



Newsletter No 13

December 2010

Hello Everybody

I find it hard to believe that Christmas will soon be upon us again. How the years fly by, which I feel sure is a sign of aging as when one is young time seems to pass very slowly especially waiting for Christmas to arrive. I hope all of you enjoy a wonderful Christmas with family and friends in a warm environment with good food and gifts and may your Christmas be filled with love, peace and joy.

The Reverend Jude at St Anne's Church asked me to write an article for the Christmas Issue of the church magazine The Hatch Herald. I was unsure of what to write as all of the parishioners have read about and heard me talk many times about One Life and the children in South Africa who we help. Then it came to me that as it was a Christmas Issue of the church magazine I should write about the reality of how Christmas will be for millions of Africans in the year 2010.

I phoned Khanya (Nancy's daughter) and asked her what Christmas would be like for her, Nancy and the family (now 13 in all) and also how it would be for the children we sponsor. Khanya told me that on Christmas morning in her home they get up, have breakfast and go to church to the Christmas service. They then come home and spend the day like any other day, nothing different, nothing special except money permitting they may have jelly and ice cream after their meal. There is no money for gifts for even the youngest child in Nancy's care. For the children in the shacks, they too attend a church service if they are Christian and then return home to just another day of poverty and hardship. What is different for them is that just prior to Christmas Day, Nancy, if she has received funding from One Life, holds a party for all the children who attend the centre. She buys crisps and jellies and sweets and bits and pieces and organises games for the children to play and she tells them the story of Christmas and the child Jesus. Money permitting she will get extra food and fruit and biscuits and sweets so the children can all take home a small package and also for their carers or siblings. Please, on Christmas day let us stop for a moment to think about the children we sponsor and how Christmas day will be for them.

Thanks to an anonymous donor who donated £1000 a short while ago to help with Christmas for the children and also for Nancy and family and to several sponsors who have sent out Christmas gifts to the child they sponsor and others who have donated money, plus the money raised from the sponsored walk, I have been able to send out money enabling Nancy and family to celebrate Christmas this year, and also for the children who come to Nancy for food etc to have a Christmas party and the fun that goes with this. I just know how excited they will be. I have just posted out a parcel of books for the crèche as a Christmas gift and this includes a pop up Nativity story which I think the children will love. Rosemary Faupel, who sends out lots of gifts to the crèche and the children she sponsors, is sending them a big Tonka fire engine. How I wish I could see their faces when it arrives. The children including Nancy and family have no expectation of receiving gifts at Christmas and because of that any small thing they receive or which happens for eg the party brings such joy and delight and that great big smile which only these children can give.

So far this year £27,600 has been sent out to South Africa for education, food etc. In all, since the onset of the charity, £133,358.94p has been sent out so once again thank you all for making this possible.

As always new sponsors are needed for the children, so if you know of anyone who might be interested in sponsoring please put them in contact with me. I have three children desperately in need of sponsoring as due to financial difficulty the person who sponsors them is unable to continue. We have a 10 year old boy, a 14 year old boy and a 15 year old girl. Due to the devaluation of the pound, the South African rand to pound rate of exchange has dropped from up to R17 per pound to R11 per pound and this has of course affected what we do enormously. Because of this the fees per year per child for schooling are now £60 per year which some of you pay already when paying monthly. I am not asking people who pay £50 per year annually to raise that amount but for any new sponsors it will be £60 a year otherwise we cannot afford to pay the school fees and also buy the uniform and stationary which they also need.



The annual sponsored walk held in September was once again blessed with fine and warm weather, warm enough to gather together after the first two laps of St James Park to have lunch sitting in a big circle on the grass near a coffee vendor and also close to the toilets. Everyone said they had enjoyed the walk so I hope they will join us again next year with hopefully more people as this is such an enjoyable way to raise money. We

meet in Trafalgar Square where everyone has coffee together and then gather near the fountain for the photos after which the walk begins. It is a social event which blossoms into new friendships for many people. Do join us next year if you are able to.



My thanks go to all who continue to support One Life and to those of you who send gifts, cards or letters to the child/children you sponsor. Here is a photo of Andila Biyela with probably the first gift he has ever received. The children who received the knitted hats were also excited and very happy to receive them. Some of you may not have known that you can send gifts or letters so if you would like to do so please contact me and I will give you the address to send things to.



For the children to receive a small gift or a card or a letter and especially a photo of the person who sponsors them is such an exciting event and very meaningful for them.



Since the last newsletter we have continued sending out to South Africa parcels of hats, books, toys, shirts and t shirts and Rosemary Faupel sent dresses and other goods and also two black dolls one which is a large girl doll and the other a slightly smaller boy doll. Nancy told me that the children absolutely love the dolls, the boys loving the boy doll and girls of all ages wanting to hold and play with the girl one. When I asked what else was needed Khanya reminded me that it is two years or more since we sent out used but in good condition bras for the teenage girls. I am now asking if any of you have unwanted bras in your house please could you

get them to me and I will post them out to Nancy for the girls. It is easy to forget that there is no money for underwear which the girls really need more so than the boys. I have already enough donated bras to send out for some of the girls and I know these will be received with many thanks and gratitude.



