



Flame of Hope

*(Home for the physically and intellectually challenged)*

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**Dear Friends,**

We are back with our latest developments.

Busy time indeed as we were in the final deal of purchasing the land for the school.

God is giving us shock after shock. We did not yet recover from the shock of acquiring such a beautiful place in Siliguri and God seems to continue to amaze us with His/ yours generosity. I told you that as we were relaxing on the terrace of 'Maranatha' house, after purchasing it; our eyes fell on the land adjusted to it. 'What a nice piece of land' someone said, I don't remember now who. But I know who said:

**"Do not covet your neighbor's property!"**

I tried not to, believe me, but when Alessandro came on his 'annual' visit somehow we found ourselves on the 'neighbor's property' and Alessandro confirmed us 'in breaking' this particular – one of the 10 Commandments. The prospect of beginning a school for the local children, who because of their disability and poverty are confined to remaining hidden and isolated from the rest of the world, was too tempting to



hold us back from purchasing 'neighbor's land'. We did it- you did it! The land is ours! That really spares us from coveting and I tell you the more we looked at the land the more desirable it seemed to us. It is just behind our wall, square, plain, fenced and no electric poles on it. Alessandro of course had to pay for 'our sin'. Land is so necessary and the starting point. But I sincerely hope that that is the last deal in the area of land purchasing. It is so 'hazardous' work.

But it is over and so far no complains.

Recently there was big commotion regarding another piece of land just opposite to our house.

Someone bought the land, fixed the boundary pillars and by night all the pillars were gone! Well, everyday morning I peep through window to see if our boundary is still there. **And it is.**

We got another gift but that was free (maybe free with the purchase of land like in the shopping malls, 'buy one, get one gift free') and that is Anjana. Since we got already **Anjana**, in order not to add to our already confused little world we changed the new comer's name to **Teresa**. She is about 7yrs. old and she is the first Bengali child. "Poor will take you to the poor". Our Porimal had no peace of mind until he took us to his village and pleaded for the child. Anjana has no father and the mother is an occasional domestic helper. If you got even little imagination (Attilia and Mariangela will understand it instantly because they saw the village), you will guess what that means- in the village like Porimol's the 'domestic' works are

done by householder. No one has need of domestic helper. So Anjana's mother used to leave her daughter on the mercy of God and go in search for 'daily bread' all around the villages. That meant that Anjana would wander around by herself and be exposed to different harassments by men who are not at all



merciful. So eventually the Merciful God entrusted her to us. She is mentally challenged child. Those who are destined to be with us will find themselves just fitting to the rest. Recently we got confirmed on that. We took one child from Kalimpong; a social worker brought her to us. We usually avoid that way because we normally first go and see the situation, then we decide. But this time we were somewhat 'pressed' to yield to the demand. In no time it became evident that the child (Sonia) will not adapt to the rest. The 'family child' will always long to be back with family and will in a way reject others who try to come close. The atmosphere became almost intolerable as Sonia would kick and slap on the face anyone who tried to befriend her. She was mentally normal,

understanding 10 yrs. old girl and I suppose she knew what she wanted- to be restored to her family. On the end we contacted the social worker and convinced her to take the child back to where she belonged.

We had an unforgettable experience of earthquake. We all were in one room watching on TV singing competition of children "***Little champs***" when we began to feel something strange. By the time we looked at each other in bewilderment the tremors so intensified that the whole house and earth beneath began to shake and swing very strongly. Some children fell on the floor, things fell from the shelves. All the children crawled towards me and we like one fell to our knees and began to pray. I believed that the end of the world began. There was no point of running away as the whole area was shaking, outside no less than inside. Then, suddenly it stopped and you could here only the outpour of rain that already continued from three days. After regaining senses I called Usha to tell her of what happened but she told me that the same happened in Siliguri. I just couldn't believe that such vast area can shake like leaves on the tree. Where is the wisdom and knowledge of man? Different scientists were narrating the event and trying to explain it when one journalist asked- *'is there possibility of another tremor, what magnitude it will be, when it will be exactly and where?'* The scientist paused for a while and then said: 'having all the knowledge, we still cannot predict when, how, where. We only can explain when it does happen'. Humble scientist.

After awhile we all went to the chapel to have Holy Hour because scientists did not calm our fears. My 'little champs' were not at all looking like champs. Even in the most rigorous convent you would not find that much disciplined nuns like our children were during the 'post earthquake' Holy Hour. They knelt the whole Rosary through and I did not have to say any unholy ejaculation between the 'Hail Mary's' which on other days I do. But children are so easy to put them back in calm. Chiaciu for no reasons showed me the **V** (maybe she had reasons that I realized only later) and that made me cry with





relief and gratitude. After all was over she felt like a winner, thanks to the Mercy of God and not to our merit. But sadly in Sikkim many did not come through victoriously. Parts of North Sikkim are still cut-off. By His Grace we are given more time, more chance to work on ourselves to live better life,

Fr. Abraham honored us with his visit during this PUJA holidays. Now that he is so feeble in body, not in spirit, he is advised to restrict his movements to minimum and especially traveling. Traveling from Sliguri



to Darjeeling is no longer “Joy Ride”. Rather it is 2 hours long earthquake. But he had to come down to Siliguri for his 70 yrs. Jubilee which was celebrated in the Jesuits parish in Matigara. Journey followed by Celebration would be just toooooo much so he came down the previous day and had restful sleep before the Big Day.

Mariuccia asked me to announce to our friends’ circle this particular ‘Good News’. The other day Raissa, young Italian girl of 19 has come to their center (Italy) and donated 2,000/- Euro for the children of Flame of Hope. Knowing of the economical crisis all over the world, this girl’s gesture reminds us that the world is not yet gone

too bad, the young people feeling for others who are still less fortunate and more deprived. But I know other young lady who ‘sweats’ for us- Giovanna. In the last run for registration of the land for school we needed yet additional 5,000/- Euro for the Government Stamps for registration. How to produce such amount immediately? What *immediately* I could do was to write a note to Giovanna and send it with one click on the mouse. But I know that she did not get the said amount with one snap of her fingers. She organizes charity events of which she updates me. Here again I would like to thank Fon Teatro which gave funny performance on one of such charity events, then Stefano Bortolotto who gifted our children with winter jackets and all others whose names I don’t have here, people who participated generously in the charity events. Know that without your support we would not be able to help those children. And those children are not able to help themselves; they rest and rely on your good will.

I am afraid that I live in illusionary world. I am spared from its cruelty and rush. With a click of a ‘mouse’ I see the good responses from all of you. I don’t spare anyone, family as well. We are making here small, (but big enough for all children to ‘dive’) prehistoric ‘swimming pool’ and we had to stop the work because of finances. Again one click to Marek and the work restarted. Ah! If all the mice were so ‘productive’ like the computer’s one. All other are eating our potato like if they bought it and when monsoon time the water level reached our knees they all migrated to our house. But don’t worry; they had to vacate the house as soon as the water dried up.

So these are the latest updates and with a click it will reach you.

Our sincere prayers will reach you as well, in an instant, because God’s ‘Media’ of communication are ever old, ever new, ever simple and forever efficient: from our heart to His Heart and from His Heart to your heart...all the Blessings of God

And loving wishes from all of us,

***The Flame of Hope family***

