



Dear ones,

First of all I want to convey that you are always in my thoughts and prayers. I hope this simple message will find you well and happy, and that this holiday season commemorating the birth of Jesus will have been full of peace and love.

I'm back in Africa and all is well thanks to God. In material terms it is, and will always be, an unknown matter since we are at the mercy of men and their economic plans that in the governmental realm leaves no doubts as to preferences in the distribution of subsidies and grants, even if only to attest the credibility of those who work on behalf of the needy. But anyway, as Jesus also said, the poor, some of material resources others in spirit and ideologies, we will always have them with us. One has to keep a positive attitude and stay the course.

The partnership with the Church/Community Centre, the place we helped build keeps going, slowly but surely. While away we heard and now here, we have participated in events for the community which bring us much joy, to see that the efforts, small as they were compared with the desire to do more, are being compensated with fruits we believe will remain.

It's still in our plans to adapt the installations so we can also receive the younger ones, the future of any society. We already have the necessary permissions to start a creche and now we only need to financial support to go ahead with the work. A wall and gate are needed so that the children will be protected from the road and traffic when they are in recess, school tables and chairs, and mobile partitions to separate the children's classes since it's a multitasking space.

For a couple of years this idea has been in our minds but until now we haven't been able to make it a reality. Forgive me the candor but every time I read the news of the millions that are granted to institutions that after one finds out were misused, and that with the knowledge and participation of the politicians in charge of disbursing them, I feel somewhat disappointed and ready to throw it all in the air. I wish just a little percentage of those millions and much would be done. But I won't bother you with tirades on things you know already.

The other day there was a wedding ceremony which I attended. A symbiotic event that combined occidental costumes with local ones. It was very interesting. The video clip can be seen here; < <https://youtu.be/zEtd-mbpOrQ> >.

And on Christmas Day I went to "visit Jesus" at the local Hospital (Matthew 25:36). I was

pleasantly surprised to see the scarcity of patients, the cleanliness and order in the place, the composure and joyfulness of the staff and doctors on duty. Jesus was there!

I also want to ask for your forgiveness if sometimes I'm not as present as expected. Believe me that I feel sorry for that. The fact is that for reasons of health, and being a foreigner, I need to be away back in my home country part of the year, for doctor's appointments, medical tests, what have you when the years start weighing in. The energy starts to diminish and the days get shorter than they used to be. God willing now that I'm here I'll be more available and participative!

My great wish to you dear friends is that 2018 will bring you and your loved ones much love, peace and prosperity. God bless!

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