

## Dear Friends,

It is not so long time that I wrote but I better empty the bag when it is still not overflowing. We certainly were not overflowing with water. The area where we live has high water level but so full of iron that it is just rusty color. We did dig the well as we shared with you in our previous letter but as we started pumping the water what we got was a 'promogranate juice' and not water. Was its taste like pomegranate we would be delighted but though full of iron it wasn't the iron we needed for our body and hemoglobin won't rise with that. On the end we had to go three times a day to bring the water from the village tap, for the entire use of the house: cooking, washing, cleaning (*and even for toilet*). In the end when I shared our problem with Peter, he gave idea and donation to implement it, to make a bore. Three times the machine broke as they were boring deeper and deeper, crushing the boulders that are underneath. Remember our place is a river bed. When they reached 200 feet down the muddy water gushed out the pump and covered our compound. The workers were very disappointed and we desperate. Hesitantly they said that they will have to pull out all the pipes and dig somewhere else. This much work and in vain **!?** Usha did not allow for that. She firmly told them to continue as she herself brought the statue of Our Lady and began saying Rosary. And when they dug another thirty feet the 'spring' water gashed out, clean like spring water clean can be. The workers stood in amazement. Our problem was gone as



The first flow of water (muddy). Thank God we follow Our Lady's advice to Bernadette- to dig deeper.



Rewarding smile

the bore brought out the overflow of crystal water and our hearts were overflowing with gratitude to God and to Blessed Mother.

Water is such essential thing that you just can't go without it.

Our hearts have more reasons to overflow with gratitude, Serfraj's heart especially. Shirley Valentine and her family were very prompt in their generosity to sponsor this rather big

expenditure and now I am sure they feel rewarded as they see the picture of Serfracj and his smile. He has undergone the surgery, everything went well as the doctor wished, and now he is recovering. His leg is still in plaster but now he can move around (and should as advised by doctor). Hence he began attending the classes which is another joy for him and for the children. They faithfully visited him at home and updated of all the events of our village life. How much they notice the world around them. It seems that nothing escapes their eyes (I have to be on guard).

We brought him the half year results and all climb on the bed to be included in the photo also, but mainly because the room is so small that there is no place for more than three people to stand.

Now school curriculum came back to normal though Serfracj with his white plaster on the leg is a continuous distraction. However, our teachers know how to deal with distracted children. Providentially the time that Serfracj was hospitalized was a time of our monsoon holidays and we all were down in Siliguri house. It took hardly 15 minutes drive to reach hospital so we could easily go up and down. That is one adventure of having home in Siliguri.

Behind the little house that served as prayer room for pastor and which we transformed



On Serfracj's bed on the day of giving half year results.



Not scaring, but just the contrary- attracting the fish to pop out of the water.

into play room there was a big ditch and it would take not a few trucks of mud to level it. So instead of filling it up, we dug it little wider and made a pond for the fish. Right now around 300 little fish are swimming in, popping out as children come.

I remember old times when I was small how the fishermen would chase us out for making noise, telling that all the fish run (swim away) when there is noise. And indeed it was so. But here our fish does the opposite. They come up to the surface of the water whenever children pay them a

visit. Who would not? They carry away to the fish whatever they sacrifice out of their meal. And I had not an easy time watching not the fish but the children, ready to jump in at any time. So far I did not have to. I wouldn't mind as I would have an excuse to swim myself. In my honorable age I cannot allow myself for such folly except prompt by some serious motives.



But actually during this monsoon rains I got 'cured' of the desire to make a swimming pool. Children are just irrational when they see water. My verdicts are always proved. We had very heavy rainfalls and the full of compound was submerged, also the space behind the house. As the rain stopped and sun came up our children like one sneaked out through the back door and were indulging themselves in the water that was little bit above knee (their knee).

Just imagine what could happen if the water was above my knee!

As we came back from monsoon holidays we began new session with hard work. The



That cured me of the desire of having a swimming pool in our compound.



He must be confused why we 'waste' the chewing gum; it could be a delightful piece in his mouth.

as fillings for the holes made by wood worms. I had to be watchful that children don't reuse them for original purpose (you can't trust Arpit in these matters).

After a week of toil, the owner wouldn't guess these were his benches so different they looked. But I would recognize my children from the colorful patches all over them. If you meet child with green hair or face or hands with green spots don't be alarmed- it is not yet another sickness invading the earth. Please just send him or her immediately to Flame of Hope.

Another surprise.

school next to us was shut down few years back and the owner now and then feels like giving up few of his old school benches. So again he had this gainful (for us) feeling and brought some benches which we without hesitation 'changed' by smoothing and putting paint so that they are new again.

Even chewing gums that were eternally stacked underneath became useful to serve



Putting primer under the supervision of Kusi, who is most accurate in any work, perfect supervisor.



Waiting to welcome you

The volunteers' house is ready to accommodate those who wish to stay with us and join in common toil. I never thought that it will come up so soon. In first place I did not think it will come up at all this year. We just thought that since we got some spared amount we will make the foundation before the money dissolves with ice-cream. But each time we came to

Siliguri Usha would surprise me with one more pillar (one less ice-cream day). Then when we reached roof level I asked some help from you and put up the roof. And on the end we got a lovely dwelling for you: two bedroom with toilet attached and small kitchen cum dining room. The cook is not provided.



Anjana is getting ready your dwelling, really clean: no cockroaches, only ants and their hunters- lizards.

I always feel that you are part of our mission, our family and so we wish to secure the place for you so that when you come here you have modest but of your own room to rest. And you need to rest when you work with our children.

So these are the last news.

We are in process of fulfilling yet another of our desires. We paid the first advance for the land for school purpose. Last time when Alessandro came he made a survey and judged it absolutely fitting for the use. The location is perfect as the land is neighboring with our land separated only by brick wall. Previous times I would say: 'there is already a well' adding by that to the attractiveness of the spot. Now, knowing what that well contains I mention about it with the different tune- "Yes, there is a well but we will fill it up and level it". Please pray for the successful deal. There are some complications but 'with God for us, who can stand against us!'

With loving wishes from all of us,

Flame of Hope Family.



