



Christmas 2011

St. Francis Children's Care Organization

"Hope - sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible"

Dear Friends and Supporters of Addis Hope,

Each year as I compose the Christmas letter I contemplate again the generosity of those who comprise our donor base. I am sure that each of you has been affected in varying degrees by the serious decline in the global economy these past years. Yet, you choose to continue supporting Addis Hope to whatever level your own situation allows. I will attempt in this note to let you know how much your generosity has made a difference to the children in our program.

My colleague (and founder of the program,) Ruth Girmay continues her tireless efforts to stretch our limited resources to educate and feed 200 students each year – a huge difference from ten years ago, when on her own she opened the first school with just 15 students. Her faith is admirable. There have been times this past year when our balance was so low that it was questionable as to whether we could pay salaries or buy food for the single hot meal of the day that we provide for the students. As always, you prove to her that her faith is well-founded. A decade later, you, our donor partners, can take credit for the fact that more than 1,000 students have gone on to meet the criteria for admission into the government schools which have a limited number of seats.

If life wasn't enough of a struggle, this year some of the makeshift mud and straw houses that our children lived in were razed to make way for condos. Most of these students now live in lean-tos made of scrap metal, cardboard and plastic tarps. Our school is the only stability in their impoverished lives. (Learn more about their situation on our website, www.addis-hope.com)

Looking farther into the future than next year, it strikes me that almost all our donors are connected to me by vocation or family ties. This year I face additional medical challenges that make me more aware than ever that Ruth and I need to find ways to expand the donor base and to create a sustainable source of income for years to come. It is encouraging that an Italian Catholic non-governmental organization has recognized the value of the program and is awaiting Ethiopian government registration so as to begin its support for Addis Hope. We continue to follow up with other possible funding sources. While we have no firm commitment, we are hoping for the provision of funds that will stabilize our "cash flow," as precarious as it is. I would love to write in my next Christmas letter that this has been realized.

As we enter the eleventh year of the program, we do not know all the challenges that await us. Our future will likely be influenced by the political instability in many parts of the world, (Africa included,) the failing economies in many first world countries, and our donors' changing financial situations. I simply ask that you continue your generous support to whatever degree you are able, whether that is done financially or through prayer or both. In return, I beseech our Heavenly Father that at this holy season, He will bestow peace and abundant blessings on you and your loved ones.

Fraternally,
Brother Gregory Flynn (Jack)



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Addis Hope Donation Form

(Donations are not tax-deductible.)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

AMOUNT: _____

EMAIL: _____

(Acknowledgement of donations will be made by e-mail where possible.)

Please make checks payable to:

C. B. Community Melrose – Addis Hope

Donations should be mailed to:

Addis Hope Fund Administration
9550 South Ocean Drive, Apt 605
Jensen Beach, FL 34957