

***MASASI  
& NEWALA  
NEWS***

***Issue No 29***

***January 2016***



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“Masasi & Newala News” is produced by Gill Hucker with assistance from a number of other Masasi supporters. The Editorial Team would be very pleased to hear from anyone who has any comments, articles or information that they would like included in the next issue.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive future copies of “Masasi & Newala News”, please send their name and address to Gill Hucker at the address below. There is no charge for the newsletter, but contributions towards the cost of postage are always appreciated.

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*Please note that the opinions expressed in “Masasi & Newala News” are those of the individual writers, and not necessarily those of the Editorial Team, who nevertheless reserve the right to edit contributions as they think fit.*

## **A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR :**

It was our intention to produce this issue of M&NN shortly after +James' and Veronica's return to Masasi. However, as we knew that three of the Trustees - Jennifer Oakley, Jonathan Rendall and Dirk Juttner - would be visiting both Dioceses during the summer months, it was decided to hold the publication until we had received their reports.

In the meantime, having already visited Washington, DC in May of this year, within a very short time + James was off on his travels yet again – this time to Canada and Maryland – and so it was decided to postpone the publication of M&NN No. 29 until we had reports from these visits.

And as we neared the end of 2015, we heard that +James would once again be visiting England in January 2016. He has been invited by the Archbishop of Canterbury to attend a conference for newly appointed Bishops, which is to be held at Canterbury from 27th January to 8th February 2016. After the Conference he will be spending a few days in London (staying in the Clergy House at St Matthew's, Westminster) and meeting with the Trustees of the FM&N, and then travelling to Cambridge to meet with the Stapleford / Nachingwea Group, before making brief visits to Worcester, Hereford and Liverpool, and flying home on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> February. As he has been away from the Diocese on so many occasions recently, +James wants to get back to the Diocese as soon as possible.

We felt that if the newsletter was sent out over the Christmas period it might get buried in cards or thrown away with the wrapping paper – and we therefore decided to postpone publication until the New Year.

And so, belatedly, here is M&NN No. 29 with sincere apologies for the delay but we hope that this issue will, as usual, prove to be an interesting read for all our supporters.



## **CHRISTMAS LETTER FROM BISHOP JAMES ALMASI**

**My dear friends, brothers and sisters in Christ,**

We greet you at this Christmas time in the love of our Lord and Saviour whose birth we all celebrate with joy and thanksgiving and warmest wishes too for happiness that lasts throughout the year ahead for you.

**Introduction:** as we look back over the past year, we give thanks to God for peace: in our country, especially during the national election; peace in the Diocese between the clergy, parishioners, workers and the whole community that is our Diocese.

**Pastoral work / activities:** This year 2015 we have made many parish visits. We have visited 26 parishes where I have confirmed about 1451 people - of these nearly 500 are adults and maybe 200 were converts from Islam. We have also ordained three Deacons into the priesthood and seven were ordained Deacon; they are already serving in their parishes. God also enabled us to lead seminars in some parishes, which I myself conducted. We have insisted that the church is to discover its complete dependence in knowing our Lord as a source of all and that the church is ours and theirs! I have also led retreats for our priests, another for the wives of the priests and women in the church, and for the evangelists; also two retreats at Mailasita for the CMM Sisters. The Diocese hosted a Provincial Seminar and meeting at Tunduru in September - which is an Islamic area; the Seminar was led by Bishop James and the Provincial Chairman of the Evangelism Committee and about thirty two Muslims converted to our faith.

**Invitations in 2015:** this year has given us great blessings with many invitations to some of our partners. In April Veronica and I went to the UK, supported by The Friends of Masasi & Newala. We visited many places including Hereford Diocese, which is one of our link Dioceses. We thank all who organized this and also Bishop Richard and Archdeacon Paddy Benson for their hospitality, friendship and partnership. In May, I travelled to Virginia Theological Seminary in USA, to receive an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity. I received many blessings from my past friends, such as St Francis Potomac, St John Olney in Maryland; also seeing my beloved Joe Hensley and Rev Dr Ann Williams in Fredericksburg in Virginia Diocese. In September I visited African Palms and St George Parish in Fredericksburg USA, who welcomed Canon Geoffrey Patrick and myself. We thank God that the visit was gratefully received; we thank all for the generosity and love they showed to us and our Diocese of Masasi. In October, we visited our other partner diocese, Montreal, meeting with Bishop Mary Irwin-Gibson and the Archdeacons with a welcome to attend

and speak at the General Synod, and especially meet the partnership committee; also to preach in various places in the Diocese. Thank you all.

**St Cyprian's College and Rondo Junior Seminary:** These two institutions are doing well despite other challenges at the College such as water and roads but God is faithful and we are doing well. This year was the Jubilee of 50 years of the foundation of St Cyprian's Junior Seminary by Bishop Trevor Huddleston, but unfortunately the celebrations were cancelled due to the lack of water. Perhaps next year we can celebrate this great anniversary. The roof and the windows of the chapel have been repaired; we now have solar lighting for the services. This solar lighting is also so much appreciated by the students in the classrooms. We give our thanks to the Friends of Masasi and to Minchinhampton Parish for their generous funds for this work. The new classrooms for Years 5 and 6 are being built and we hope to see the students having their studies there soon.

**Visitors:** This year 2015 we have received some visitors from UK: Jonathan Rendall, one of the Trustees of the Friends of Masasi & Newala also leading some Rooted in Jesus Junior seminars; Dirk Juttner, the chairperson of the Trustees attended the opening of the new girls' hostel at CMM Mailasita, together with our sister Jennifer Oakley who helped us much with youth activities and also taught at Rondo and Mnara. In August we welcomed the Youth Ambassadors from Montreal Diocese who for a week did a lot and travelled to many places in our Diocese and saw our country for their own eyes. Dr Ann Bailey, with her group from Hereford Diocese, manifested their love and led a youth seminar for three days about Permaculture in November. All these visitors amongst others have shown us their love and concern.

**Events in 2016:** I would like humbly to share great news that in the year 1926 Masasi became a Diocese and William Vincent Lucas, a Priest in Masasi was consecrated as the first Bishop of Masasi Diocese. This coming year, 2016, the Diocese will be 90 years and we plan to have a big, if not the biggest, 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its inauguration. However, also in 2016 Canon Douglas Msigala, the Vicar General and I will be fifty years old. It is our Jubilee also. We are

planning to combine these two big events for the Diocese to celebrate and to mark this occasion we will start to raise funds for St Catherine's Secondary School, at Namasakata, which will be a girls' school. I am sure that by the end of January, we will inform you all of the proper date for this celebration. Let me start early to ask for your prayers about it and by God's grace to arrange to join us as soon as we extend our invitation to you.

**Target:** One of the challenges we as a Diocese have been facing is lack of good Biblical foundation for our catechists and I am thinking of starting a Bible School at Kwitonji in the remaining old building which the Community of St Francis built, if God will bless us with some facilities such as beds, mattresses and other things. When we celebrate our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we would like this to be one of the things to open, with possibly fifty catechists as the first intake. We know that if we start the Bible School we will equip a large number of God's workers and that we can then have strong leadership in our parishes.

**Thanks:** We do give thanks to God for the many of you who have prayed for us and for our Diocese; for those who have encouraged and supported us in our work and service to the church and people in the Diocese. God has surely answered many of your prayers. We also give our thanks to the Trustees of the Friends of Masasi & Newala for enabling us to complete the purchase of a new Landcruiser for the Diocese and all the cooperation they have shown and are showing to help the Diocese.

We praise God for his great grace and wonderful blessings in this year. We often say, *"God is good; all the time God is good"*. This is our testimony and confidence as we approach the year 2016. Mama Veronica, Farajah, Hugh, Faraha and all in our Diocese of Masasi send you our love and greetings at Christmas.

We pray God's blessing for you in the new year 2016; God our Immanuel, the Prince of Peace and King of Kings bless you and the Christmas Services.

With many kind thoughts and prayers.

**+James Almasi**

PS: My new e-mail address is : [Bishopjamesalmasi@yahoo.com](mailto:Bishopjamesalmasi@yahoo.com)

## **News of Bishop James and the Diocese of Masasi in 2015**

At his consecration +James declared that one of his priorities as Bishop would be to see that peace be maintained at all levels of society, of church and in the communities of Masasi. The Bishop reports that peace is clearly evident across the Diocese and + James continues to seek and work for this, knowing and declaring it to be God's gift to his people.

