

# African Mission Newsletter

## Spring 2013



Thanks to your support African Mission continues to support several projects within **Fatima Mission**, Zimbabwe and **Dr Ray Towey's** work in Gulu, Uganda.

Fatima Mission is a very large mission (900 sq kms in size) based in rural Zimbabwe, 220 kms from Bulawayo. Practically everyone living within its boundaries are poor subsistence farmers. Despite its size it is overseen by one Franciscan priest, Fr Jeya. It has a number of primary and secondary schools and a clinic within its boundaries.

In 2009 the physical state of the primary schools was very poor. Since then African Mission has built a new double classroom and a teachers cottage at Dungu Primary School (246 pupils) and put a new roof on a double classroom and built a teachers cottage at St John's Primary School (153 boys + 159 girls = 312 pupils). We have also provided tables & chairs for 4 classrooms for each school. It is thanks to our supporters that we have been able to improve these schools.

Both primary schools and one of the secondary schools (Lubimbi Secondary School) are attended by poor children. Many of the children are orphaned or semi orphaned as a result of AIDS. Some have been abandoned by their parents and are living with unemployed grandparents. Other children living within Fatima Mission cannot afford the annual £48 needed for a primary school education (fees & books) nor the £114 needed for a secondary school education.

African Mission has also helped set up a project for the most marginalised within Fatima Mission i.e. those suffering from blindness, deafness or other debilitating conditions. The Blind and Deaf Project is a residential project offering education and training to blind and/or deaf children and adults. This project offers hope to a group who otherwise would be faced with an extremely difficult future.



At the Blind & Deaf Project in Fatima Mission this year we have eight children (photo on left). Two are totally blind, two are partially blind, two are deaf mutes and two are polio affected. Out of these eight children seven are studying in the Primary school and one is in form one. It costs £48 per month to cover each child's education, school fees, board & lodging and travel fares. Each term for all 8 children costs £1,152 and an entire academic year (3 terms) costs £3,456.

Within Fatima Mission's boundaries there is also a good boarding school called Fatima High School. 700 students attend the school, 600 as boarders and 100 as day pupils. The level of education is similar to that of Secondary education here in the UK. Despite the lack of basic infrastructure which we would take for granted e.g. broken windows and desks, one text book between 10–15 pupils, the pupils were all very industrious and keen to learn. In response to the priorities outlined by the teaching staff, African Mission has purchased a laptop, a data projector, science equipment and text books for three subjects for Fatima High School.

20% of the school's intake is from the local population; most of whom are too poor to pay the school fees. Their fees are subsidised by voluntary donations. African Mission would like to sponsor six poor children to attend Fatima High School at a cost of £790 per year per pupil. Although the costs are high in comparison to Lubimbi Secondary School mentioned above, we feel that the quality of education on offer and the chance to transform a child's life chances is such to justify the additional fees.



**Front cover photo: Girls carrying water home from a borehole**

## **Thanks from Dungu Primary School (St Thomas')**

*On behalf of Dungu Primary School teachers, the school children, the school development committee and the entire community, I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation of the remarkable assistance African Mission has given to our struggling school, via Father Jeya.*

*The two classroom blocks that have been given to the school enables us to keep pupils' books and other school stationery safe and tidy. The pupils and teachers are now safe and protected from bad weather such as cold and wind that often blew exercise and text books away, leaving them torn. We can now as teachers control pupils' attention from straying on to other irrelevant activities because of the classrooms provided.*

*Thanks to Fr Jeya, the school has also been given two teachers' cottages (one of which was paid for by African Mission). The most recent cottage was built in March 2012 and provides the best accommodation in the Binga District. The quality of the accommodation has attracted high calibre personnel and the school has already received one qualified teacher as a result. These new teachers will undoubtedly improve the quality of the education on offer.*

*Dungu School also recently received 48 benches, 44 tables and 7 teachers tables. The teachers have already noticed a positive improvement in the students' handwriting. Thanks to the new tables, the books will last longer than they would on dusty floors. The new furniture also makes it easier for teachers to carry out group activities.*

*We also note with great appreciation and thanks the assistance we received in the form of exercise books and pencils. The stationery came as a rescue particularly to the orphans and vulnerable pupils who can hardly purchase this much needed stationery. May God bless you for your unwavering support that has seen Dungu Primary School improve substantially within a short period of time.*

*Yours faithfully,  
Mpofu Phumula  
Acting Headmaster*

## **Thanks from St John's Primary School**

*We greet you in the name of the Universe Creator, Jesus Christ. We as the St John's Kavunikwa Primary School staff members would like to thank you for the great deeds you are doing for us.*

*Firstly, we would like to thank you for the borehole which brought a change to our lives. We used to walk up to 15kms as far as Dungu, Dongamuzi, and Lubimbi in search of water but thanks to your borehole our walking distances have been greatly reduced. Secondly, we thank you for the good looking classroom blocks you built us. This has also reduced the children's walking distances.*

*Thirdly, we would like to thank you for the brilliantly built teachers cottages. This has also reduced the walking distances for some of the teachers as before the cottages were built there was insufficient accommodation for all of the teachers. Fourthly, we would like to thank you for giving us furniture which enables the children to learn comfortably. We would also like to thank you for the stationery. We will always appreciate your great services. May God bless you.*

*Yours in Christ,  
St Johns Kavunikwa Staff Members.*

# Upgrading of the Glostavent ventilator/anaesthetic machine

## Dr Ray Towey



I am very grateful to the Mrs.L.D.Rope Third Charitable Settlement for their grant to African Mission in 2012 to upgrade one of our Glostavents at St.Mary's Hospital Lacor, Gulu, Uganda.

The Glostavent machine is a life support machine, a ventilator which supports respiration in patients who are no longer able to breathe and also an anaesthetic machine. A ventilator is an essential machine for any intensive care unit anywhere in the world. In rural Africa intensive care is at a very early stage of development but the Glostavent is specially designed for the difficult conditions of rural Africa where electricity is not reliable and where oxygen cylinders are almost impossible to obtain in a large quantity.

I am happy to report that Mr.Neighbour of the UK firm Diamedica which manufactures the machine came to the hospital without charge and upgraded the machine in November 2012 with the parts that we were able to purchase from the grant received. (See photo insert)



To fully appreciate the importance of this machine please see the article published in the journal, "Update in Anaesthesia" on Intensive Care in Rural Africa. This journal is available via our website at

<http://africanmission.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/forms/Update28-2012.pdf>

This grant has enabled us to build our capacity to support patients in respiratory failure and in publishing our results help in the education of other clinicians in Africa and other parts of the developing world faced with our problems of limited resources and the challenge of providing intensive care.

Dr.Raymond Towey  
Consultant Anaesthetist

*The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not  
overcome it.*



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