



Better Life Mission

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Newsletter - October 2011

Dear Friends and Sponsors of *Better Life Mission*

On September 5, 2011 Mario and I returned from our latest trip to Africa. By the grace of God we were able to accomplish the purpose of our trip. First we would like to share a few testimonies with you.

Testimonies

After our arrival we met Joshua who bade us welcome. He told us how *Fiwagoh* had changed since my first visit at the orphanage. After the introduction of Christian Education the atmosphere at the orphanage is not the same any longer. He expressed his understanding that the central issue in Christian discipline is leadership and the power of being a good example. The children have noticed how the teachers changed after reading and studying the books of the Spirit of Prophecy about education and the training of children. The children certainly appreciate these changes.



Joshua

One day we were talking with Winnie, one of our godchildren. We asked her how she used to experience one of the teachers before. She explained that this teacher had been tough. We asked her to tell us how she experienced the same teacher now. She simply told us with a big smile: Now God lives in her heart!



Teresiah

On Sabbath we had the opportunity to listen to a few testimonies of the children. Teresiah praised the Lord for His goodness. She expressed her thankfulness in spite of the fact that her mother and father had died. She said: "Before I only had a mother and a father. Now God has given me both mother and father in Florence and Benson and still another mother in my sponsor. It would be out of place if I wished the old situation back." - Of course Teresiah does not mean that she is glad that her parents have died; but she has understood that God has given her much more than what He has taken from her.

Joseph Gachoka also shared his wonderful testimony. I would like to share it with you:

"Together with my brother and sister I was taken to a juvenile home. We were told to get ready because we were going to be taken to a school. I knew that schools usually start at seven in the morning. Therefore I looked for the school the next morning at seven, but there was no school. Later we were told to get in line. This meant that we were going to get food. We were given a cup of warm porridge. Then I asked where the school was, for we had been told that we were going to be taken to a school. I was told to wait then the teacher would come. But the teacher never came. The days passed by and we had nothing to do. We were not given much food. Therefore we were soon involved in stealing in order to get good food. Time passed by. One day we were told that I and my brother would be taken to a school. We did not want to leave our sister alone. But we were told that the school was only for boys. Now I started to pray earnestly to God to help us, for we did not want to leave our sister alone. It had be-



Joseph

come a habit to steal money and buy food. We shared our food with our sister. How was she going to manage without us? I asked God that He would take care so that we would not be separated from our sister. One day we were told to get ready for we would be taken to a school. My brother and I got ready. At the same time I prayed to God and pleaded with him that we would not be separated from our sister. As we came outside I saw that our sister was also dressed accordingly. Now I knew that she was also going with us. God had answered my prayers. We saw a man and a lady and were told to follow them. We wondered to which school they would take us. We passed at a certain place that I knew. I began to fear that we would be taken to a certain school where I had been before and where I had made trouble. I was absolutely sure that if they took us there, then the teachers would kill me. But fortunately we were not taken to that school. As we continued I suddenly feared that they would take us back to our grandmother. But I was glad they did not take us there either. Finally we arrived at a house where we stopped. A lot of children surrounded us and stared at us. I wondered how I looked since they all stared at us. Then we were left alone with the children. They all hugged us. Now we knew that we were in a good place. When we entered the house we saw a blackboard. Now I knew that here there was also school teaching. We soon felt that the people here were good. We were also given good food to eat.

In the year 2010 we were informed that anyone who wanted to be baptized should take a decision. I then decided to be baptized. The group who decided to be baptized began to study the Bible together with Benson in order to get a better understanding of what it meant to be baptized. About eight months later, after gaining a better understanding, we were baptized on January 15, 2011. We were born again, hoping to continue a new life. It really helped me to be a follower of Christ. Since then I am doing my work in God's vineyard. May God bless you and thanks to all who have helped me to reach this point."

I would also like to mention that I often see children with a smile when I meet them the second time. When they come to the orphanage they are hardly able to smile because of the circumstances in their lives that have weighed them down. Elizabeth is just one example. I noticed how she was smiling this time. In October 2010 I had not received one single smile from her. She explained to me that before she had no reason to smile. Hannah Muthoni also is a wonder when it comes to smiling. She had come to the orphanage before my first visit in the beginning of 2009. Many times I had tried to get her to smile. But it was impossible. But this time she approached me with a big smile. It had taken her several years until she learned to smile. Most children are learning it within half a year.



