



Christmas 2014

NEWS FROM THE MISSION HOUSE



from Nigel Kiernander

Hello Everyone,

There is a proverb which says 'Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser...' and as we know instruction can come to us in many different ways. But whatever form it takes it requires change.

Change is going on all the time all around us, sometimes subtle, other times obvious; sometimes it impacts directly sometimes indirectly. Change may come as a consequence of something we have done, or not, or of a particular environment changing around us but whatever forms it may take we have to learn from it and take appropriate action.

Socrates (the Greek philosopher not the Brazilian footballer) observed that that 'the secret of change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but on

building the new' – and we are in a process of change and 'building the new' in The Mission House.

Before I explain let me give you an update on this year which has been so positive in so many ways.

Our focus on education continues at The Mission House Academy in Fort Dauphin, Southern Madagascar, where this year we have provided Life Skills training to over 200 students as well as Leadership and English language training classes to many others.

These courses are enhanced by Leaders from the community who, as guest lecturers, regularly donate their time to teach in their areas of expertise. We are really grateful to them for their service.

Also in Fort Dauphin we make a donation of rice to the local prison at this time of year to make Christmas a little bit more special for the inmates – this gift also helps create goodwill with the prison authorities and will open the door to our taking our Life Skills course to the prisoners, when we have the resources to do so.

In Central Madagascar we continue to have on-going projects providing child sponsorship at Le Triomphe orphanage and a teacher's salary at a rural Christian Primary and Secondary school.

In Sri Lanka this year, together with our in-country partners, we have provided water and sanitation to a small Christian village of 12 families in the northwest and in the central region two villages have been provided with 20 and 60 latrines respectively. The latter project is not quite completed yet because of torrential rains.

The thankfulness of the beneficiaries is profoundly humbling; especially from the women and all thank you for providing them with decent, clean, safe toilet facilities – and dignity.

All these outreaches and good works are the direct result of your commitment, help and support. I want to really thank and commend all of you, our supporters, for being on board with the vision of relieving spiritual and material poverty. “Thank you” to our fundraisers, individual donors, corporate donors, volunteers, those who pray and all who have given their time and expertise to help us *provide help at home and abroad*.

(Below & top) Some of the beneficiaries of the Sri Lanka water & sanitation projects



But yet in the midst of all these successes, and as I mentioned above, the need for change and ‘building the new’ has become more necessary.

A decline in our income is very ‘instructive’ in re-focusing the mind on strategic issues (where we are going and how we are getting there) and so to address the issues of reduced income and rising costs we have moved the Academy to a new premises in Fort Dauphin (see picture) which means we have been able to achieve a significant reduction in rental costs.

Also, we have reduced our full time teaching staff to a minimum and are

New premises for The Mission House in Fort Dauphin, Madagascar



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focusing on delivering only our Life Skills courses and a reduced number of Leadership courses.

Unlike the 12 week open bible Leadership course the Life Skills course is not overtly biblical, although all the students know we are a Christian charity and indeed the modules on Relationship and Leadership are led by a local evangelical minister (see picture).

However, we now have over two thousand Life Skills graduates in the



local community and I believe that we are at the right time to be openly bible based in the appropriate modules of the course and so updating the course content is a work- in-progress at the moment.

We are embracing the challenges of change. We have made economies and cutbacks and are changing our on-going educational outreach to be more overtly scriptural. Meanwhile, we will continue with our sponsorships together with water and sanitation projects as we are able.

These expressions of care and concern for our neighbours are only possible because of what you give.

Thank you.

Relationship & Leadership teaching led by Pastor Gilbert

EASYFUNDRAISING

This year The Mission House have found a great way to raise money for free, simply by shopping online through a website www.easyfundraising.org.uk.

Whenever you buy anything online (e.g. presents, groceries, clothes, books, train tickets, hotel rooms, etc.) you can raise a free donation for The Mission House . There are over 2,700 retailers registered with the site, including Amazon, John Lewis, eBay and Tesco who will donate a percentage of what you spend to The Mission House to say thank you for shopping with them.

Here's how it works:

1. Sign up – go to <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/themissionhouse> and click on the button to sign up.
2. Shop – from the easyfundraising website, search for the retailer you'd like to shop with and click through to the retailer to make your purchase. This tells the retailer you came from easyfundraising. The price is exactly the same as if you'd visited the retailer directly.
3. Get a donation – after you've made your purchase, the retailer will give you a cash reward that easyfundraising turn into a donation for The Mission House.

No cost, no catch!

Please be assured that using the easyfundraising website will not cost you a penny. There are no catches or hidden charges and The Mission House benefit from any donations you make once registered.

Thank you for your support.

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Until I advise otherwise, please consider this and future gifts as GIFT AID. I confirm that I have paid or will pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.

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