

HOLY FAMILY MISSION HOSPITAL

NEWS LETTER AUGUST 2008

NEWS FROM UNDER THE MOUNTAIN....



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From the Editor's desk

Once again, greetings from Holy Family at the bottom of Mount Mulanje! It's a pleasure to have yet another time to brief you our dear readers on what is happening below this Mountain at holy family Hospital.

I hope you had a nice time going through our last edition. In this edition we will look into different issues which will focus on education, entertainment, spiritual issues as well as interest points. It's my sincere hope that you will find the articles exciting as well as informing.

Holy Family Staff wish you all the best as you go through this edition!!!!

Solilhani Phama!!!!!!

(All the best as you read)

Jane Zgambo

From the medical officer

How quickly time passes....., nearing the end of my contract. At the end of November of this year I will have ended my extended contract at Holy Family. Close to five years under the mountain.

More and more the realization comes to me that I will be leaving the protection of my beloved mountain. How often have truly appreciated the splendid view of green tea fields draped over the flanks of the mountain, the warmth of the people working with me and the wonderful country of Malawi.

The coming months will be spent on saying my goodbyes to all you dear friends, close and far.

I am privileged to leave behind dear colleagues who are eager to continue the good work. Responsibilities previously in the hands of the expatriate doctor will be passed

on to Malawian colleagues. Sr. Kambalame, our hospital administrator will be taking on donor management. Mrs. Mtonga, Principle nursing tutor, will be responsible for guiding the Tripartite collaboration with Albert Schweitzer Hospital and Cordaid. Also, hopefully very soon, a Malawian doctor will be found to take on heading the clinical department.

New developments:

The water project, sponsored by Pro-Phalombe, has been completed. Three water pumps were installed, pumping water from bore holes in to six water tanks. This system is providing the hospital and staff houses with enough water.

We had the privilege to have with us Clair, a Dutch paediatric nurse, who worked in our paediatric ward for three months. She generously donated enough funds to the hospital to enable us to purchase two new oxygen concentrators. Together with her mother, she brought color to the paediatric ward. They spent two days painting wonderful pictures on the walls of the ward.



Bringing colour to the paediatric ward

The children from paediatric ward thank you!

We also received our first guest from the Albert Schweitzer Hospital (AZs) in Dordrecht (the Netherlands). This visit is part of our collaboration with AZs formulated in the tripartite collaboration. Nicole v. Os will be assisting the hospital in her capacity as Intensive Care nurse and in the nursing school in teaching the first and second years nursing students. Hopefully you will be reading about her experiences in the next news letter.

Warm greetings from Phalombe,

Dr. Anten

Current issues

NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID UPLIFTS HOLY NURSING COLEGE

When approaching Holy Family you will be welcomed by magnificent houses standing at a place which used to be maize gardens. The scene is so breath taking that, for a second, you will think you are in Namiwawa. The fifty-two bedded hostel towers over the houses like a palace.

Thanks to NCA who embarked on building tutors houses and the girls' hostel at the college. This project has come at a time when the college badly needed accommodation for tutors as there were only three houses. This led to the chronic shortage of staff.



Building of a new girl's hostel

Holy, is therefore so grateful to NCA for the assistance rendered to the college. NCA has further more promised to renovate the old existing structures.



Building of six staff houses

Once again Holy Family says thumbs up for Norwegian Church Aid for a job well done.

Zgambo [lecturer]

Education

MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS

It is one of the bacterial infections which causes inflammation of the meninges. It is caused by a gram negative coccus called *Neisseria meningitidis* which is harbored in the naso-pharynx, especially in the neutrophil leukocytes. *Neisseria meningitidis* grows well aerobically on the blood serum at a temperature of 37 degree Celsius, and ferments glucose and maltose.

Meningococcal meningitis is transmitted from person to person by droplet spread.

Meningococci produce endotoxins which activates both complement and clotting pathways leading to peripheral circulatory collapse and disseminated intravascular coagulation. They spread to the cerebral spinal fluid causing meningitis with

involvement of the pia and arachnoid layers. The immune complexes respond leading to arthritis, cutaneous vasculitis, episcleritis and pericarditis.

