

Here is the letter that began the fundraiser:

EMAIL #1 (from Jemille a UofC Phd student)

Jambo!

Martin and I are in a village near Dodoma (Tanzania's capital city) right now, and have just spent our first day working. When we arrived in Dar es Salaam, we spent a day and two night there just getting adjusted. Brother Anthony took us to the Ocean where we visited Bagamoyo, a town set up by priests and nuns who bought slaves from slave traders and gave them their freedom. They set up a colony called "Free town". Pretty sad museum....those chains are just AWFUL!!!

Then we headed to Morogoro and next to Dodoma. I met with the nuns today who will be running the school. Only one is an actual grade one teacher. The other two are mother superiors etc. Sister Theresia will stay with me for the whole month to learn about the curriculum, and then train the other two teachers who are god-knows-where. I've asked a few times where the other teachers are, and I jut get this kind of sigh and cute African chirpy noise and then no answer. So I guess whatever happens, at least Sister Theresia and her superiors know what is going on, and they have agreed to train the remaining two 1st grade teachers if they never show up before I leave. I was worried about how they would take to my Global Education curriculum, but they really loved it, and they LOVED the books. We are all very very excited. They said that they are going to pray to God that I change my mind and come to live in Tanzania to run the school or teach with them. I laughed at that and said...Sorry!! I've got to pay for my house!!

Martin began his painting of the classroom walls before he begins the murals. He has two helpers from Canada who will be here for a week. That is great because the base coat itself is such an enormous task. The classrooms are really big which is also great, and they have 12 foot ceilings. I can't attach photos through this 90's piece of crap computer, but I'll have lots to show you when I get home.

This compound is amazing how they create everything they need like their own little civilization. They use the crap (literally) from the outhouse and then throw in some cow dung as well to make methane gas which heats the stove for cooking. There is an actual vent coming out of the outhouse for this purpose. How cool! We drank milk straight from the cow today, Martin had coffee picked from coffee beans outside the laundry room, we ate pork chops from a pig that I just saw butchered today (which was pretty grisly). And I could go on and on, but others are waiting to use the computer. The internet hasn't worked for a while, so they want to get on while they can.

When you see the pictures of this school, you are going to be so impressed. The building is really beautiful. They have completely left the rest up to me, which has been daunting, but actually, now it is quite exciting because the nuns really love the curriculum and they

are totally on board with teaching the girls and their families against female genital mutilation, and teaching the kids not to discriminate against the AIDS orphans. Bro is dead set that the AIDS orphans will be the first kids admitted into the schools. There are only 120 spots for grade 1 and there are 600 kids on the list who have applied. The government officials are trying to pressure Bro to register their kids that they want to take out of international school, because they heard that St. Gaspar is going to be very high quality in terms of resources, building and curriculum, but Bro is so stubborn that he has totally refused them, and still managed to get all of the necessary permits etc. He told government that this school is only for those who cannot afford school. If anybody can hold out and admit only the poorest of the poor, it will be Bro. He has no qualms with saying it like it is (in his mind at least...). Instead of charging money tuition, the kids' parents are going to work off their kids' tuition through labour equivalent to the value of tuition i.e. work in the school lunch kitchen for a week or two, be a gardener for a bit, a guard, etc. according to your skill and the school's need. Kind of like a bartering system. The kids will get fed once a day at school, so at least we know that they will get one square meal, and I am also going to collect toothbrushes and toothpaste for all of the grade one students, as they don't have any dental hygiene except tree bark, and I can see from the adults here that this doesn't work all that well. And if you are really quick on the ball while reading this email wondering who the AIDS orphans will get to pay off their tuition through labour.....well, those loving sisters of the precious heart will be kicking in some volunteer labour for each of the AIDS orphans' tuition. Bro has it all figured out.

I'll write again when I can.
Lots of love,
Jemille

p.s. If you managed to get through this really long email, and it got you thinking to how you could help....please feel free to donate the following things that we are really going to need to send here in the next container:

1. You can always donate money for school books which is of course the #1 priority....any amount counts since \$5 buys one classroom reader, and one reader makes a big difference to a kid even though you may feel like it is nothing.
2. New unopened boxes of: pencil crayons, crayons, pencils
3. Rulers (doesn't matter new or used...but must be metric)
4. Erasers (preferably new)
5. Scissors (doesn't matter new or old as long as they work and won't kill a grade one kid)
6. Glue sticks (new is best)
7. red pens for the teachers
8. Toothbrushes & toothpaste (...ummm....new would be good please :)

If you can get any of this stuff at your workplace....go storage room go!!!! We are going to put little baskets of this above stuff on groups of desks (4 kids to a group) so we're not

expecting to get one of each thing for every kid (except toothbrushes). They can share! Supplies here are crazy expensive, hard to find, poor quality and they could never afford to buy them. If you can't donate anything right now, maybe at Christmas time your family can put together a care package for the kids here, since I will be doing this for every consecutive grade for the next 7 years, and I probably won't bug you for stuff. You can just offer if you have anything on this list!

I will be sending stuff with Father Tim on September 8th (he's coming home to visit his mom), and I'm getting back from Tanzania on August 27th, so this is a surefire way for the supplies to get directly to the kids and teachers at St. Gaspar.

Thanks so much everyone!

love again, Jem

pps I really didn't mean for this email to be a donation request. Sorry about that....you just can't be around this kind of poverty and not think of asking....

EMIAL #2 (from Jemille again)

Meara, you are so AMAZING!!!! Thank you so much!

What I need most are books from Chapters/Indigo, so if you can just use the cash to buy a Chapters/Indigo gift card, that would be the best thing you could do with cash donations.

I have a list of textbooks that I need for next year (second grade) and the Chapters near my house gives me 20% off the internet price because I get all my books from them, and because it is for a charitable cause.

You can't begin to know how much it touches me that you have done this! Thank you a million times. You are a great friend.

I got home two nights ago, and I haven't been able to sleep. My mind is still on the other clock, and I'm trying to put together all these boxes in the next few days before school starts so Father Tim can take them back to Tanzania. Your stuff will not arrive in time, but don't worry, I can send it in a container at the end of September with some more books for grade 1 that I have to send.

I'm attaching some photos, but I'll send more later. There is one photo of me with the teachers (sisters) I was training this summer, there is one of the women's group (of mothers and grandmothers) in the community who first gave me the inspiration to start this project five years ago (they asked for my help to stop the spread of Female Genital Mutilation in their community, and refused to do it to their daughters, and there is also a photo of the kids who will go to St. Gaspar playing your favourite game...soccer!!! They make their soccer ball out of rags tied up with twine.

Thanks again so much,

love Jem

EMAIL #3 (from Meara)

Jem,

>I received you note saying that you have all the toothbrushes you need. We are currently working on the rest of the stuff and I have begun a fundraiser for you here with the help of the staff and students of my school. We HAVE SO MUCH STUFF FOR YOU!!! :)

>Please send me an address so that I can send them to you or Father before he leaves in September. What about cash donations? Should I use it to buy stuff here and ship it down or would you like it to use for whatever comes up?

>Meara

>

>Can they use computers?

EMAIL #4 (Jem to Hull school)

Meara, I am just running off to work. I will write again later...YOU ARE AMAZING!!

Thank you, and your school and your students so very very much. You have a huge heart girl!!!!

love you!

Jem