

T.H.E. Mission  
Tanzania Health & Education Mission

**Mission Trip 2009 - Newsletter**

*“Every one of us is called by the Lord; the important thing is to know how to answer His call.” Blessed John XXIII*

It is with this spirit that we heeded the call to embark on our third annual trip to Tanzania in 2009. We were a group of five people all somehow interconnected. May I introduce the group: Pamela, Sherry & Jehane, members of T.H.E. Mission, Matthew Sullivan who is Sherry’s husband as well as Pamela’s brother, and Patricia Lucas who is a friend of the Sullivan’s.

Our journey started on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009, with destination to Sabuko, our home far away from home. It is there that we reconnected with our community of priests and friends who came to greet us at the airport as we came once again with 6 suitcases full of medical and school supplies to distribute.

It was business as usual starting the following day of our arrival. May I please remind you that nothing is as usual in Africa...always expect the unexpected, all on “African time”, no hurry, “akuna matata”.

The weekend was full of preparations, sorting out of goods, meetings to discuss all the logistics of our trip, our comings and goings, who & where to pick up....This year it was for the most part “deja vu”, but things worked a little bit more smoothly.

We did reconnect with our various communities of priests & nuns, schools and dispensaries. We visited new schools as well, much to their surprise, as they were not expecting us...but we gifted them with a variety of school supplies which was quite welcomed.

As our visits are becoming more familiar to some, we were able to expand our duties amongst the people we help support. We met with two school principles to purchase what was deemed essential school supplies ranging from soccer balls, 44 pairs of shoes, clocks, cameras, pencils, supplies for chemistry kit, etc.... We also had a chance to do a home visit to a patient who is diabetic with blood sugar in the 400s and suffers from neuropathy in the extremities. He was actually showing us his foot that he had just finished soaking as he was recovering from an infection in his toes, but he felt “great”, and it was business as usual for him!!!

As people are getting more familiar to seeing us, the request for any help whether it be medical or academic was much more present. The needs and demands are endless, but we have to remind ourselves that our supplies of funds are limited. We were always cautious as to not over extend ourselves as we didn’t want to disappoint anyone, especially if they had high expectations.

We accomplished much this year and we are very thankful to our donors as it is thanks to you that we were able to provide the care needed to the multiple and varied communities we served throughout the Kilimanjaro area of Tanzania.

- Purchase of bed-nets- \$800.00 worth: 200 bed-nets for 3 dispensaries
- 75 bed-nets to Boma Ng'ombe VTC
- Purchase of 2 sewing machines and scissors for Boma Ng'ombe VTC @ \$207.00
- School supplies and science kit for 2 schools @ \$766.00
- Medications & medical equipments for 3 dispensaries @ \$8,000.00
- Building foundation and purchasing a 10,000 liters water tank for Kiraeni Dispensary @ \$3,500.00
- Purchase of food staples for three communities and one orphanage school @ \$2,840.00 as the farmers had another year of drought and food supplies were lacking.
- Sponsored 14 students for their 2009 school year, for a total of \$7,862.00. Out of these 14 students, 9 are new this year.
  
- \*\*A total of \$24,000.00 was spent on this trip. We thank you for your generosity and continued support to our cause in helping the poor in Tanzania. \*\*

There were other events that touched our lives on this trip:

-We had a chance to reconnect with Niruvande Orphanage School. With the money raised and donated to them by Anny Lee last year they were able to finish putting a roof on one of their classrooms, purchase 8 bunk beds for the dormitory as well as supply the school with a water tank. We distributed to them the much needed school supplies we brought from the USA as well as clothed their heads with knitted hats kindly provided by Julie Salas and her friends.

-We shared a special moment with a faith community group from Ngarenairobi outstation. As described by Pat & Sherry: "it was as though you were present in the manger and that the whole experience was a surreal one". Although we did not speak the same language, our Faith connected us and brought us together. The thought of being able to worship and be thankful even in the midst of trials and tribulations, to expect nothing, yet have everything... how simple, yet so profound.

We gifted them with rosaries made by Our Lady of Mount Carmel ladies and they, in return, gave us a Masai cross pendant. It was a bond that was unique and special in its own way - the sharing of the One Spirit that brought us together.

-Our next destination is quite remote and usually not readily spoken about: "your resting place". It was at the request of Sr. Mathias that we visited her resting place. It is called "the mother house", not for lack of name. That's where you will find the nuns of her community when they reach their retirement age. But believe me, it's no retirement...your work is not done. You find yourself in this paradise/wonderland with endless possibilities, shores, activities, whatever and however you want to call it. It is an endless and heavenly surrounding with all its greenery, a Grotto, a Church

with beautiful stations of the cross decorating its walls. The possibilities of working with your hands whether it be to do tedious work as knitting or working the land, harvesting the crops of coffee beans or bananas, attending the beehives, taking care of the fish pond...to name but a few things. And last but not least, the true resting place: the cemetery. It was so peaceful and serene to be in the midst of all this, you had the rest of your life to just be still, recollect, be absorbed by God's creation. It was good to be able to stop and ponder where we are going and what our life is all about.

*"If visible things are so beautiful, what will be the invisible? If the grandeur of the heavens transcends the measure of the human intellect, what mind will be able to explore the nature of the everlasting?" St. Basil.*

We are truly blessed. Each year as we journey to Tanzania we are reminded of that reality. As we encounter our "other selves", as we see the simplicity of their lives, we are reminded that things could be different; we could have less and yet be very happy. Such peace that is radiating and discloses the inner joy that we see in the people we encounter. But we shouldn't kid ourselves as some families are burdened with death, malnutrition, poverty, lack of shelter, orphans - the reality of their lives. That burden is somewhat alleviated for some as we attempt to remedy this lack of benefits. The needs are great, but the hearts of people are also abounding. Once again it is due to your efforts and generosity that we are able to minister to our brothers & sisters in Tanzania. Our heartfelt thanks to you our benevolent donors and supporters.

May we leave you with this thought that is written in the monthly Magnificat and a reminder to us all to do good will to man.

*"As God has protected and delivered us from misfortune, whether small or great, so must we do for others, especially for these made vulnerable by poverty or social isolation. The commandment of love makes concrete demands."*

On behalf of T.H.E. Mission, we thank you.

Pamella Sullivan  
Sherry Cassedy  
Sarah Jones  
Jehane Jones