

E-BULLETIN #140

"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)

item 266

hot or cold, hunger never says 'No!'



The beautiful town of George, known not only for its fast economic growth but as a tourist attraction, is no doubt one of the dream places to visit in South Africa.

It has also attracted many migrants from neighbouring provinces, seeking a better life. They settle in what are called 'Locations', very different from the town itself. One of these 'Locations' is **Thembaletu** meaning "Our Hope". At daybreak one can hear the noise of taxis, and the stamping feet of men and squeals of young women rushing to catch them, in order not to be late for work. About midday one can still see many movements of women and children who look on life without really expecting much but happy that another day has welcomed them and they are alive. They wait for the return of the labourer's wages for the chance to put food on their table.

It was in this situation that **Brother Hermann Michels sac**, in 2006, sought to contribute in his little way towards alleviating hunger and malnutrition in this poor area. With an old *bakkie* [ute/pick up] he would drive up and down every Tuesday to collect vegetables, fruit and eggs from the cheaper shops in order to make soup for about 200 children who gather every Wednesday afternoon at the Thembaletu church with their mothers.

Soon after that Herman extended the days to cover a kindergarten every Thursday, and an old age home every Friday. Wednesday is a feast because three massive pots of soup are standing on the stove, boxes of fruit are being cleaned by some women while children are playing and shouting outside, waiting for the call for prayer which begins the sharing. On Thursdays, children in the kindergarten are sure of an extra lunch box with fruit, which is often absent in their menu. On Fridays old people are happy just to sit in the sun while watching the old *bakkie* roll into the yard with some *izimphahla* (goodies).

How was brother able to do this? He had some benefactors from Germany who supported him, but he also supported himself from what he produced from his small carpentry workshop and from the sale of trees. For 7 years Herman dedicated himself tirelessly to this mission. When it came the time for him to go back to Germany, Hermann's heart was very down for these people. His face lighted up when I told him that I was willing to continue this work. He promised to continue to support it from Germany.



However, while in Germany his benefactors lost the passion to continue their support and his funds dried up. But just as I was about to give up God inspired me to actually beg for help locally. So I wrote several letters to bakeries, meat shops, grocery shops, and to individuals, and there was a good response. We now get up to 50 loaves of bread, a bag of bones, a few boxes of fruit and some money to pay our cooks every Wednesday. We cannot go every Thursday and Friday to the kindergarten and old age home but we still reach out to them when it is possible. So Tuesday is the day for collections or, if you like, for begging and the whole of Wednesday is the feast. Whether the weather is hot or cold, the soup tastes good in the mouth and flows smoothly to the stomach of these children who have increased to nearly 400 in number. Last year **Fr Ignacio Chiphiko sac** joined me in George and has so far helped to alleviate my tight schedule particularly by getting involved with the soup kitchen.



Once in a while we gather old clothes and toys from different parishes. Such days bring tremendous happiness to the kids and their mothers. One can notice that they do not often say *Enkosi* (thank you) but the smile on their faces, when they accept their share, is tremendously fulfilling. Many of them, although not really looking wretched, make one think: *'Ahhh!! Christ is so right, there will always be poor people around you'*, who suffer inside because their hunger is not obvious.

This is no time for sitting back, I play with kids to the point of fainting because they don't understand that grown-ups get tired!

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item 267

Pallottine skaters!

September 20, 2014 will remain in the history of St Vincent Pallotti School, Nagpur as a golden day on which it marked the historical beginning of the St Vincent Pallotti Memorial Roller Skating Championship. It was the first time that the school had organized such an event, having already created many national skaters from her own students.



Skating is not merely a sport but an art that helps one in self-empowerment and self-reliance.

The Championship was organized by the school in association with Nagpur District Roller Skating Association (NDRSA). A total 394 students from over 20 schools from Nagpur district participated in the

championship. In the individual category prizes were shared amongst many schools and in the group category first position was bagged by Central India Public School, Nagpur and second by Center Point School, Dabha. Prizes were distributed by Fr Tomy Luckose sac, Vice Provincial - Nagpur Province of the Pallottines and Rector of Pallotti Bahwan, and Shri Upendra Varma, Secretary of the Nagpur District Roller Skating Association.

Pallotti School extends a big-hearted thanks to all the principals, trainers of various schools as well as parents and officials of NDRSA for making the event a great success. The second St Vincent Pallotti Memorial Roller Skating Championship is slated for September 12, 2015.



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