Unbelievably we are still having problems with the computer out in South Africa; this has been ongoing since the computer was hit by lightning in June. Now we are waiting for the modem to be fixed. To those of you who are waiting for photos and background info of the new child you are sponsoring, I can only apologise and ask you to continue being patient. Once communications are freely flowing again I will get them to you. For myself, trying to run the charity efficiently is very difficult and frustrating without proper communication as I cannot get the things I need in order to do so.

### **Some of the monies raised and donated since May**

- June 10th brought a £30 donation from Rosemary Faupel
- On June 20th £60 was raised from the sale of Handmade Greeting Cards/ African Goods.
- Also on June 20th £500 was donated anonymously.
- The 5th July brought in a donation of £205 from Rosemary Faupel.
- On July 10th Caron and Stefan Keeley (aged 9) donated £76 raised at Chase Lane Primary School.
- £1896 came to the charity in July following an appeal sent out by email.
- Yusuf –al-Minji in September donated £200 for courier charges.
- September also brought in £200, a donation from Eira Endersbee
- On September 10th a donation of £1000 was received from Val Phillpott of Bridlington.
- The proceeds from the September Annual Sp Walk came to £1,585.
- On October 12th £1000 was received from an anonymous donor.
- Christine Foster of Walthamstow in November donated £100 to help with the postage of goods to South Africa.

### **Future fundraising event**

Penny and David Rolfe are arranging a supper/ musical evening with Cantando Chorale. This event is to be held next year on Saturday 15th January. Last year this proved to be a very popular event so please try and join us. Please contact Elena for more details. This event will be held in aid of One Life and will take place in the St Anne's church hall.

### **Africa news**

Nancy continues to function from the double garage we equipped a short while ago. It is not ideal at all but enables her to run the crèche and also to feed the children who come before and after school. What we need is a donation of around £25,000 in order to either totally adapt the building donated by the local Zulu Chief by installing windows, adequate flooring, a new roof, toilets and a new kitchen plus the installation of electricity and running water. We would also need a high fence surrounding the building and the land around it plus, and very importantly, a full alarm system including cameras and the salary for a security guard at the entrance. The safety of Nancy and the children in her care is of utmost priority. If any of you have friends or acquaintances who run their own business please take this urgent matter to them as all donated monies to charities can be claimed back through the tax.

I am unable to start a fund for this project as at the moment every penny which comes into the charity goes out almost immediately for food and other urgent expenses. Please help if you can.

Due to corruption in the department which Nancy was working with, she has now broken away and is working with the children totally on her own. A while ago she reapplied for registration independently of any other party and last week her papers and registration number came

through. Maybe now she will be able to apply for some help in whatever area it is needed. This would release some Of One Life's money which at the moment is used for the children's immediate needs and we could resume with the all important shack repair and installation of electricity etc.

Nancy is still experiencing great pain in her feet which can result in making walking very difficult for her. This is a side effect of her diabetes and unfortunately she has not got the financial means to purchase the medication which she needs in order to find some relief. She has difficulty in sleeping at night because of the discomfort in her feet. Unfortunately a short while ago her husband was also diagnosed as diabetic and following that he suffered a mild stroke. Nancy is a very determined lady and despite everything which has happened to her, including the shootings, corruption, court cases, illnesses and worry she continues to help the children. I feel blessed and privileged to be able to help her in the great work which she does. When I was out there the children told me that they now regarded Nancy as their mother which I feel shows the high regard and respect with which the children hold her.

Sister Emmanuel is now very frail and mostly in a wheelchair. She has been transferred to Pietermaritzburg where she can be looked after because of her frailty. I have spoken to her on the phone and she is quite bright and accepting of her situation but she greatly misses her little dog which the other nuns in Empangeni are now looking after. She has led a very full life and in it has done much good for people in need especially the African community. I believe a lady in South Africa is writing a book about her and I am looking forward to reading it one day.

We have only one young woman in college now due to the vast amount of money needed for this most valuable and life changing opportunity. Thandisiwe is just finishing her first year in Human Resources and begins her second year in January. It costs around £1,500 to £2,500 per year to put a young person through college depending on the course they take up. As a small charity I am not in the position to help in this area and the three young people we have put through college has been done by individuals specifically donating for this reason.

Children In Need is being televised at the moment and I think it is a wonderful event benefiting the many children in dire need in our own country, at the same time I am saddened that as millions are raised from this event I am not able to even raise enough money to take our children out of the garage and into adequate sized safe premises. If the opportunity arose for Nancy to safely move into new premises then she would once again be in a position to feed hundreds of children, run counselling sessions for those bereaved and in need of that kind of support and as done previously the building could be used as a drop in centre for anyone in need, where they could come to sit, chat, have a meal and feel not quite so isolated in their poverty and hardship.

I continue to trust that one day we will be in a better position to help Nancy with these changes, who knows, maybe someone will hear of our work and the work which Nancy continues to do despite all the knock backs experienced over these last two or three years and will step forward to give us the financial aid we so badly need.

Please pass this newsletter around if received by post or print out and pass around if received by email. The more people who hear of the work we are trying to do, then the more opportunity for us to receive the help we so badly need.

Once again my thanks go to all of you who support One Life and the children in need in Kwazulu, South Africa and for your continued support despite the financial problems hitting this country.

I hope you all enjoy a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and my Best Wishes for A Healthy and Happy New Year 2011.

Elena

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