Across the Diocese there is an awakening of interest and of a desire to learn more about the Christian faith and then to express the faith in daily life. People are returning to church in increasing numbers. Adults and children are coming forward for confirmation. +James has continued his commitment to visit parishes, to lead services and to encourage the church through developing personal relationships and contacts. His expressed desire to be very visible as Bishop in the life of the Diocese has proved to be of benefit to churches and parishes, resulting in increased attendances and Christian giving in the parishes. As a priority he is teaching that the church must rediscover its complete dependence on God, in knowing the Lord as a source of all and that the church belongs to the people!

This year +James has visited twenty six parishes; he has confirmed one thousand four hundred and fifty one people and of these nearly five hundred are adults and maybe two hundred were converts from Islam. He has also ordained three deacons into the priesthood and in addition seven men were ordained deacon and all are already serving in their parishes. He has also led and conducted seminars in some parishes; he has led retreats for the priests, another retreat for the wives of the priests and women in the church plus a further conference for the evangelists. The CMM Sisters have welcomed him as leader for their two retreats at Mailasita in 2015. The Diocese hosted a Provincial seminar and meeting at Tunduru in September - which is an Islamic area - led by + James and the Provincial Chairman of the Evangelism Committee and about thirty two Muslims converted to our faith.

One recent parish visit was to Nakapanya, the parish where African Palms was begun by Father Alan Talbot in 1965. Bishop James spent three days there meeting parishioners, teaching and preaching – and so fulfilling a promise made some months ago, as no bishop had been

there for many years. The Diocese gifted the parish with seventy corrugated iron sheets for the priest's house.

Another visit was to Napacho Parish, well off the main route and in the bush, where there is great poverty; there was much joy and celebration at the Bishop's arrival with Veronica and a choir from Masasi Town. Bishop James was able to leave some maize, some chickens and some clothes for the priest, Father Patrick Ganisye, his wife and his six children - a priest so committed and dedicated in his ministry in this challenging outpost of the Diocese, and whose monthly stipend is about 30.000/-Tsh (£9 sterling)

These pastoral visits are fulfilling his stated aims at his consecration - of meeting the people, encouraging and supporting priests and catechists, and faithfully preaching the gospel across the Diocese, but the lack of a suitable vehicle for the Bishop to travel in this huge Diocese has been a real challenge and problem in +James' desire to meet and serve his parishioners and people. The MU vehicle and the vehicle funded by the Primates World Relief Development Fund in Canada, have been loaned for his need as and when available.

Recognising the need for the Diocese to own the ministry of her Bishop and priests, the diocesan leadership visited five key parishes to share the need for a vehicle and ask for their specific giving for this task. A designated Bank account was set up and just four months later £8000 had been given. This is a wonderful response to the need and from the hearts of the people: their love of God clearly demonstrated in this generosity.

In December, Fr Linus Buriani was appointed to be the Assistant to Canon Geoffrey Patrick as Diocesan Development officer. Canon Geoffrey has been Development Officer for twenty seven years and it is important that his successor has time to work with him, to gain from his understanding and wisdom from these years of experience. Father Linus has a degree in Development Studies and from December he and Canon Geoffrey will work together. As from January 2016 Father Linus will be based in Tunduru with the brief to oversee the PWRDF sponsored development project, Mateno, with a focus on women and children, based in seventy two villages. The Management Team is currently reflecting on the new appointment in Rondo to replace Father Linus.

Bishop James has also made a further new appointment to Lindi Parish of Father Matthew Mlowe, who was previously the Vicar General in SW Tanganyika Diocese, thereby bringing expertise and experience into the Diocese of Masasi. In 2016 Lindi will celebrate 75 years as a parish.

As the year closed, the rains came - in torrents! This was good news after poor rains in 2014 and 2015 but for some the rains and the winds were too much and in three villages on the road from Masasi to Newala in the foothills of the Makonde Plateau - Nagaga, Mbuyuni and Mitesa - many homes were washed away and one hundred and four families were rendered homeless. In response to a public appeal by the Regional Commissioner, the Diocese designated Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> December as Family Sunday with all offerings and collections to be given to the disaster appeal for these families. Last week 205 corrugated sheets for roofing, 50 kg of nails and 25kg of maize were presented to the District Commissioner and to the Chairperson of Masasi District Council by +James and the Diocese Management Team after 2.7million/=Tz shillings (£850 sterling) had been given by the churches across the Diocese. National television covered this generosity of giving by the Anglican Church in Masasi.

The Almasi family are in good health. Bishop James' aged parents live in Sindano, which he visits as often as he can, but Veronica's mother lives in Tanga Diocese in northern Tanzania, so visits are less frequent. The children are doing well in their studies: Faraja and Hugh are in secondary education, while Faraha has just passed the examination for her secondary education in Dar es Salaam. 2016 will be a busy year with the Diocese of Masasi celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its foundation and +James' own Jubilee - his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday!

The Diocese of Masasi has had a very successful and encouraging year. The often heard affirmation of faith, "*God is good all the time because that's his nature*" is both a testimony of the year 2015 and an expression of confidence in God for 2016 for all in the Diocese from the smallest outstation to the Cathedral, from the youngest to the oldest and warmly echoed by Mama Askofu Veronica and Baba Askofu James Almasi.

*Jonathan Rendall, January 2016*

## **THE VISIT OF BISHOP JAMES AND VERONICA**

Everyone seemed to agree that + James' and Veronica's visit to the UK in April of last year was a resounding success and the Trustees of the Friends would like to thank everyone who helped with the arrangements, hosted and transported +James and Veronica and gave so much of their time to ensure that they both had a memorable and very worthwhile trip.

The Friends had agreed in advance that they would pay all the travelling and accommodation costs as well as travel insurance and any incidental expenses during the trip (which lasted from 10<sup>th</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> May) and they are particularly grateful to Jennifer Oakley who not only managed to obtain flights at bargain prices but also avoided the many pitfalls often involved in visa applications.

Everything was arranged, the flights were booked, the programme for the visit had been finalised and all the Trustees knew what role they were to play - but at the last moment, things seemed to go drastically wrong.

Bishop James and Veronica were booked on a flight from Dar to Amsterdam and an onward KLM flight to Birmingham, which was due to arrive early in the morning of Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> April. We knew that the flight to Amsterdam was on time, but when Jonathan arrived at Birmingham International Airport in the early hours of 10<sup>th</sup> April, he discovered that at very short notice and for some inexplicable reason, the flight from Amsterdam to Birmingham had been cancelled.

In the middle of the morning Jonathan received a message that +James and Veronica had been offered a flight to Aberdeen – which fortunately they declined, and shortly after midday a message was received that they had been put on a flight which was due to arrive into Heathrow at 4 pm. Thanks to the efficiency of British Rail, Jonathan managed to get from Birmingham to Euston, across to Paddington and down to Heathrow in record time, and despite being initially directed to the wrong terminal, was at Heathrow to meet the by now very weary travellers, shortly after they landed.

James and Veronica finally arrived at Alan and Shirley Talbot's house – where they were staying for the duration of their time in London - at about 8 pm, only to learn that all their luggage had been sent to Birmingham. Fortunately the suitcases were delivered by courier to the Talbot's house the next morning, but it was not an auspicious start to the visit!

Very precise plans had been drawn up in advance for James' and Veronica's visit and once they were here, everything seemed to go very smoothly: on Saturday a trip on an open top bus and a conducted tour of St Paul's Cathedral ; on Sunday Sung Eucharist in St Paul's (where they were welcomed by the Dean, the Very Revd Dr David Ison) followed by Evensong in Westminster Abbey, with seats in the choir stalls (thanks to Jean Castledine) and after the service a private tour of the Abbey including the tomb of Edward the Confessor and many of the Plantagenet Kings of England; on Monday a full medical check up for both +James and Veronica, followed by lunch with US and

more sightseeing; on Tuesday the London Masasi Day at All Saints' (which was attended by a large number of people, including HE The High Commissioner for Tanzania); on Wednesday Jean Castledine accompanied them on a visit to Canterbury Cathedral and a meeting with the Dean, the Very Revd Dr Robert Willis, and on Thursday Shirley Talbot took them for a day out in the country, visiting Dr Marion Bartlett at the College of St Barnabas in Lingfield.

On Friday they travelled by train to Devon where they had a few days much-needed rest and relaxation. Bishop James celebrated the Eucharist in Ermington Church on the Sunday and the remainder of the week was spent visiting Buckfast Abbey and meeting with the Abbot, shopping in Plymouth and, much to Veronica's delight, lunch with the local branch of the Mothers' Union.