The incubation period is 2 -5 days. The onset is sudden and present with fever headache, general malaise, and at times diarrhea. Later petachie appear in the skin and conjunctiva which rapidly progresses to ecchomoses. Blood pressure falls dramatically and ECG shows myocardial involvement later shock.

Laboratory investigations show marked polymorph nuclear leukocytosis. Blood culture is positive for meningococci in a peripheral thick blood smear.

Some of the complications of meningococcal meningitis are pulmonary oedema; renal failure (due to myocardial complications arthritis); cutaneous vasculitis leading to gangrene of the extremities and skin ulceration.



In this young child, meningitis led to loss of one eye and.....



gangrene of the fingers leading to amputation

For us at Holy family hospital we witnessed some of the complications of meningococci in a child admitted with a gangrenous hand and later on episcleritis; in which the child lost one eye.

P.LIMOLE

Health information

PROTEIN ENERGY MALNUTRITION VERSUS HIV

Protein energy malnutrition is one of the leading causes of death in the hospital setting. Children under nutrition rehabilitation respond positively if no other underlying cause is at stake.

For every ten children admitted to the nutrition rehabilitation unit, seven are HIV positive. This is because HIV destroys the body's immunity, which exposes the child to several opportunistic infections like oral candidiasis. This leads to malabsorption of

food nutrients and also reduces food intake because of painful sores in the mouth.

We can come to a consensus that HIV infection contributes to increased number of malnutrition cases. However, not all malnourished children are HIV positive; for example, we have a two year old child who is currently on TB treatment and nutritionally rehabilitated but HIV negative.

P. LIMOLE

BEATING THE HEADACHE BLUES

Over ninety percent of people experience headaches of some kind. There are many different types of headaches ranging from sinus to migraine, with tension headaches being the most common.

Ten headache cures:

Too much, too little or disrupted sleep can trigger headache so sleep well.

Fluctuating blood sugar levels can cause headaches, so eat regularly and healthy.

Mild dehydration can cause headaches, so drink enough water.

Keep a headache diary, to investigate the cause of your headache.

You may need to understand your condition, so read about it and treat it.

Talk to people with the same problem. Problem shared is a problem halved.

Take time for yourself, its time to recharge and relax.

Wear sunglasses. Optical-grade, polarized lenses are essential.

Stay healthy and above all

“Osati thupi la nsima”

Stress can trigger tension headache. So don't let little things bother you.

VIRGIE CHOPI

HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL DRAMA GROUP

Holy family hospital has a drama group which performs activities in order to inform, educate and entertain. As such it acts as a hospital mouth piece.

This has been shown during the tour they had on community sensitization for the hospital's pneumonia program. The group went to different villages surrounding the hospital so that people should know what the hospital is offering in terms of child lung health. During the tour the group visited several villages like Kambale, Mpambachulu, Nyambalo where sensitization was done through drama.

Currently the group is comprised of ten members who actively participate on a voluntary basis. But we feel if these people are supported we can make a difference in the way the hospital can convey most of messages it has to deliver to the local area.

Currently the hospital is failing to give the group transport such that these activities mentioned were done by walking to respective venues to perform. Because of this we must perform after lunch and, with no lunch allowance, we cannot revive ourselves for the next performance.

During our travel we were assisted by our lovely sister Claire van der Horst from Holland [paediatric nurse] who saw our effort and encouraged us after seeing the impact of the performance; which emphasized the common signs of pneumonia, the danger signs, the importance of coming to the hospital early in

the context of all diseases and above all the importance of oxygen therapy to pneumonia.

The group consists of Alfred Saopa, Symon Bondo, B. Samuka, Miss Kapete, Maleka, Dan Namalanya, Miss Tente, and Miss Chilomo.

After hearing of our small problems which are hindering the process of disseminating information to the venerable people, we hope you will come to our rescue.

Rex Chinzu [coordinator of child lung health] contact him on chinzurexrobert@yahoo.com for more information.