Elizabeth

Visit at the Orphanage

Mario and I spent four weeks at the orphanage, from August 8 to September 4, 2011. The main purpose of our



trip was to help them to use the computers that they had received from Australia in 2010 and to teach them the basics in bookkeeping. Mario had a class of 11 students Florence included. Partly Benson joined the classes as his schedule allowed it. Mario started in showing them from the Spirit of Prophecy what God says about bookkeeping. This of course motivated the students when they understood how God is attaching importance to bookkeeping. Africans in general have a hard time to see the benefit from doing bookkeeping. Then Mario taught them the basics of bookkeeping. Florence started to understand the different principles and was eagerly learning. We are convinced that the bookkeep-

ing will be a great help in the management of the orphanage.

I myself was busy with the bookkeeping of the orphanage, helping Florence to put that which she had learnt in school to practical use. While Mario was teaching I had some free time. I decided to spend some time with the children in the garden. Every time I came outside and said that I wanted to go to the garden a group of small eager help-



ers gathered around me. They wanted to join me. I had to learn to restrict the number of children otherwise I would not have been able to "manage" them all and to prevent them from trampling on the plants. When they were tired I brought them back to the orphanage and another group would come with me. Jafali made a very good impression on me. His endurance knew no bounds. On the other hand after one hour most of the children showed the first signs that they had enough.

Unfortunately I also came to realize that their zeal in treating the sick children had abated after Claudia's visit in the beginning of this year. It was not possible for me to hide my disappointment. But then things changed quickly. Benson called a meeting with the big children who are responsible for the clinic. After a few days preparation they took hold of



the task. For two weeks they gave the sick children intensive treatments that consisted of vegetable juices, steam baths, herbal baths, etc. It was a pleasure to see and witness their zeal. Benson said after one week that the sickest boy looked much better. The diet for these children was adjusted. When I left the orphanage I was assured that they would follow this plan until Claudia will come in November 2011. Claudia is a medical doctor. For the second time she will volunteer at the orphanage for three months.



Children washing carrots for juice

Actual Needs

In our newsletter of May 2011 we raised funds for the purchase of 3 acres so that the orphanage will be able to grow more vegetables and fruits for the children. In the meantime this land was bought. Prices for property towards the lake have risen so much that we no longer intend to buy more land towards the lake. But there are two more properties of 1 acre each that we would like to buy. This land is to be used for building homes for the employees. Since these two parcels of land are located in between other parcels that already belong to the orphanage, it is very important to get them too. Benson is negotiating the price with the owners. We expect to be able to buy the first parcel for USD 3,500. We already have this money. But we are still raising funds for the second parcel.

Unfortunately the project with the gutters and the water tank could not yet be fin-





ished because the water tank had collapsed twice during construction due to heavy rain falls. For the moment this project is on hold while Benson is looking for expert help in order to know how to proceed. In the meantime we focus on the purchase of the above mentioned two parcels of land.

Gifts for the Children

The children liked the photo albums that I brought with me this time very much. I had put a picture of themselves in each album. The pictures that I had received from the sponsors I also put into the albums. Unfortunately I had for-

gotten to inform you that the pictures for the photo albums should have the size of 10 x 15 cm. I would appreciate if you keep this in mind when you want to send a picture to your children.



Mary, Lena og Miriam

Letters for the Children

I do not yet know the exact date for my next travel to Kenya. But I assume that it will be soon. In case you still want to write letters to your children you may send them to me. All of you who have an email address will be informed as soon as the date for my next travel is settled.

Visit at the Home of One of Our Godchildren

During my visit in January 2011 Winnie, one of our godchildren, desired that I should visit her mother. Time did not permit it then. But I promised her that we would do it at my next visit. On Sunday, August 21, 2011 we were driving to the slums of Nakuru in order to visit Winnie's mother. She welcomed us with open arms. She was very thankful that we took time to visit her. She asked us to enter her only room in which she and her oldest son are living.