The following Thursday they travelled to Hereford, where they were met and looked after by Jonathan Rendall for the duration of their stay. On Friday morning they visited Ludlow School (which is now linked with the Junior Seminary at the Rondo) and in the afternoon they had optician's appointments (and new glasses for both +James and Veronica). They then met with the Bishop of Hereford and attended Evensong in the Cathedral before going to a supper party, kindly hosted by Hazel Gould. Saturday saw the Hereford Masasi Day, in St Peter's Church, which was organised by the Diocese of Hereford, and was a great success. There was a very full programme of talks and presentations, and many long-standing supporters of Masasi attended, as well as several people from the Hereford area who had heard of the Masasi link and came along to meet the Bishop and learn more about the Diocese. We were particularly delighted to see Val Levick and James Holt at this get-together, as well as many "faces from the past" including Tim Brooke, Susanna Grunsell, Richard Price, Shirin Spencer and Brenda Stone.

After the Hereford Masasi Day, Stephen and Linda Jarvis drove +James and Veronica to Minchinhampton, where they spent the next five nights. Bishop James celebrated and preached in Minchinhampton Church on the Sunday and the rest of the week was taken up with renewing old acquaintances, making new friends and visiting the surrounding area. And on Thursday, Bishop Michael Westall, who +James has known for very many years, drove them to his house for a final day of rest and relaxation before taking them to Birmingham Airport for their flight back to Dar early on Friday morning .

It was a very full programme for them both - visiting many old friends and making new acquaintances, a wealth of new experiences (particularly for Veronica) and a great opportunity for supporters who had not met +James to get to know the new Bishop and learn of his plans and hopes for the Diocese. They both coped extremely well with the non-stop round of meetings, greetings and travelling, and although they were tired by the end of the visit, it was all extremely worthwhile and Bishop James and Veronica assured us that they had a wonderful time. Certainly we all enjoyed spending time with them and getting to know them better and most importantly understanding more about the Diocese and +James' aspirations for Masasi.

## **REPORT FROM THE FRIENDS OF MASASI & NEWALA**

All the Trustees put a great deal of effort into ensuring that + James' and Veronica's visit was planned and executed down to the last detail and we were delighted (and relieved) that apart from the delay on their incoming flight, everything went according to plan. However, some of the Trustees were in need of a well-earned break after the visit and consequently, although we are all in regular contact via Email, we did not get together again until we met in Minchinhampton two months later.

**Saturday, 3 July 2015 :** One of the most important issues we discussed at this meeting was the School at Mtandi and especially the **Unit for Blind Children**. Although this School is a Government School, it was started by Bishop Trevor Huddleston (and only handed over later, as he had wanted) and partly because of its proximity to the Cathedral, the Diocese has always had an interest in this School. The special unit for blind and disabled children (many of whom are also albino) has, over the years, received considerable support from the Friends, the Tanzanian Development Trust, African Palms and other UK based charities but when +James visited in April he told us that the school was desperate for basic supplies. As a result of this, the Trustees pledged to do all that they could to help these severely disadvantaged children.

The Trustees had received reports on the needs of the Unit, which indicated that not only are they lacking basic equipment such as beds and bedding, but over the previous months they had been desperately short of food; this was in addition to their urgent need for a wide variety of educational supplies and equipment and also fencing of the site, to improve the security of the children - especially the albino children who are most at risk. But most importantly, there were several children whose sight could be improved and in some cases completely restored, by a simple and cheap operation. For some conditions treatment is available at Ndanda but for the eye operations most children would need to travel to Dar es Salaam. The operation is relatively inexpensive, but the cost of the travel and accommodation in Dar and the need for an escort to be with them at all times, makes it very expensive.

Earlier this year a young couple called Tom and Lorna Hughes very generously offered to climb Mt Kilimanjaro in support of the Friends and when they asked if the money could go to a special project, the Trustees suggested the Unit for Blind Children at Mtandi. We are delighted to report that Tom and Lorna's efforts and the support from many of their friends raised over £2000 – which is absolutely magnificent. As a result of this the Friends decided to send £500 to purchase emergency supplies of food and to send further money once Jonathan and Dirk had visited the Diocese and reported back on the current situation.

A detailed statement on the Unit for Blind Children is attached at the end of this report.

The Trustees also discussed the **Special School for Children with Learning Disabilities** at Lulindi in the Diocese of Newala and again, agreed to offer support once the Trustees had had an opportunity to visit and report back.

Jennifer had visited **St Cyprian's Chapel at the Rondo** and reported that although a great deal of money had been spent on completely renovating the roof and carrying out other essential maintenance work, there were still holes in the glass which needed to be repaired. This is very skilled work and Stephen confirmed that he was liaising with the Museum of Stained Glass in Cambridge as well as the York Glaziers Trust for advice on the best way forward. The good news was that Richard Hughes, the architect of the Chapel, had made a substantial donation towards its restoration and Stephen confirmed that the parish of Minchinhampton was continuing with its fund-raising for the Chapel. Father Linus had reported that the solar panels which had been installed on the new roof, were proving valuable in providing light for the morning services, but asked if it would be possible to install additional panels to provide light later in the day, which would enable the students to study in the evenings. The Trustees had been advised that the cost of an additional solar panel plus inverter and battery would be in the region of £1500 and they agreed to send funds to carry out this work. In the event, it was decided that it would be better if the additional solar panel was used to electrify the three classrooms for Pre-form 1, Form 1 and Form 2 and also the three small offices used by the teachers and priests.

The issue of **text books for the Junior Seminary** was also discussed and it was noted that 100 copies of some text books are needed, at an approximate cost of £2 per copy. It was agreed that Jonathan would check on the situation regarding text books when he visits and would report back to the next meeting. It was also noted that the Junior Seminary is now considered the top school in Southern Tanzania, but to maintain this position they need good teachers. Jonathan confirmed that the link with Ludlow School was hopefully going ahead and that they were very keen to support the learning needs of the Junior Seminary.

The Trustees also discussed the purchase of a new **vehicle for Bishop James**. At an earlier meeting the Trustees had pledged to donate £10,000 towards the cost of a new vehicle and had asked +James if he could try and raise the balance. It was therefore very encouraging to learn that +James had recently carried out a tour of the Diocese, during which he had visited seven Deaneries, and a substantial sum had already been donated towards the cost of purchasing a new vehicle.

The Trustees discussed the **Bishop Trevor Scholarship Scheme** at great length and agreed that rather than offer a total of four scholarships each year (i.e. two young men and two Sisters), from 2016 onwards the Trust would offer two scholarships alternatively each year to the Sisters and to the young men. It was agreed that to cut back on the BTSS was regrettable, but since the money donated at Lancing College had now been exhausted, the Scholarship Scheme

was being completely financed by the Friends and in view of all the other requests for support, this reduction in support was inevitable.

As far as the **Diocese of Newala** is concerned, Dirk confirmed that he would be meeting with Lawi Issa during the coming week and he hoped to learn more of Lawi's plans for the future expansion of St Michael's Health Centre and also to determine the needs of the School for children with learning disabilities at Lulindi. In view of the total absence of communication from Bishop Oscar, it was agreed that the Trust would continue to concentrate their efforts in the Diocese of Newala on these two projects and would make an immediate donation of £900 to Action Medeor to enable Lawi Issa to purchase drugs and other consumables for the Health Centre.

**Saturday, 7 November** : One of the major points for discussion at this meeting was the **Unit for Blind Children at Mtandi**. Jonathan had recently returned from Masasi and he reported that when he was there on 27 October there were only three sacks of flour left. It was therefore agreed that the Trust would immediately send a further £500 for food and, once they had established the current situation regarding beds and security fencing, more funds would be made available. Steve Arbery reported that he was also hoping to establish a link with New College, Worcester, a national residential school and college for young people aged 11 to 19 who are blind or visually impaired.

