

SSVM en Tanzania

There are so few missionaries and Africa is so immense!!!

"If I were able to fly and reach out to everyone to bring them the Light of faith!!!"

(Santa Josefina Bakhita).

Dear Family,

I write to tell you of some moments spent at our mission.

FOUNDING OF THE MISSION

It was the intention of Monsignor Minde to open our mission under the presence of our Superior General and this past January 11, with the presence of Mother Anima Christi, we celebrated the founding of our mission in this land that thirsts for God. On Sunday, January 10, parishioners worked all day for the celebration, setting up tents, cleaning the patio, and installing signs on the dispensary and the convent—the one on the convent includes Mother Anima's name because she opened the doors to the home as a sign of blessing. On the 11th, representatives of each parish arrived. Usheta is far and the road difficult to travel in times of rain—one of the vehicles even got stuck in the mud and they never arrived.

Mother Anima and Mother Victoria arrived in the Bishop's vehicle as all of the people waited to receive them with songs and shouts of joy, saying "Karibu Mama Mkuu" which means "Welcome Great Mother". After everyone was greeted, the house was blessed and the Bishop asked Mother to say a few words. She told everyone that the sisters would be living among them as if their own mothers and she ask them for protection.



Also present for the Mass were the Bishop Emeritas of the Diocese, Parish priests, and sisters from other missions in the community. A procession of the Holy Eucharist followed Communion, headed by Monsignor Minde, a group of religious, and the choir and it ended at the tabernacle where to this day Our Lord resides.

After giving thanks, we were invited up to the Altar to receive gifts from the people and greet them.



The generosity of the people was impressive considering how poor they were. They make gifts when they can and sometimes they even give money—surprising given how difficult it is to obtain cash--they have to walk miles to sell their goods in the city. Mother Perpetuo Socorro told the people that we will use their money to buy medicine for the dispensary.

MOTHER VISITS OUR COMMUNITY



We are grateful that Mother visited our mission that week. We are able to plan our new apostolate together, we visited the sick, and nearby chapels. (In one of the chapels, there is a group of youth who are discerning their religious vocation and they have asked to come visit us.)

On one of her “Good Nights” Mother Anima gave us, she proposed Edel was named co-patroness of our community. She was a woman of much faith that came from England to be a missionary with the Legion of Mary in Africa. Thanks to her presence in this land, the devotion to Mary has grown through the works of the Legion of Mary. Mother told us that when she visited Kenya a few years ago—before visiting the Sudan—she was interested in visiting the tomb of Edel and that is when she asked for the graces to found an SSVM mission in Africa.

In this parish, the Legion of Mary is one of the most persevering groups—they come to Mass each

Saturday and a meeting afterwards. Through the intercession of Edel, we ask God for the grace to be fervent Marian missionaries.

OUR FIRST APOSTOLATE WORKS

Once the Dispensary was blessed, a lot of people come each day to ask for help because they are ill. Unfortunately, we can only curar las heridas and give them medicine when they run a temperature. We don't have medication or doctors that can help us. The dispensary that the Bishop built in front of the convent only has beds. With the grace of God and through the generosity of benefactors, we hope to make a trip soon to Dar es Salaam to obtain medicine and equipment.

A Child of God: One night, two men came to the house with what appeared to be a very ill little boy—in reality, the boy was 18 years old and looked like a 10year old. They arrived on bike from 56kilometers away. He was very sick with a fever. We found the only injection we had to give to help lower his temperature. We kept him in the dispensary with plans to take him to the hospital, knowing the family had no money. The boy began to hemmorage internally. The family had not been baptized because they live so far from a church. Since we feared the boy may die, we baptized him with the name of John Paul.

The following day, we took him to the hospital where he was hospitalized a few days to recuperate. Afterwards, they came to visit us and we talked about the baptism we had performed and his new Christian name. They were very happy and the father appreciated us much. He sick boy's brother even asked to baptized as well. Unfortunately, they live so far that they won't be able to go often. We agreed that they would come to church when the priest arrived..

As Saint Josefina Bakhita has said, “If our African brothers had heard talk about our Lord and Our Lady, everyone would have been converted. They would be good.” Many people have never heard the name of Jesus, no one has told them they have a savior. And when someone explains the mysteries of our faith, they believe quickly. Their simplicity helps them believe in the supernatural. As soon as we spoke to them about Jesús, we noticed how their faces changed, as the grace of God was poured upon their souls.

Children in the House: We have started to help three children in our house, to care for them. Two of them were abandoned by their Father and live with their mother, and one girl abandoned by both parents and she lives with her Grandmother. They have no one to watch them in the morning as they work in the field.



We also started the oratory for children on Sunday.

“The missionary children of Jesus”: On some weekends, we accompany the parents to the villages in the car and we attended a class that the father was giving—the children learn the catechism and group rules by memory. That day the father was teaching them how to pray; to ask the Blessed Virgin On some weekends we accompany the priests to the different villages on a pick-up truck. One day we were able to stay and listen to one of the talks that the priest was giving: the children learn Catechism and the rules of the class by memory. On that day the priest taught them a prayer in which they asked the Blessed Virgin Mary to protect all children, especially those who have problems and those most in need. Each chapel has a group of children like this and every year they collect Money and take it to the Diocese so that the Bishop can help the poor children with this collection. This makes one think about these children’s generosity because even though they are very poor they care about others.



Parish Life: We pray the Rosary daily at 6:30 am at the Parish with the people and then we participate in the Mass and pray Morning Prayer with the people. We visit the sick every morning and take care of those who are wounded who sometimes are quite a lot due to their hard work in the countryside that causes many skin infections. We also take care of some children and visit families. Every Wednesday we pray the Rosary with the different Parish groups. Each group has a leader and a Patron Saint. Everything is taught by word of mouth, Catechism, prayers, etc. because many adults do not know how to read and the Parish has no apostolate resources, not even holy cards, even the songs in the choir are learned by memory.

On Thursday afternoon we participate in adoration at the Parish with the people.

We would like to thank once more to our Founder and our Religious Family. We know you pray for us and the fruits of this mission, we especially thank the prayers of the fathers of the Institute of the Incarnate Word and we also pray so that one day they may also come to save souls in these lands. The Parish is really large, there are 35 chapels and the majority of them have enough people to create a parish.

United at every Mass, we close with the words of the first Sudanese Saint:

“If God allows me, I will send from Heaven thousands of graces for the salvation of souls.”
-Saint Josephine Bakhita

In Christ and Mary,

Servants in the Garden of Peace



Curing someone sick



Pulling Rain Water from the Well



The neighborhood