

Doing the Numbers

Our Work

The other day someone asked how many children we work with in the hospitals. I hadn't thought of it, but I started to work it out.

On any one day we have a significant impact on the lives of 50 to 100 children. Over the year, we get to know around 500 children well and spend some time with a further 500. They will have heard the main Bible stories, played games, sung, and prayed. They will have had an opportunity to talk about what is worrying them. Some will also have received help with their education.



They will all have heard that they matter and God loves them.

Of course, there are some other numbers that have been concerning us. We are very grateful for those who support the work financially, but recently things have been

very tight and we are struggling to pay salaries.



Two of the main reasons for this are the exchange rate and the level of inflation in South Africa. Not so long ago, we were getting about 13 Rand for each pound. Now we get a little over 10 Rand. Prices have risen by 5 to 10% each year, and even more for things our staff buy such as food and electricity. Putting all that together, what a gift of £30 would have bought 3 years ago requires over £50 now.

Your Opportunity

Some of our friends make regular monthly payments. This is a great blessing to us as over 90% of our expenses are the salaries of our 5 staff. We need the equivalent of another 15 people making monthly donations of £50 to cover our monthly expenses of £2,000. This would enable us to spend less time on finances

and more on helping the children.

If you would like to set up a monthly donation, those in the UK can get the Standing Order and Gift Aid forms from www.zaninibantwana.wordpress.com or contact us and we will send them to you. For those outside the UK, you can make a monthly donation via the secure credit card facility on the website.

Of course, single gifts are all very welcome and these can be made by credit card using the online facility or you can send cheques made out to "Fitzroy Presbyterian Church" and marked "For Zanini Bantwana" to:

The Treasurer, 62 Beechgrove Avenue, Belfast, BT6 ONF, N Ireland.

Please help us to go on helping these children. **"Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."** (Mt 24 v 40)



Khayelihle

"Where is Nqobile?"

(To protect her identity, we have changed the name.)

.....Nzuzo asked the other day. It's a good question because we have no idea where she has gone.

After 3 months with Nqobile we felt we had been quite successful with her. She left us healthy and happy after being cared for in a stable loving home.



As you know, if you read our letters regularly, it wasn't always an easy road with her, really because of what she had been through. We had one occasion when we felt we had witnessed something demonic; another time we were aware of some evil being lifted from her. Hard to explain, but real experiences nevertheless.

We had arranged that Nqobile would go into a children's home - at 15, her only option

here. We left her with the social worker as arranged and, as yet, she has not arrived at the home.

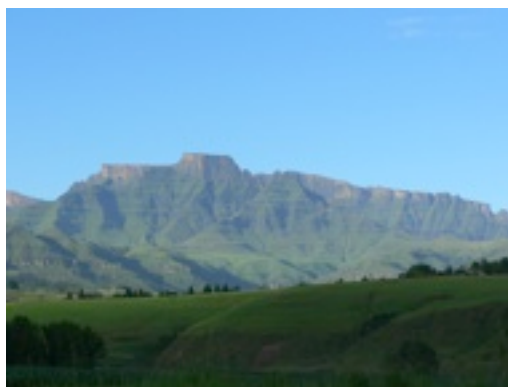
We have been shocked by the standard of work of some of the social workers here and we are very concerned about Nqobile. One of the difficulties about taking short-term children is that we have no control over where they go when they leave us.

We will try to follow this up, but have no ultimate say in what happens to her. Please join with us in praying that she will be kept safe as she is a very vulnerable girl.

"The LORD will keep your going out and coming in from this time forth and forevermore." (Ps 121 v 8)

Holidays!

We enjoyed a great holiday after Christmas when we went camping in the mountains.



The campsite is only a 2 hour drive from here. The children were soon swept up in the herds of children roaming around on bikes, and just appeared back with us to be fed and watered! We all had a super time and came back feeling very rested.

Back to porridge. (literally)



It's all change in the Gaston household as Henry (13) starts his final year of primary school before moving to High School; Siphos (7) and Sihle (6) start in Grade 1 at the same school; Nzuzo (2) has 3 mornings a week at a playgroup. They are all taking it in their stride - it's mum who isn't too sure about them growing up! Please pray for them with a different routine. We are also excited to be handing in Nzuzo's adoption application next week. Please pray that it will go through smoothly.

For further information and online donations go to www.zaninibantwana.wordpress.com

Contact us at sheenagaston@mac.com