech is somewhat indistinct but we could have a conversation. I offered to ask the Missionaries of Charity if they would be able to receive him, (the sisters have homes for sick and

destitute), but Girma decided, understandably, that he wanted to stay with those he knew and who knew him. It was finally agreed, that we would take him to our house for a little each day, and visit the doctor with him.

On his first day in our house we helped him have a shower. You cannot imagine the joy he experienced to have running water flow over his body! We then massaged him a little to try to loosen up his limbs, after which he said he would have a sleep... All the excitement of the morning had tired him out!

He awoke two hours later, pleased with his long sleep, in the peaceful surroundings of the house, and then we helped him to the table for a late lunch....I placed a spoon in his hand and after a few moments of trial and error he began to feed himself. I did not notice how momentous this was, but later, on his way home and when he reached the hotel, he could not contain his joy in telling everyone how he was able to eat by himself!

So now it is a regular part of the day, picking up Girma and bringing him to the house for a shower, a rest, some basic physio, and just sitting around looking at what everyone is doing...simple joys.

Having Girma among us is like the cherry on the cake, he allows us to discover the preciousness of life, the fragility of our strength, and the possibility of letting the Lord take control of everything.

Once again, in this Easter season I thank you for your prayer and for the financial contribution many of you make to the charity 'The Mission of Hope'.

I keep you and your families in my prayer,

Happy Easter!

Sr Mary Joachim

HAPPY AND BLESSED EASTER FROM GODE!