The next item for discussion was the **purchase of a new vehicle for + James**. Jonathan reported that, following the Trustees' suggestion that +James should try and raise some money within the Diocese, he had embarked upon an extended tour of the Diocese, visiting some parishes who had not seen the Bishop for more than 40 years and this had proved to be extremely successful. During the past three months more than 25 million Tanzanian shillings had been donated and these funds are now in a ring fenced bank account, which is specifically designated for the purchase of a new vehicle for the Bishop. The Trustees were very impressed by this news and agreed unanimously to go ahead with the purchase of the vehicle for which Bishop James had expressed a preference. This is a Toyota Landcruiser, semi LWB; 4164 cc diesel engine, 6-cylinder, 5-door, 5-speed manual transmission; 10 seater with airbags, air conditioning and roof rack, plus 4 lap type seat belts for 2x2 rear parallel benches, together with recommended options of a transit safety box to secure easily removable items, fire extinguisher, warning triangle, first aid kit, rope and vest. According to the Toyota website, the normal price for this vehicle would be in excess of £37,000. However, the Friends of Masasi & Newala, as a registered charity, are able to buy the vehicle listed above through a specialist agency - WEM Hamburg ([www.wem-hamburg.de](http://www.wem-hamburg.de)) - at a cost of well under £20,000 cif Dar es Salaam.

This is a fantastic opportunity and the Trustees are very grateful to be able to take part in such a scheme.



Since the meeting the balance in the Tanzanian bank account has been transferred to the Friends' account, the invoice has been paid in full (in Japanese Yen) and delivery of the new vehicle is expected towards the end of January or early February 2016. The Trustees are aware that there will be some additional handling charges once the vehicle arrives in Dar and they have agreed to cover these costs. In the meantime, the special bank account in Masasi is still open to receive donations and any funds received in the next three months will be transferred to the Friends' bank account.

We are so grateful to WEM and impressed with the service that we have received that, for our readers' information, we print an extract from their website below :

**WEM (Wirtschaftsstelle Evangelischer Missionsgesellschaften GmbH) is the procurement agency of the Protestant Missionary Societies and was founded in 1952.**

**WEM is actively supporting procurement in about 90 different countries with partners from churches and their institutions, as well as non-church organizations involved in development activities or disaster response (e.g. various NGOs, Hospitals, Vocational Training Centre etc.). WEM is operating cost covering on a non-profit basis, which allows the competitive edge towards commercial suppliers and can ensure ethically sound handling of purchases.**

**WEM supplies a wide range of products from vehicles to medical equipment, emergency supplies, education materials, communication equipment, tools and spareparts, including setting up complete hospitals or training centres. WEM is achieving excellent conditions with the suppliers and has the aim to also give chances to qualified and suitable suppliers from the "South" in order to have the proceeds remaining and invested in the local economy.**

**By co-operating with local partner procurement agencies and utilising further strategic alliances WEM is able to provide the whole logistical support through to final destination also for many difficult destinations.**

**WEM has agreements with partners exclusively to arrange for their general procurement and has been procuring for International NGOs or Government Agencies, by strictly observing respective criteria and ethical guidelines for the procurement of goods and services of e.g. EU, UN, GTZ and KFW.**

The Trustees are now preparing for **+James next visit to England, which will take place from 27<sup>th</sup> January to 17<sup>th</sup> February 2016.** Bishop James has been invited to a Conference entitled "On Being a Bishop", which will take place in Canterbury from Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> January to Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> February. His fare and all expenses involved in attending the Conference will be covered by the Canterbury Education Department, but after the Conference, +James is spending some time in London and also visiting friends and supporters in Cambridge, Hereford and Liverpool. The Friends have accepted responsibility for the extra costs involved and a **meeting with the Trustees is planned for Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> February.**

## UPDATE ON THE UNIT FOR BLIND CHILDREN

Masasi Primary School has over 1,000 pupils and attached to it is a **unit for blind children**. The school opened in 1931 and in 1967 was taken over by the Tanzanian Government, as was customary at the time. In the same year the then Bishop of Masasi, Trevor Huddleston, started a special unit specifically for blind children but this unit now takes boys and girls of many different ages with a wide spectrum of disabilities. In Tanzania children are entitled to seven years of free primary education from the age of 7, but for a variety of reasons many children do not begin school until they are older and some are well into their teens before they begin to receive any form of education.

Although all the pupils at the Unit have varying degrees of sight loss and many are totally blind, others suffer from additional disabilities, handicaps and hardship - some are orphaned, some have mobility problems and of particular concern are the blind children with albinism.

Children with albinism, as with adults elsewhere in Tanzania, are a very vulnerable group within Tanzanian society and are in danger of being murdered for their body parts which are used by witchdoctors. Earlier this year Tanzania passed a law in an effort to stop this hideous practice but sadly it still continues. Blind children with albinism at the Unit are particularly vulnerable because security at the school is dependent on very poor quality fencing around the perimeter of the school compound. Dreadful though this situation is, the children with albinism in the north of the country are at even greater risk of harm than those in Masasi.

The Friends are anxious to help the blind children at the Unit and to help us respond to the school's needs we asked Bishop James to talk to the Headteacher, Mrs Mwanaidi Mtaka, about the needs of the Unit – and it soon became apparent that these are many and varied. At the most basic level is the need for food; if the school's food supplies run out the children are sent home, but some have no home to go to or live a very long way away so they remain at the school on very meagre rations. Funding and food should be provided by the Government but this is not always the case.

Apart from the need for food, the Unit has many other needs. It is difficult to know where to begin. At the moment the Unit's budget is for 52 children but they have 72 on roll. There are 14 non specialist teachers and 11 specialist teachers and 3 teachers that are blind themselves. The school has very little specialist equipment. There is one functioning braille machine and six or seven broken ones. There are also about 30 pads to manually write and learn braille - these are A4 plastic frames with tiny squares into which a braille letter can be punched with something like a bradawl. The Unit has some old and battered braille books to read and also some large lined exercise books. It would be nice to say the unit had a few computers, even old ones, but even if it did they would be of no use as the school has no electricity at all.

The classrooms and classroom furniture are totally unsuited to supporting the needs of blind children and children with low vision. Classrooms have steps into them from the playground area; three blind children who get around by crawling have very special difficulties and the areas around the classrooms are unmade and the walkways uneven. Those children whose vision could be improved with spectacles are unable to afford the glasses they need.

Some children's sight could be improved by an operation that is readily available at hospitals in Ndanda and Dar es Salaam. The overall cost of the operation is about £40 but the children who would benefit would have to be accompanied by a teacher for the duration of their stay in hospital, which increases the cost. In addition the children would need post operative care and transport to and from the hospital, which would have to be by taxi - an extra expense which makes the cost of treatment beyond the reach of most ordinary families. The sight of many of the children who would have benefitted has now deteriorated and the operation would not now be of any use even if they could afford it. Some of the children are orphaned and have no independent means or family support.

The school does not have its own mini bus. Because of the difficulty of transport, children who become unwell (malaria is a continual worry) only get treatment when the situation is considered serious, at which stage a taxi is used.

The children at the school are accommodated in dormitories with bunk beds, which have old mattresses but very little bed linen. There is a shortage of beds and those children who do not have one sleep on a mattress on the floor.

**This picture of the school is hard to accept. However to the best of our knowledge it is accurate.**

Many of us want to help and help is given by individuals and churches but sadly there is no strategic plan in place that offers long term specialist support. Equipping the Unit with teachers, buildings and equipment to the standards we would expect to see in the UK is probably a pipe dream. But we want to make a start and at least to make the Unit acceptable to the very best of Tanzanian standards for these children.

Economically Tanzania is one of Africa's poorest countries. Its dependence on agriculture, its main source of income, makes Tanzania an economically unstable country. The country has widespread poverty and unemployment. The country is slowly changing from a command economy to a market economy, but the stark reality is that disabled adults find it harder than most to find employment. Scarce resources mean that investment in the education and training of young people is concentrated on those who will, later, be economically useful. Children with multiple disabilities find themselves at the bottom of the pile as they are of little value economically. The resources allocated for the purpose of educating the country's children are, in the main, directed towards the healthy, not those of little or no economic value.

At a recent meeting of the Trustees they identified five areas of support the Unit needed:

- Personal wellbeing/welfare
- Nutrition
- Educational/learning resources
- Unit security
- Health/medical

The Trustees have agreed to earmark funding to alleviate the shortage of food and to improve the bedding provision. They also agreed to provide help with the medical costs of children who would benefit from eye operations.

They are now looking for additional funding and specialist help to support their work in the five areas identified above. This is where the need is most urgent.

In the report from the Friends we mentioned that to support the Unit for Blind Children at Mtandi, Steve Arbery is hoping to set up a link between the Unit and New College Worcester, a national residential school and college for young people aged 11 to 19 who are blind or visually impaired and Steve has been in touch with New College to discuss what support they might be able to offer.

However, in the meantime, there has been another very exciting development.

Some months ago Steve mentioned to his own opticians, *Stephen John Eyecare* of Worcester, the Trustees' wish to support these children and Stephen John indicated that he might be able to help.

