

19th December 2009

Issue 1



Missions Newsletter

Inside this issue:

My Story	1
The Orphanage	2
Acknowledgements	4

Did you know?

- There are over 143 million recorded orphans in the world?
- There are approx 8.2 million orphans in Nigeria?
- FACT: 400,000 orphans die every year due to malnutrition?
- It can cost a person as little as 71p per day to help keep an orphan alive.
- There are 42,000 new orphans every day.
- 60 million orphans go to bed hungry.

My Story

My journey to Nigeria took place on 6th November 2009. I woke up early morning, Tuesday 10th November at 5.30am. My brother Olu and I travelled to New Life Assembly, Redeemed Church of God (RCOG), Kubwa, which is on the outskirts of Abuja. I had made arrangements with Pastor Mba, the Zonal Pastor of RCOG when I was in England prior to travelling to Nigeria. The youth leader of the RCOG, Kubwa is called Abiole. She told us about her visit to the Abuja Children's Orphanage, with the church's youth two weeks prior. I was very excited and felt privileged that God had called me to my motherland to give to the orphans on the core of His heart. So far I have been serving the poor and homeless people on a weekly basis in the UK via my Mission Shaped Communities (MSC) Church, St Andrews. This was my very first trip abroad on missions; to my country of origin and my very first visit to an orphanage. Orphans have been on my heart since I was a teenager. I lost my mother when I

was 10 years old. In England, my father was taken to hospital in an emergency one day when I was about 11 years old. My older brother, younger sister and I were taken into care by the authorities. NB: Olu, my eldest brother was in boarding school in Nigeria. My sister was taken to a foster home as she was only about 4 years old. My brother and I were taken to a children's care home. I was scared stiff. I looked around to find the care house had basic furniture and my first thought was that it did not feel like a home. It felt cold and empty. I was introduced to a teenage girl who I was to share a room with. She was quite fowl mouthed and to my horror she was a chain smoker. She was obviously street wise, whereas, I had only known a quite sheltered life. She told me a few stories in the short space of time I was with her. I believe she had a boyfriend in the same house. I was not sure how often I would see my brother there as nothing really was explained. I did not even know if I would see my

dad again. It took the whole day for us to be called for an update. Up until then I confess, I felt like an orphan child. It was very frightening. I felt I had lost the last covering over my vulnerable life. 'No mum, no dad.' Or so it seemed. But the Lord is gracious. We were called outside where a car was waiting for us and my auntie and uncle came to rescue us. I was so relieved. Although I still felt vulnerable, it was more of a secure feeling to be with someone I knew loved us. The good news is that my father recovered and our family was reunited. There is no place like real home, real family. Although I had only a glimpse of what it is like to lose both mother and father, just that, was enough to place on my heart the fatherless. Vulnerability opens up the door to abuse in all different forms. Our loving Father has not forgotten His children and seeks to rescue them through our stewardship. The 10th November 2009 was the day the Lord released me into world-wide Missions.

The Orphanage



When Pastor Mba, Abiole, Olu and I arrived at the Abuja Children's Orphanage, we had to sign a book to declare our donations. I spoke at length with the manager who told us the home has just under 70 orphans; boys and girls from age 0 to about 17. The orphanage has a school attached. Most of the children were abandoned, found on the streets, or rescued from ungodly rituals. After I had donated money, clothes, toys and sweets for the children, we were shown around the orphanage. I noticed a children's painting in the foyer. It was very colourful. I hope this is symbolic of the colour added to the lives of the orphans because of those who care about them.

The image on the left is Tope & Abiole in front of the church's Missions bus. She was a great tour guide as well as companion for the journey!

On the right is an image of the orphanage's school with 2 children playing outside.





We spent time with the 0 to 5 year olds (please see photographs below). I first noticed a tiny baby in the arms of one of the helpers. She was probably born premature and I found out her name is Miracle. Olu brought to my attention a young girl of about 4 years of age. I immediately crouched down to speak to her but there was no response. I tried and tried again. Then I asked a helper what her name is and she replied, Precious. I told Precious she is very precious to Jesus. I was bothered by her lack of response even when I held her hand. It was as though her soul had been taken from her. I then noticed a crucifix around her neck and I believe someone else knew what had happened to this child and knows only God can restore her. I remained by her side throughout and a boy came over with a small orange ball. I chatted and played with him for a bit and found he did not speak English. I also realised why the Lord prompted me to buy some toys in the UK for these children in Africa. Things we take for granted. This orange ball is the only toy I can remember being in that room.

Then other children came over including 2 babies who were about 14 months old. I carried them both and one of them put his thumb in his mouth to suck and lay his head on my tummy for comfort and security. Which brings my thoughts to Psalm 131.

The image at the top of this column is a painting drawn by some of the orphans



I rocked him gently and the other baby hit him and they began to tussle one another. Some of the other children were fighting over me too, as I tried to bring some order. I sensed a real love deficit. I looked around and could see the helpers were tired. I pray God will refresh them. I got as many names as I could including baby Adam and beautiful Destiny. Olu was occupied with a new friend, an albino child. She stuck with him the whole time talking to him intrigued by his mobile phone. As I continued to share the Father's love with them, I quickly sensed how easily one could become drained by their neediness.

Pastor Mba said it was time for us to leave. I then felt the urgency for us to pray over these dear children before leaving. As they were heading out of the door I asked Pastor if he would pray. He started with a beautiful song. Although I had not heard this song before, I joined in and sang it with my heart to the children. As I sang one of the girls looked intently into my eyes as though she had never heard singing before, as I looked into her eyes whilst singing the words, I touched her cheek and felt the presence of God so strongly.



Then Pastor Mba prayed a passionate prayer for these children. As he prayed the words, "...Lord, we cannot do everything for these children but You can.....", my heart broke and I started crying for these children, as I came into agreement with these prayers. I hate suffering and I knew we were only scratching the surface. I was moved with compassion. I was adamant by the time he had finished praying that there is much work to be done and it takes one act of faith to put the Lord's work into action. I sensed strongly one can put down one thousand but two can put ten thousand to flight. So, it is my heart to set up a charity in aid of these children and God willing other orphans around the world. I cannot do it but the Lord can. And I believe the Lord will bring one by one, like hearted individuals to the newly established registered charity to help raise funds for these orphans and travel as missionaries around the world bringing the Father's love to the fatherless. I am calling the project, 'The Precious Foundation.'

The Abuja Children's Orphanage are in need of more workers; more food; clothing; toys and books for educating the children. Your prayers and giving would be very much appreciated.



I have truly learnt that it is indeed more blessed to give than to receive. I experienced more happiness giving to the orphans than I did going on the high street in the Western world purchasing goodies for myself. I do not desire earthly riches but to be rich in God. I do not only desire to be right with God but to please Him every day. As I do this I learn to trust Him more. When I see my heavenly Father face to face, my TRUST will be complete.

1 Corinthians 13:12.

By Tope Teniola

Founder, The Precious Foundation



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"And the King will answer and say to them, Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."

Matthew 25:40

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If you would like to partner with Tope's ministry, she would appreciate one or more of the following:

1. Daily Prayers
2. Volunteers to help with The Precious Foundation Project
3. Donations

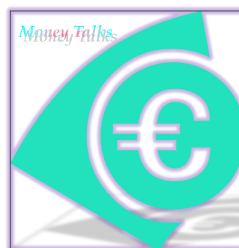
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