Religion

LOVE OF GOD VIS AVI AFRICAN POLITICS

In the beginning God loved his people, Adam and Eve. He gave them all the authority and everything was good. In the New Testament we see our lord Jesus Christ being sent to earth by God to save his people, through humiliation on the Calvary. We also witness the love of God through Jesus when he changed water to wine at Cana and also the healing of Jairus' daughter, who was at the point of death. God did not stop there; Jesus resurrected the son of a widow in Nain. The same Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit as guidance on earth after he resurrected and ascended to heaven.

But what we hear in African countries is war and crime, humiliation and xenophobic attacks amongst fellow Africans. Take Sierra Leone, for example, where for a long period of time war has led to loss of lives. This is also true of Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo, where ethnic groups have been fighting, leading to loss of innocent lives. This has led to people seeking refuge in countries like Malawi and South Africa. But a few weeks ago there was a xenophobic attack in South Africa

where foreigners were being killed and others left injured.

All these things are happening because of lack of love amongst people. It is time that we love one another so that peace and tranquility should prevail in Africa.

P. LIMOLE

Entertainment

IT NEVER RAINS BUT POURS

"May the almighty be praised in all earthly life and for eternity. Amen" the entire congregation chorused in response to the reverend.

"Having reached this moment, brothers and sisters in Christ, parents from both sides and everyone present to witness this colorful event. This happens once in a blue moon. I would humbly ask the two of you standing before the entire congregation to recite as I read from holy life-breathen bible."

No sooner had the reverend paused to adjust his ten diopter glasses than a high pitched female voice echoed from the far back aisle where a tall, heavily melaminated woman stood. "Excuse me reverend; before you go on to unite these two. I stand to oppose their intention to marry. This young man is my son - in-law and preparations are underway and marriage is due next month."

Her intervention left the whole gathering engulfed in confusion. The congregation were distracted and were now glaring at the two birds standing in their wedding attire. Even the reverend, his hands crossed at his chest and mouth agape, his bald head had lost sense and did not know how to handle the hot issue.

This was another fate for Sondrin “ why could you Nick?” she could not voice out anymore words to Nick who had already drowned and engulfed with embarrassed torture. For Sondrin, she paced out of the church followed by her relatives, sobbing down her cheeks..

By ALBERT MAKINA [to be continued in the next quarter]

JOKE OF THE QUARTER

QUESTION: What is the best definition of globalization?

Answer: Princess Dianna death.

QUESTION: HOW, WHY?

An English princess with an Egyptian boy friend crashed in a French tunnel, driving a German car with a Dutch engine, driven by a Bergian who was drunk with Scottish whisky, followed closely by the Italian paparazzi, on Japanese motorcycles, treated by an American doctor, using Brazilian medicines.

This story has been written by a Mozambican, working in Malawi, using Bill gates technology on a computer that used Taiwanese chips and Korean monitor assembled by Bangladesh workers in a Singapore plant, transported by Pakistan lorry-drivers, loaded by Sicilian long shore men and tracked to us by Zimbabwean affected by xenophobia attacks in South Africa.

THE FALL OF THE GIANT

Saturday May the 14 2008 will go down in the history books of Malawian soccer as the national team popularly known as the flames scorched the Pharaohs of Egypt in grand style in the joint world cup /Africa nations cup qualifiers at Kamuzu stadium in Blantyre.

The flames were rated underdogs as the pharaohs are the number one team in Africa. “Football is played on the ground”, a soccer fan pointed out a day prior to the game. Malawi proved this through their determination, enthusiasm and hard working spirit when they flooded the pharaohs.

Currently the flames top group 12 on goal aggregate .They have six points from three games played wining twice and loosing once. To achieve this the flames taught Djibouti a soccer lesson when they thrashed them 8 –1 before loosing 1-0 to DRC through a late controversial penalty in Kinshasa

As a token of appreciation companies and individuals showered the team with praise through monetary means and materials, for the job well done.

The first citizen, Dr Bingu wa Mutharika treated the team to a dinner at Sun Bird Hotel on June 15 before hosting them at Sanjika palace in Blantyre.

Congratulations the flames!!

Wishing you all the best in second round games.

Victor Namalawa.