At a subsequent meeting Stephen John revealed that shortly after his initial discussion with Steve Arbery, his own son had tragically died and not long after this he himself had been diagnosed with bowel cancer and he is currently undergoing an arduous 30-week course of chemotherapy.

Stephen John explained to Steve that his son had always wanted to visit Africa and he and his wife have therefore decided, in memory of their son, to make it their personal aim to raise £5000 for the blind children by this time next year. Stephen is hoping to do this by various means, including approaching Vision Aid Overseas (VAO) for help and making known the needs of the children to the professional bodies to which he belongs.

**This is a truly wonderful gesture and the Trustees are extremely grateful to Stephen John and his wife for thinking of these children at this difficult time.**

**We wish Stephen well with his continuing treatment and are humbled to think that so much good can come out of so much sadness.**

## **VISITING TANZANIA : JULY/AUGUST 2015 REFLECTIONS FROM JENNIFER OAKLEY**

After a non-eventful journey, I arrived in Dar to be met by Fr Emmanuel Chilumba and Peter Vava. Fr Chilumba has served in Masasi and was also a previous Rector of Rondo, and Peter is a son of Mumbaka, just outside Masasi. He has supported Masasi Diocese faithfully, especially during the consecration of +James in September. He took responsibility for printing large calendar mementos, the liturgy and security badges for all those attending. He also provided food for the children of Masasi Primary School to attend the proceedings. Peter has a Guest House complex in Mwanwege, Dar es Salaam called Mwanzo Park Lodges. This is his home but it also has accommodation for guests in ensuite rooms and family rooms. There are also conference facilities and a swimming pool and restaurant. Peter has built a church nearby at an area called Mwanzo Holy Centre. This church is now an Anglican Church in the Diocese of Dar es Salaam. Fr Chilumba serves as a priest there and lives in the adjacent priest's house with his young son and wife. The following day we looked around the offices for Mwanzo Holy Centre and also the large farm with coconut trees, mangoes, rice and many trees. Peter also has plans for new businesses in ICT, secretarial services as well as a butchery. After dinner and much celebrating we listened to Mwanzo Holy Centre Kwaya (who also sung at + James' consecration) singing welcome songs.

Very kindly, Mama Askofu, Veronica Almasi came via Mwanzo Park Lodges to collect me with the Bishop of Masasi's Suzuki Swift and we drove together to Masasi.

In Masasi I met Tom and Lorna Hughes who had completed their climb of Kilimanjaro and had been in Rondo for a week or so to do some teaching. The climb had gone very well and Tom and Lorna have made a tremendous donation to FoM&N to support the Special Needs Unit at Masasi Primary School, which educates blind and partially sighted children and those with albinism.

**UViMA :** This is a group of people ranging in age from 18 to 40+. Unemployment is a great problem and for many people there are slim prospects of becoming employed with a salary. These people are from Mkuti, Mkomaindo and Mtandi parishes and they encourage each other and meet for fellowship and worship. Many have set up small entrepreneurial enterprises such as making mats, keeping bees, sewing, raising tree seedlings and animal keeping. The group also works collaboratively in parishes undertaking tasks such as making bricks to build churches. I visited two projects where new churches are being built in Masasi Diocese in Chikunja and Namajani. At Namajani the priest, along with UViMA members, works as an agricultural labourer and uses his wages to buy cement to make bricks for the new church. UViMa collaborate together to raise funds and when these accumulate, they spend their Saturdays making bricks, carrying sand and water by hand and combining this with cement into wooden moulds. It is this Masasi group of people who have provided their

hands free of charge to make bricks for Rondo Form 5/6 and also for the Girls' School at Namasakata.

The next few days were spent visiting Masasi parishes that I had wanted to see for the first time - Luatala and Nagaga, the home villages of two of my friends Michiga and Mangaka. Along with Fr Linus Buriani, priest and Assistant to Fr Geoffrey Patrick, several different UViMa members came with us to see the surroundings.

I visited Masasi Primary School several times for short visits during these few days. There were only 4 or 5 pupils in the Special Needs Unit on my first visit - a boy around 14 who had albinism, and another two teenage boys who were partially sighted. There was no food at all in the store room, only a huge pile of foam mattresses that had seen-better-days for the bunk beds in the empty dormitories. There appeared to be bunk beds for many of the pupils, including 12 new sets provided by Peter Vava who was a pupil of Masasi Primary School.

Mrs Mtaka the Headteacher, showed Fr Linus and me around and we discussed that emergency funds for food were ready in the bank to be collected and used. The rest of the school was a happy and lively place to be with motivating mottos painted everywhere and a huge nursery class who were singing and writing in the sand with two enthusiastic teachers. I visited on my own a few days later and met another teacher who showed me a few more classrooms and was busy doing remedial lessons after school with pupils. On the last visit I met Mrs Mtaka again and my fellow Trustee, Jonathan Rendall, and I saw a store full of many sacks of beans, flour, rice and many other essentials including soap. There were children returning all the time to the unit and we watched two blind children learning how to punch holes in a frame to write in Braille and use an abacus to count. Mr Ndimbo, one of the specialist teachers, has sent more pictures of many of the returned children, who are now back at school. There is no sign of the government providing food at the moment, but the school has now shut for the summer break.

I returned to Masasi the following week with the Rondo Boys Kwaya. They sang at a big choir event at Mtandi along with Masasi Parish Choirs from Lindi and Mpindimbi, Mkuti, Nachingwea and Mtandi. Nine choirs and many spectators were entertained with amazing singing and UViMA prepared and cooked food for all of these people and also for a conference delegation of 30 Mothers' Union visitors from Central Highlands Diocese who were staying at parishioners' homes.

Visitors from the Masasi Diocese's partners, Montreal Diocese, had also arrived and the Vicar General, Fr Douglas Msigala, took them to visit many Diocesan projects before they went on to Arusha. On the Sunday after the Saturday choir event a large service was held at Mtandi for 105 years of the Cathedral. Many choirs sang and there was singing and dancing with Rondo Boys and Andrew Joel, the choir teacher and many UViMa members, which went on long after the end of the service.

**Solar :** At Rondo the chapel is looking lovely after a big investment from FoM&N for improved solar power and reroofing; the solar equipment was bought in Masasi and we took it back with us to Rondo. The plan was to increase the light in the Chapel, but it was felt that it wasn't appropriate for boys to study in a place used for worship. There are also no desks to use. The new solar has therefore been used to electrify the three classrooms for Pre-form 1, Form 1 and Form 2 and also the three small offices used by the teachers and priests. The lighting in the classes was woeful and there was no light in the offices. The pupils could barely see during the three hours of prep each night. Some had personal solar lamps to help, but not many. The light is now bright and clear and useful when the boys are in the classrooms - from 7.30 am until 10 pm every night. Before there was lighting in the office it was common to see teachers marking books by the paltry light of a mobile phone in one hand and the pen in the other. There is now good light. The solar is also strong enough to provide some lighting on concrete pillars outside the classrooms and along the front of the assembly point. Using some funds from St Barnabas Primary School Café in Worcester, some landscaping work has started by the classrooms to stop water flowing like the Nile Delta when it rains!

**Chapel and dining area :** The Chapel's large benches, which were originally from the 60s and built by the first residents and missionaries of Rondo, were given a coat of varnish during my visit. Some of the ordinands spent many hours with me sanding down the benches and varnishing them. I began with pathetic sandpaper from B&Q but was pleased to be able to buy industrial strength stuff in Lindi! My boss (an ordinand!) also gave me pieces of old glass to scrape years of dirt from the wood and the benches now look lovely. There are also 40 new benches built by Ndanda builders and these are now in the previous Pre-form 1 building with tables. The boys now do not have to eat standing up!

**Form 5 and 6 :** It had been decided to use a Rondo tree to provide the timbers for the roof and also to provide timber for window frames, doors, desks and benches. Rondo has a chainsaw and this has been used to cut boards from the felled tree, ready to continue with the construction of Form 5 and 6. The classes will need to be registered for "A" Level with the Government. Exavian Kachenga, who built the dormitories and many other things at Rondo is ready and waiting in Masasi to come to begin work; he is giving his services at a vastly reduced rate as an offering to Rondo. To begin with there will be only Form 5 but this will expand with time.