The other four children are all at the *Fiwagoh* orphanage. She told us how much she appreciated the help that her children got because Benson and Florence were sacrificing themselves and because the sponsors were ready to help children in need. She was so happy that her children had come to an orphanage where they are loved. Her life was not easy. Her husband left the family. After that she was no longer able to care for herself and the children. She went around on the street begging for food. In the evening she sought shelter close to a kiosk. She huddled together with her children and tried to sleep. In the end she was so desperate that she did not see any way out. She succeeded in buying some poison. She wanted to bring this suffering to an end. Since she had

neither a cup nor water to mix the poison she got a banana and blended the poison with it. She and her children ate. Normally after ten minutes they should have been dead. But by a miracle of God no one died. Today she is praising God for His great care and for His grace towards her and her children. If God had not intervened they would all be dead. After the four youngest children had been accepted at the orphanage she got new courage to live. She went on the street in search of her oldest son. He had been living on the street for four years and she wanted to take him back. Today she struggles to care for herself as well as for her

oldest son who is now going to school. She praises God for His great mercy. Her thankfulness is very great that there are people that care for others in need. We thank God that we had the opportunity to visit her and that we could experience what meaning the work of the orphanage has.

Jasmin Visiting Her Godchild Lucy Wanjiru

Jasmin and her family live in Austria. In August / September 2011 Jasmin visited the orphanage for the second time. This time she had the opportunity to visit the home of her godchild. Jasmin writes about her experience:

„At my last visit at Fiwagoh last September, Lucy, my godchild, desired that I visited her home. I told Pastor Benson about it and he agreed. On my last Sunday, September 11, we started our trip. Since other children at the orphanage come from the same area they were allowed to go with us. So in the end we were 15 people.

We drove in the mission van and were badly shaken on our way! From Nakuru we left the paved road and continued in direction of Moronyo. I was shown the old school. Unfortunately I could only see a little because of all the trees and shrubs. But I could guess how small the campus was.

Lucy's home is not far from there. Having arrived, her grandmother bade us welcome. First she thought that something had happened since we all came and she started crying. But Lucy comforted and assured her that we all were well. Then she invited us into her mud house that consisted of three rooms: living room, pantry and bedroom. Because of the sunlight outside it took a few minutes before my eyes had adjusted to the darkness inside the hut. It was very small. In the living room there were a sofa and a small cupboard. It was very narrow. There was not even room for six of us.

The visit was short. I did not have much opportunity to talk to her grandmother. Since she does not speak English I could only communicate with her through Lucy. The grandmother was also busy giving fruits and sugar cane to the children.

Then we had to leave because we also wanted to go to Teresiah Wahu's and David Wainaina's family.

Having come back to Fiwagoh I could not find Lucy for a long time. Later I found her in the garden. She cried for a long time and would not tell me the reason.

She felt so embarrassed that I found her home in such a condition. It was not tidy, the floor was dirty and dishes were spread everywhere.

Since her grandmother has no money she has to get up very early to do her work in the garden. After that she looks for other employment. She has no one who looks after the house. Normally this is Lucy's job when she is at home during the holidays. Lucy's other sisters do not take care of their grandmother.

Often she has to leave the home early in the morning not even having time to eat. This was also the case on the very day when we visited her. Although she has so little for herself she was willing to give us of her fruits and sugar cane!

In this evening we all that had been on this visit were very thoughtful and silent.



Lucy and Jasmin



For a long time my thoughts dwelt on it. I thank God that He gave me the possibility to see how Lucy's family is doing. At the same time I am happy that He gives me the opportunity to help Lucy because she is my godchild.

How many children are still out there who are worse off? How many parents, fathers or grandmothers have not eaten today because they are looking for employment not having enough? We cannot change the world, but we can change the life of a single person. And I thank God that He gives us this possibility!"

Charo Family



Nathaniel & Elizabeth Charo

In October 2010 our friends, neighbours and co-workers returned to Kenya. We mentioned that in a previous newsletter. They settled in Kilifi and have started to work for the Lord. They wrote a report about their work. For those who are receiving the newsletter through postal mail we have enclosed their report with this newsletter. All of you who download the newsletter from our website can find their report under **Newsletter** and then **Greetings from Kilifi**.

Most of you have cer-

tainly heard about the drought and famine that hit also the area where the Charo family is living. In July we did a quick fundraising effort among friends and we were able to collect USD 1'590.00. This donation was mainly for the purchase of food. In the above mentioned report you can read how the money was used.



Conny Charo



Noah Charo

We would also like to get tracts in Swahili printed for them. Besides it is our desire to buy Swahili bibles for them. Donations for this purpose shall be marked "Missionary Work Kilifi".

Many thanks for your support and your prayers for the orphanage as well as the different mission projects.

Lena Clerc



Mario

Bank Information

USD Account:

Beneficiary: Better Life Mission, Schweinbrunnenberg 2, CH-4938 Rohrbachgraben
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