



FLAME OF HOPE

[A home for physically & intellectually challenged]

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Dear Friends,

Time mercilessly flies away (and mercifully for those who long for 'Eternal City'). I apologize for being so late and irregular with the news, but I don't promise to improve on that either. I almost got paralyzed realizing that if I delay any longer the volumes I will have to write will not fit in an ordinary envelope. So here we are according to our camera's records.

1. PICNIC IN DARJEELING ZOO.



All in one before the entrance to ZOO

An event that still pops out of their memory at any time, sometimes in the form of imitating animals, other times in sharing the photos with whoever



Parish priest is lifting Akash to show him fish

comes.

What most they liked was the aquarium with the colorful fish and of course monkeys (though they can see them outside the ZOO as well).



Our future picnic



Meena advertising masala dosa

But above all the **toy train!** (It's not in ZOO). To whoever come next- we have to take the children for a toy train ride! Some never did it, some forgot already and the rest don't mind to repeat the pleasure.

On the end of this euphoria trip we had a glorious meal in Glenary shop- **masala dosa**. Meena's picture doesn't need any commentary on to what rapture the masala dosa carried her away.

2. LUCIA'S VISIT.

They were still fresh after the ZOO experience when we had a lovely visit of Lucia, who spared few days out of her long voluntary



Coconut breaking



Children show to Lucia pictures from outing to ZOO

service in Calcutta. Children are the best indicators of any situation and any guest. The fact that they stacked to her like bees on the honey comb told us more than any recommendation letter. We had a solemn coconut breaking, of course done by Usha (an expert from Kerala- the country of coconuts) and many other games and fun.

3. PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY IN SILIGURI AREA.

Now...we pull out 'the big fish'.



Pastor is handing over the keys

We have been dreaming for a while already (don't get wrong impression that we have long nights because it was a day dreaming) of setting another home (family) in the plains, near Siliguri. We have been looking for a suitable place but found none. Lastly we gave up the dream believing that God doesn't dream the same way and "if God does not build the house, in vain is your early rising, your going later to rest". I even got comfortable with that, now that we began to have easier life, with everything set up properly. It doesn't speak well of me, I know, but human nature tends to be easy going.

But... our searching in vain was rewarded by God- **Him finding the place for us**. God is perfect, so is the place He chose for us. There is one acre of land in peaceful surroundings with some buildings there and with road access (living in the Hills I became obsess with roads). There are even mango trees full of fruit because it is a season for mango, banana and jack fruit, guava and one more I can't remember the name.



The new property

Still, there are so many potentialities for development the area. But the real potentials lie in the fact that we are close to so many poor families living on the river bank whose whole day's occupation is to break stones and collect sand and that for no reward but miserable payment. I already can see the purpose of our coming there. God has not only pointed out to us the place but He also provided in a



Ciaciu is plucking mango.



First crop from new property.

marvelous and miraculous way so that we were able to purchase the whole object. For certain reasons I am not able to disclose the details (I suppose the curiosity might bring some of you here to hear 'the details'...most welcome). All I can say is: **THANKS TO GOD** and **THANKS TO EVERYONE** who took up the challenge and helped us with raising the funds. It is just incredible how it all worked out. Truly, 'nothing is impossible to God'. I recall the days when I thought of myself gone mad. It seemed altogether too much for us. When we were praying with children for the new project in Siliguri I was not able to give to God any hint -what we want, how we want. God had to work it all out **all by HIMSELF**. I pass to you this **golden advice** for your supplicatory prayers. Till the last moment before the registration day, which was fixed on **13 May**, we were counting Rupees to the last paisa= penny (we did not take in account the fees for different persons and purposes: lawyers, registration etc). And then, without a notice everything fell in its place and we victoriously could hand over the payment and take back the keys and the Deed of Conveyance where was clearly written that from now on the land belongs to **FLAME OF HOPE**. Believe me or not- even the cheque book arrived only on the morning of the registration day. We had applied earlier because the old one was finished but the bank send the order for printing to Calcutta and that delayed the process.

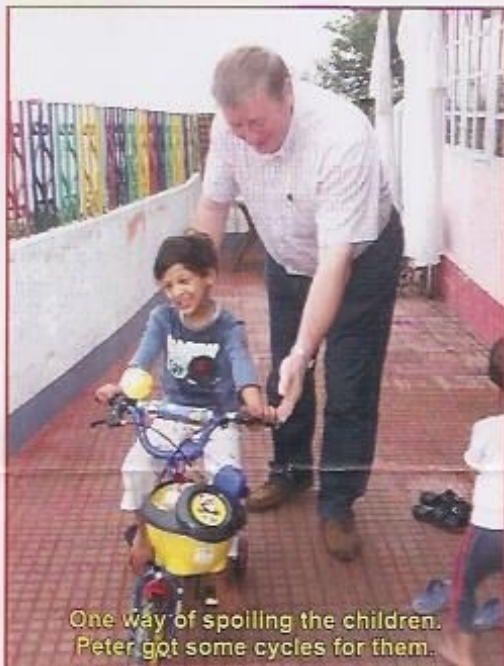
But finally, the confusion and nervous tension turned into a sea of calm- God's doing indeed and not ours. Because God is perfect so His doings are perfect, beyond our imaginations, calculations, speculations and expectations. Though we don't write the particular names, we remember you all, **name by name**, before the Lord.

4. VISIT OF PETER and ANN.

No sooner they reached the kangaroos and koala bears jumped out of their Australian bag. They were overwhelmed no less than the children. Here the joy of giving and the joy of receiving bang on each other.



Ann distributing koala and kangaroo



One way of spoiling the children.
Peter got some cycles for them.

The miracles God performs in 'our compound' are different in kind but they can be summed up with one description- **God's love unites**. There is nothing to put barricade: not language difference or age or culture or social status. Peter kept on saying: 'in these two days I want to spoil these children' (in positive sense) and I remembered words of Mother Teresa when someone criticized her work saying she is spoiling the poor. She answered: 'there are many who spoil the rich; few who spoil the poor'. So I let him spoil our children. We knew Peter and Ann from e-mail conversations. We first 'met' electronically when the fraction of our land collapsed in landslide. That was the day Peter wrote to me 'how can I help you?'. As luck would have it or rather as God's Providence would have it, he has a business here, in India, called "Rapidwallsystem" (I am not making it up) and what more we needed in that particular day than to construct and do it rapidly a solid wall?! They played their role in buying the property in Siliguri and were extremely enthusiastic to see it as it is and 'see' it in future.

5. **FR. ABRAHAM**- after a sudden collapse of health he was admitted to hospital and next...to our home- unusual CHILD, though in many ways like our children. He is still with us, recuperating, getting his strength back, with promising future. We are not only happy to have him with us; we are greatly privileged to assist him in whatever way necessary. Those who know father personally will be happy to see him walking with bright smile.

And coming to end, we too, greet you with bright smiles, caused by ice-cream of course but first and foremost by all the love they receive from you.



Father taking afternoon walk



With love in return

Flame of hope family

Ar A Francesca