**Rondo 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee :** Very sadly this event which was planned for St Cyprian's Day, September 15<sup>th</sup>, was postponed. September is a month spent anxiously looking forward to the rain arriving later in the year and also a time for eking out water resources in the large tanks. It was felt that it would be unfair to the pupils to put the available water supply under pressure with the arrival of many guests who would have travelled considerable distances, so it was decided to wait until a time in the year to celebrate 50 years of education, worship and community at Rondo Junior Seminary and St Cyprian's Theological College.



# The Rondo Choir

**In the above article Jennifer Oakley refers to the Rondo Choir and we are absolutely delighted to report that a CD of the choir has now been professionally produced at a Recording Studio in Dodoma. Copies are available at a cost of £8 inclusive of postage and packing.**

**All proceeds will go towards the Building Fund for the new Form 5/6 at the Rondo.**

**If you would like to order a copy, or copies, please send your payment to Jennifer Oakley, 94 Longride Road, Malvern WR14 3JQ.**

*Gill Hucker says that she has a copy in the CD player in her car; she listens to it constantly and says she loves the CD – especially Track 3*

## **“Let the Children come to me”\***

Cutting the tape to open St. Mary's Girls Hostel at the CMM Sisters' Motherhouse in Masasi was the highlight of my visit to Tanzania this year. This Hostel is for 20 girls from distant villages, who attend one of the secondary schools in Masasi.

It was only during my visit there last year that we finalised the building plans, and now the building was finished and stood ready to receive the first intake. The opening ceremony started with a service of thanksgiving celebrated by the Bishop of Masasi in the convent church, followed by a procession to the hostel. It was a big celebration in true Tanzanian style with much singing and dancing to drums, attended by a few hundred people who enjoyed a good meal afterwards. This is a real step forward for the Community of St Mary (CMM). - Tumshukuru Mungu. (Thanks be to God).

The welcome I received from the Sisters was as hearty as ever, and the time I spent in Masasi gave me plenty of opportunities to hear the Sisters' thoughts and concerns, and hopefully to be of some help. In view of the distances between the twelve convents of the Community of the Sisters of St Mary, the sisters in each house very much need someone to listen to their concerns and ideas, and the listener's comments and suggestions can help them to clarify their thoughts and find the right way forward.

There was also ample time to meet the Masasi Diocesan staff to discuss matters relating to local diocesan projects, parish churches, HIV Aids sufferers, clergy widows, the seminary, the dispensaries, and schools within the diocese.

A further highlight on my visit I was very much looking forward to was to be the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the building of the Rondo Chapel, a grand building created during the time when Trevor Huddleston of the Community of the Resurrection was Bishop of the Diocese. The *Friends of Masasi and Newala (FM&N)* had paid for substantial repairs to the roof and the beautiful 'Creation' stained glass windows. This celebration however, had to be cancelled due a shortage of water at Rondo high up in the hills. The students of the junior seminary and the ordinands training centre there had been sent home because of this problem.

When I arrived at the School for the Blind in Mtandi (close to where the Diocesan Office is based), I received a similar welcome as when I arrived at the CMM Sisters Motherhouse in Masasi. I was welcomed by the headmistress of the School with a big hug, which was obviously due to the support given by the *FM&N*. The Blind Unit is part of a Government primary school with over 1,000 local children. Seventy-two blind children, some of whom are also albinos, are boarders at this Government school, which thankfully is in the position of being able to feed and care for the children.

There followed a visit to the 'School for Intellectually Impaired Children' (to use the correct name!) in Lulindi, some 20 miles away. As always, it was a joy to be here again. A group of children ran to take me by the hand and led me to the head of the school. One little girl hugged my legs, as that was as high as she

could reach! This is the only Tanzanian school of this type run by the Government. At least they had food, but they do need help in a few areas.

I was glad to be able to put the Head of this school in touch with the school for the physically handicapped children (originally a Polio Hostel) in KwaMkono – started by a Sister of the UK *Community of the Sacred Passion*, under whose wing the CMM Sisters were originally founded. This school, which is administered by the Diocese of Tanga and is well run, is supported by *The KwaMkono Disabled Children's Trust*. Here too, the loving care that all children need is given with great dedication.

The next stage of my visit was to Sayuni, in the SW Highlands, eleven hours by bus from Dar es Salaam, with only one stop! The Swiss doctor accompanied me for the sixth time, in order to assist the CMM Sisters in upgrading their dispensary (which is in a remote location) to a Health Centre. Here we are making good progress, and we hope to get Government recognition once we have sorted out the present water problems. Much work has gone into this project with the addition of a children's ward, a large maternity unit, a laboratory, and now a mother and child clinic, which is in the process of being built. The number of patients attending this centre has increased dramatically and so more staff have had to be engaged. The government has also placed seven fully trained and paid personnel here, which demonstrates the success of this venture.

Once the dispensary has achieved the status of 'Health Centre', it will be another great step forward for the Sisters after five years hard work on the project. Now, we can only hope that enough CMM Sisters will come forward to be trained as nurses, midwives and laboratory assistants to run this Health Centre in the future.

During my five weeks in Tanzania, I visited ten of the eleven CMM houses in Tanzania, scattered over the country in several different Dioceses. I travelled 2,800 miles (4,500 km), mainly on buses, often for hours on end. Sometimes it is amusing travelling on local buses, with people having live animals such as chickens and ducks with them. On one occasion, as the bus hurtled along the dirt road, a woman sitting next to me, after a chicken excreted on her dress, put the chicken on my lap while she shook her 'canga' (the cloth rolled around her dress) out of the window of the bus, and my only thought was what do I do if it happens to me .... ? But that is Africa!

During my visits to the various schools catering for special needs children, the opportunity to see for myself the amazing level of love and care they receive, especially from the Sisters, was an enriching experience.

Assisting women and children is one of the principal activities of the CMM Sisters, and they carry out this task with tremendous love, treating each one with dignity. Their relationship with those they serve is a reminder to me that we, like all those around us, are children of God in need of love and care.

\* *Matthew. 19, 14*

*Dirk Juttner, October 2015*

## **COMMUNITY OF ST MARY, KILIMANI MASASI, P.O. BOX 502 MASASI, MTWARA REGION, TANZANIA, EAST AFRICA**

Dear Friends and Partners,

Annual Letter 2015

“Give thanks to the Lord, call on his Name, and make known among nations what he has done.” Psalm 105:1

We greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We chose these words of Psalm 105 verse 1 to thank our Lord and call upon his mighty name and make known among nations what he has done to CMM this year.

We thank God this year as we have been doing well. We continue to serve our Lord and the society around us through education, health and material things.

We would like to thank you all, our friends and partners; The CSP Sisters, The Board of Trustees of African Sisters Support Group, the CMM friends in England, The Friends of Masasi & Newala, The Rev. Fr. Nixon, Missionaries of St. Andrew Australia; Partner sein in Switzerland, Dr. Max-Beat Fluckiger and the Old Catholic Church in Germany (just to mention a few) for your great support to CMM convents. Were it not for your moral, financial and material support, some of our developmental plans would not have materialised. Your great support has enabled us to help the most vulnerable people including orphans, widows and many other needy communities. Not only that, but we have been able to boost our agricultural activities and pay education costs and health expenses for the CMM Sisters.

**EDUCATION** : We would, specifically, like to thank The Friends of Masasi & Newala and the Board of Trustees of the African Sisters Support Group very much for their great help in the education of the Sisters. Three Sisters are studying at Rondo Junior Seminary; one is in Form III and the other two are in Form II. Two Sisters are also currently studying at St John’s University, where one Sister is taking a Science Diploma in “Agriculture and Livestock” and the other is taking a Diploma in “Community Development Studies”; they are both in their second year. It is good to point out that Sr Violet has just completed Form VI and has also been selected to join the University of Dodoma this year and she is going to take Public Administration and Human Resources and Management Studies.

**NURSERY SCHOOL** : Our nursery school in Njombe is still doing well; the classrooms for the primary school have now been extended up to STD VII this year. We would like to thank very much our friends in Canada for their great support that has contributed very much for facilitating construction of the classrooms to reach that stage.

The nursery school in Newala is also doing well. Although there was a problem in obtaining enough land for building a primary school as we planned, it has now been settled and we have already bought an area of two acres and as soon as we get sufficient funds, the construction activities will start.

**HEALTH** : Our dispensary at Sayuni is doing very well and plans are on the way to upgrade it into a Health Centre. We would like to thank so much Dr Max and Partner sein in Switzerland for their great support in expanding this dispensary and improving the education of the Sisters. Through Dr Max's initiatives, the Sisters have been able to attend various training sessions and acquired knowledge in bee keeping and herbal medicine. The knowledge and skills that the Sisters received from these training sessions is a great help to all CMM convents. We are also very happy to learn that through Dr Max, the Swiss donors have agreed to continue supporting the dispensary next year. We are very thankful for this and have planned to start a Nursing School at Sayuni when we get more support.

