



Focus on Madagascar

June 2018

PRAYER POINTS

Give thanks for:

1. The 39 fistula patients operated on.
2. The dedication of the village church foundations.
3. Continued health and protection.

Please pray for:

1. For the 39 women- their total healing: physically, emotionally and spiritually.
2. That the village church will also grow in maturity as the building work continues.
3. Peace and stability in Madagascar so that the country has a chance to develop.

Update: it was good to meet with the department of education and request some help for Jorez during her exams. We were well received but, as of yet, we have had no response. I have prescribed the equivalent of a magnifier in some reading glasses and a very kind colleague in the UK is making up the glasses for her. This will at least give Jorez the best possible vision during the exams.

A Walk to Beautiful: in the west, good accessible antenatal and obstetric care means that most women do not have to suffer long complicated labour. Here in Madagascar, along with other nations, many women live in villages several days walk from a surgical centre. They may be in labour for several days and then lose the baby, suffering terrible internal damage in the process. Many women die in childbirth, but those who survive are often left with ruptures in their bladder and/or bowels (fistula). This means that they are constantly passing urine and/or faeces. They smell terribly and are outcasts in society. Over the past two weeks, the hospital's surgical team has been working flat out during a visit from Dr. Ambaye, an Ethiopian fistula surgeon. 39 women were operated on and are now recovering at the hospital. If you have a spare 51 minutes, please watch "*A Walk to Beautiful*", a documentary available on YouTube. It highlights the plight of these women and how the surgery and the love and attention they receive is life changing.

Church Foundations

Our little village church is still meeting in the temporary building, but we have raised enough money for the foundation stones to start building the new church on the land we previously purchased. After a short dedication service, digging of the outline of the church began and was followed by a shared lunch for all the members. I attempted a few minutes digging, but the ground was so hard, so I retreated to help chop cucumbers instead: a much more pleasant job!

Kids Club

Having finished the taught program a few weeks ago, the children enjoyed a picnic day out. I am still amazed when I see more than 200 children sitting so beautifully together in family groups, sharing a meal of rice and sauce, the older children helping the younger children. The picnic experience here in Madagascar is very different from the British picnic. The similarities of course, are that the children just love running around and playing games. It is such a lovely opportunity for them. Last Sunday's closing service was fantastic, with the children singing their hearts out.

Madagascar

Elections are planned in Madagascar for later this year. Over the past month, there has been some unrest, mainly in Tana, in protest of the rules around candidacy for the elections. There have been demonstrations and strikes including at government ministries responsible for dealing with our team paperwork. Please pray for Madagascar, that peaceful solutions may be found and stability restored. It was such a privilege, once again to be able to celebrate National Day, 26th June with our Malagasy colleagues. After last year's tragic events, it was good to see that lessons had been learnt and there was a sensible police presence during the evenings' lantern parade and firework display. During a short reflection before festivities, we were reminded that no matter which country we are from, God is in control and it is Him we serve.



Vicky Hopley
Missionary Optometrist
Serving at the Good News
Hospital in Madagascar
with

Friends of Mandritsara
Trust UK

www.mandritsara.org.uk

Registered Office:

29 Priory Road
Needingworth
Cambridgeshire
PE27 4SD

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Postal Address:

Hopitaly Vaovao Mahafaly
BP12, Mandritsara 415
Madagascar
Tel: 00261330802645
Email:
vickyhopley@gmail.com

Sending Church:

St Mary's, Ponteland
office@pontelandstmary.co.uk

Supporting Church:

Frontline, Liverpool