**AGRICULTURE** : Most of our Houses depend on agriculture. However, last year there was a shortage of rain and, as a result, the harvests were very poor. We are praying this year for good rains. Apart from growing food crops, we are also keeping animals such as milking cows, goats, pigs and chicken and, indeed, through these activities we earn our living.

**GIRLS' HOSTEL** : Through financial and material support from the CMM friends in England, we have managed to build a Girls' Hostel in Masasi; which was officially opened on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2015 by Dr James Almasi, Bishop of Masasi Diocese who laid an inauguration stone. At the same time, Bishop Patrick Mwachiko (retired) and Mr Dirk Juttner participated in the opening ceremony of the Girls' hostel where Bishop Patrick was involved in blessing the building and Mr Juttner in cutting the ribbon at the front main door of the building as a sign that the hostel was officially open for use. The aim of the hostel is to help the girls who are studying in Day Secondary schools who live far from schools to have a secure place to stay under the supervision of the Sisters. Such a situation will help to avoid problems that may lead to discontinuity from their studies due to temptations and other attractions that could cause unexpected pregnancies when they rent private houses.

**EVANGELISM** : We thank God that Sr Anna Mariamu has completed her two year Bible Course at Milo Bible School and we hope that she will be of great help in this field.

We are still making wafers (altar bread), candles and Church Vestments.

At our last chapter meeting held at Masasi in June 2015, we decided to have one Novitiate under one roof and one Novice Mistress rather than the two we had; one at Masasi and one in Sayuni. We have agreed to build the Novitiate in Songea and we are asking for your prayers and help so that we can fulfill our plans. We have managed to get 10.8 acres and we have already obtained a title deed for that piece of land.

**CONCLUSION** : Once again, we would like to thank all our friends and partners for your great support to CMM. We very much appreciate your financial, material and spiritual help. God Bless you all!!

*THE CMM SISTERS*

# **THE DIOCESE OF NEWALA**

**Visit to the UK of Dr Lawi Issa and Mrs Molle Issa**

**25 June to 16 July 2015**

“Praise the Lord”

It is with much pleasure to write about the success of our UK visit which was organised by Richard and Vanessa Price of Cambridge and Jennifer Oakley of Friends of Masasi & Newala who made it possible for both of us to get our visas. To all of them we thank them very much and may the Almighty God, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ bless them all.

Our journey started on Wednesday, 24 June by Qatar Airways; we departed Dar es Salaam at 1735 and arrived at Doha at 2330. The flight was very pleasant. At 0140 on 25 June, we departed Qatar to Heathrow but unfortunately our flight was diverted to Tbilisi in Georgia due to a mechanical problem, but earlier we were told that the emergency landing at Tbilisi was due to a diabetic passenger. In Tbilisi all passengers were evacuated to a hotel for five hours and then we were taken back to the airport where we waited for a further five hours before we departed for Heathrow. During all those 10 hours we were given nothing to eat or drink.

We thank God that we arrived safely at Heathrow Airport at about 8.30 pm and were met by Steve Chapman who waited for us for all that time - the plane was 13 hours late. We thank him very much for waiting for us for such a long time.

Steve and Michele Chapman are from Hereford Diocese but they live in Hay-on-Wye. By that time it was too late to drive all the way to Hay-on-Wye, so we were accommodated at Steve's sister who lives at Nailsworth near Stroud, about two to three hours along the route from Heathrow Airport to Hay-on-Wye. We had a very pleasant night and we slept like babies. We thank Steve Chapman and his sister and brother in law for their very warm welcome to us.

Then on Friday, 26 June Steve drove us to his home where his wife, Michele, welcomed us. We thank God that at last we have started our stay in UK. We stayed with the Chapmans for three nights very comfortably and happily.

Newala Diocese is linked with the Diocese of Hereford. Within the two dioceses there are links existing between parishes and schools.

On Sunday 28 June Michele and her husband Steve introduced us to the Bishop of Hereford and we gave him a copy of my Annual Health Report of Lulindi. We also gave a copy to Steve and Michele.

The income from the health services at Lulindi and Luatala is used to pay staff wages, expenses, medical supplies and further improvements to extend the services. In addition, after paying these running costs at Lulindi, I hope to be able to provide the Diocese with a regular income. At the moment this is the only project in the Diocese that generates money for the Diocese.

We had much discussion about the development of our new Diocese with the Chapmans. On Monday, 29 June, the Chapmans drove us to stay with the Revd Virginia Clements and her husband, Richard, at Church Stretton, a parish twinned with Lulindi Parish in Newala Diocese. Michele and Steve discussed with Virginia and Richard about St Michael's Health Centre, Lulindi and the Clements kindly committed to discuss with other churches to see whether they may contribute money for solar panels at Lulindi Health Centre.

We stayed at Church Stretton for one night. That evening the Parish Council and other four church councils within in the Apedale group arranged a get-together party for us. We are very grateful that we met with many people in that party who were very friendly to us and who even wanted us to stay another day. Also the Headteacher of one primary school within the parish which is twinned with Lulindi Primary School has committed herself to help Lulindi Primary School but wants to know what sort of help is needed. I will ask the headteacher to write to her with this information.

Therefore, on behalf of my wife, myself and the Diocese of Newala I say thank you very much for that warm welcome. May the Almighty God bless you all.

On 30 June, Virginia Clements and her husband drove us to St Michael's, Bramhall which is twinned with our Diocese of Newala. Keith Fenwick and his wife welcomed us and we had lunch with them on that day. Later in the afternoon they took us to stay with Dr Robert and Mrs Moyra Cryer, where we stayed for five nights. On 2 July we were taken by Keith and his wife to the Lake District for one night. We were privileged to travel by a Steamer on one of the Lakes. Generally the Lake District is a very lovely area. We enjoyed a lot while we were there.

Our stay in Bramhall was very enjoyable and we were warmly welcomed. We had dinner most nights with Bob and Moyra Cryer. We met with several different groups including coffee with the Mothers' Union, a party with the Link Group and tea with a member of the Church, who allows the public to visit her beautiful garden. We also had a very good tour of Stepping Hill Hospital where they made us very welcome. It made me realise how much we must strive to raise the standards of health care in our Diocese of Newala. We thank Robert Cryer for giving us some surgical books. We have also taken some music books from Keith Fenwick for us to give to Fr Kulwa Mahelela.

On Sunday morning we had breakfast with some of the congregation before the service. On the same Sunday we had lunch with members of the St Michael's congregation.

With all the different groups we met, we discussed a lot about the development of our new Diocese including the need for an ambulance, an operating theatre and new wards at Lulindi Health Centre.

At the end, they said that they need estimates for all these things which I shall work out and send when I get back to Newala.

I must not forget that after all these meetings on Saturday, 4 July we did some shopping in Stockport with Hamida Adkins. We thank her very much for making our shopping very successful. We could find many things that are not available in Newala shops or even Dar es Salaam.

In the evening we had a very nice dinner with Hamida and her husband and later they drove us back to Robert and Moyra where we were staying. We therefore thank Hamida and her husband for their warm welcome and making our shopping very successful and Robert and Moyra for making us so welcome and comfortable in their home.

We were also given some drugs and medical supplies for Lulindi which were unable to be taken to Lulindi about two years ago. Unfortunately some of them had expired but we managed to take a few.

In short, our stay in Bramhall was very enjoyable and very successful for the further development of links with our Diocese of Newala. All people were very kind. For example, our suitcases were badly damaged during the stopover at Tibilisi and Keith Fenwick and Robert Cryer gave us two new cases for our possessions. We thank them both very much.

On Monday 6 July, Keith Fenwick drove us from Bramhall to Coventry to meet Tim Brooke and his wife Gill who warmly welcomed us. We had a wonderful stay with them for two nights. While with them we visited the Coventry Transport Museum which was very interesting to us. In the evening we had dinner together with the Rotary Club members. We also had a meeting with Dirk Juttner from the Friends of Masasi & Newala Trust to discuss how to develop St Michael's Health Centre Lulindi. He asked us for an estimate for the cost of an operating theatre, a new ward and beds which I promised to send to him.

Brenda Stone who for a long time worked at Lulindi Hospital also came to the Brookes to have coffee with us. We thank her very much for coming to say Hello to us and also we thank her very much for she has committed to contribute something for Lulindi Health Centre development.

At Lulindi Health Centre and Luatala Dispensary they have each a motor bike for outreach services which were donated by Riders for Health from UK which Tim Brooke is the coordinator here in the UK. But both motor bikes are out of order at the moment, but Tim Brooke has promised to send money to service both motor bikes so that the outreach services can resume as early as possible. We therefore thank Tim and his wife for their warm welcome for us and for committing to service the two motorbikes.

On Wednesday, 8 July Tim Brooke drove us to see Richard and Vanessa Price in Cambridge. It was a very pleasant drive and Richard and Vanessa his wife welcomed us. This is really our UK home. This is our third time to stay with them so we feel at home.

While in Cambridge we have visited the following places. Wimpole Hall where there is a farm. We enjoyed seeing many animals - pigs, horses, sheep, goats,

geese and even a special hive of bees where you can see inside the nest. Molle was a little frightened in case they chased her! It was very interesting to see very small horses which I have never seen. These are horses which were used in the mines in the olden days. We also visited Anthropology and Archaeology Museum. This was also very interesting.

St Mary's Bocking is also twinned with our parish St Mary's Newala. Last time we came here we visited then for Sunday service and we had hoped to visit there again while we were in Cambridge. Unfortunately it was not possible. Instead, on Sunday 12 July, Vanessa drove us for Sunday Service to St Andrew's Stapleford. Richard had to rest because he had injured his back. We were warmly welcomed at Stapleford by Trish Maude and all the congregation of St Andrew's. At the end of the service we were privileged to read the Grace in Swahili while the congregation followed us.

For many years St Andrew's Stapleford has been linked to St Andrew's, Nachingwea where I was District Medical Officer between 1993 and 2005, so we enjoyed very much seeing again some old friends.

After the service we met the members of the congregation and then we were invited for lunch at Trish Maude's home with some PCC members and the Vicar, Fr John Pinder and his wife Jenny. We also thank them all very much for their warm welcome.

On Monday, 13 July we went with Richard in a taxi to visit Dr Marion Bartlett at St Barnabas College, Lingfield in Surrey. Dr Bartlett is now 94 years old. She worked as a surgeon in Tanzania for 40 years (1948-1990) including six years at Lulindi from 1962 to 1968. She was very interested to hear what is going on now at Lulindi. We showed her some photographs of the improvements at Lulindi and at Luatala. She was extremely happy to see us and to hear about these things and we enjoyed seeing her very much and hearing her talk about her memories of working at Lulindi so long ago.

Dr Bartlett gave us a copy of her book "Surgeon or Jack of All Trades?", published in UK in 2013, which is all about her 40 years medical service in Tanzania. She wrote in it: "I am pleased to donate this book to The Diocese of Newala where I worked at Lulindi Hospital for 6 enjoyable years. Marion J. Bartlett 13/7/15". We shall take this to the Diocesan office when we get back to Newala. Dr Bartlett invited us to have lunch with her which was a very nice meal. We also thank her very much for the warm welcome to us all.

Wednesday, 15 July is our final day to stay in the UK. We felt the day was rather cold but Richard said it was warm compared with winter. Richard and Vanessa took us to the Botanic Garden which is owned by the University of Cambridge. The garden is lovely and contains about 8000 different species of the world's plants. We were very much amazed by one type of plant from Sumatra in Indonesia. It is called Titan Arum and when we were there it was almost ready for the very big flower to open when there will be a terrible smell which attracts special beetles to pollinate it. I think it is too far for the beetles to

come from Indonesia! We have never seen such a type of plant. We took photographs of it.

Lastly, on behalf of my wife Molle and myself, may I take this opportunity to say very many thanks to all people who have made our visit to UK possible also to all the people whom we have visited and all the people who have taken part in any of the activities which I have mentioned above. We say “asante sana” (thank you very much).

May the Almighty God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you all.

## **Shirin Spencer is 90!**

Three Trustees of the FoM&N - Stephen Jarvis, Jennifer Oakley and Jonathan Rendall - were thrilled and honoured to be invited to join Shirin Spencer near Cardiff, on 21<sup>st</sup> November, to celebrate her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. More than 120 people met in the Parish Church for this wonderful event and the guests included John Leonhardt and others who had worked with Shirin in Masasi. Shirin was also delighted that Mr Hassani Zahoro who was visiting from Mnara Primary School, a short walk from Rondo came too!

Shirin lived in Masasi for a number of years and from 1964 to 1970 (a crucial time for the development of the education system in Tanzania) and taught at St Mary’s Teacher Training College in Ndwika, near Masasi.

Shirin had chosen nine charities to represent the nine decades of her life for guests to support, and the Friends of Masasi & Newala were pleased to be chosen as one of the nine represented.

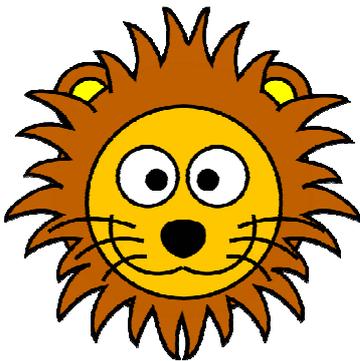
Shirin, who for has long been a supporter of the Friends of Masasi & Newala, is a remarkable woman of integrity and principle who shared her passion for justice and respect for all living things through her choice of charitable groups such as Compassion in World Farming and Amnesty International.

A good time was had by all.

*Jennifer Oakley*

And as we go to press we are delighted to report that more than £300 was donated to the Friends at Shirin’s birthday party; a big thank you to everyone who gave so generously and to Shirin and her friends who organised this very special day.

*Some time ago Dirk Juttner managed to get hold of a book entitled "The Dawn of a Diocese", written by Father Arthur Gordon Blood, a missionary priest in Masasi Diocese. This slim volume, published by the UMCA in 1935, with a Preface written by the then Bishop of Masasi, the Rt Revd Vincent William Lucas , tells the story of the establishment of the Diocese of Masasi and the dangers and problems that confronted the first missionary workers. It is a fascinating read and we are sorry that we are not able to reprint the whole book, but we hope that the opening lines of the Introduction will give you an idea of the trials and tribulations encountered by the founders of the Diocese.*



A few years ago an unusual incident befell one of our nurses. She was going on her bicycle one afternoon from Masasi to Nanyindwa. Her route lay along the main road for some four or five, after which she should have taken a path leading off to the left. This turning she missed, but realising her mistake she turned back after a little while and got on to the right road. But by this time it was getting dusk and she could no longer see to ride her bicycle on the rough forest path. When she still had something like an hour's walk in front of her, she heard a lion roaring nearby and coming towards her. Taking the bold, and probably the wisest course, she continued on her way, ringing her bicycle bell the whole, accompanied by the lion walking a few yards off in the forest and crossing the path in front of her from time to time.

As it became dark her African cook-boy, who had preceded her to Nanyindwa earlier in the day to prepare the house and a meal against her coming, grew anxious at her not having turned up before it was dark, and, having heard the lion roaring in the distance, came out along the path to meet her with a lamp and companions from the village.

So this unusual incident reached a happy conclusion; the lion, not appreciating the arrival of light and reinforcements, retired into the forest to hunt again another day, and the nurse, acclaimed for her bravery and good fortune, safely reached her destination to carry out her duties on the following day.

*If anyone is interested in this fascinating little book, original first editions can be purchased via Amazon and at the time of writing there are several copies available at a very reasonable price.*



## ***CONGRATULATIONS***

***We congratulate Gill Hucker  
on having been awarded the British Empire Medal  
for her services to the community.***

***The citation at the Investiture made particular  
mention of her outstanding contribution  
to the work of the Friends of Masasi & Newala.***

***I am sure you agree with me  
that this is a well deserved accolade  
for the unstinting work that Gill puts into  
the Friends of Masasi & Newala.***

***She really is the heart of our partnership  
and for that we are very grateful indeed.***

***Dirk Juttner, Chairman of the Friends of Masasi and Newala***



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	I would like the Trust to use my donation for the benefit of the Diocese of Newala
	I would like my donation to be used for the following purpose : _____ _____
	I am happy for the Trustees to use the money as they see fit.

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to the tax The Friends of Masasi & Newala will reclaim on my donation.*

Please send to the Secretary and Treasurer :  
Mrs Gill Hucker, 6 Erme Park, Ermington, Ivybridge, PL21 9LY  
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