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Newsletter #13

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE?

Merry Christmas!

Once again we use this time of the year to reflect on the year that has been and all the wonderful moments we have been blessed with.

Emma has recently returned home from Zambia and we are very proud of all the work she has done this year at the City of Joy. Emma shares her reflection in this issue.

Melissa and Romina will continue their work at Don Bosco Technical school, Pnomh Penh and return home early in 2015. We wish them all the very best for their final few months in Cambodia.

The Samoa Immersion was a highlight this year as we returned for the fourth Immersion in Samoa. It was once again a wonderful experience that truly immersed our young people into the beautiful culture and country of Samoa.

The Cagliero Project receives so much support from so many different people and we thank each and every person for any time, prayers and donations that have gone towards supporting our program.

Most importantly we thank our volunteers as without them this program would not exist. Their generosity is humbling. We wish those that are returning many blessings for their future adventure and look forward to 2015 with new volunteers setting off on new adventures!

We hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to being in touch in the New Year.

Many Blessings,

Jess and Lauren



Lauren and Jess

Wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year!

City of Joy, Zambia

A volunteer perspective

By Emma Smith

EMMA VOLUNTEERED THIS
YEAR IN ZAMBIA AT THE
CITY OF JOY



Flying in I was overwhelmed with a sense of adrenaline, adventure and nervousness. Volunteering is to head into the unknown. You arrive in Lusaka, to a hub of life, marketplaces, rich smells and a wave of people. Zambian people are so friendly; it's embedded within every facet of their culture. They immediately make you feel welcome and at home and this feeling remained throughout my 10 month stay in Zambia where I was based in the small town of Mazabuka, 2 hours south of Lusaka. I volunteered at the City of Joy, a home for girls at risk run by the Salesian Sisters where currently there are 28 young girls residing. Many of these girls are orphaned or experienced extreme hardship in their young lives. My role was to provide peer-to-peer support, tutor and teach classes based on their school curriculum. These girls were wonderful and truly inspiring. I will never forget how beautifully they sing, their playfulness, their hardworking and dedicated attitudes, each girl carrying their own quirks and individual talents.

During my time I was also a leader and a major part of the oratory, which at times housed up to 250 people. The oratory offers various sports such as: basketball, soccer, netball, table tennis and volleyball. The oratory provides a much-needed escape to the local children and is a home away from home. It truly embraces the Don Bosco spirit and is a place for all young people; encompassing prayer time and an opportunity for young people to play, interact, make friends and learn in a safe and comforting environment. It is here that I learnt the true importance of presence; when I was leaving a child said 'Thank you for been here, just knowing you were here and seeing your smiling face made me happy.' This really resonated with me, knowing just a smile can reassure someone and make his or her day.

One of the experiences I learned a lot from is community living. I lived in community with the Salesian Sisters, volunteers from diverse backgrounds and the City of Joy community. Within Zambian culture there is a huge emphasis on community as it is a huge foundation of which societal structures is built on, people share what is theirs and live communally with each other. Within my community, meals and other duties were communal; everyone ate together, learned together and was housed together. This created a family like environment, so essential to the girls' vitality and overall well-being. You never felt alone, you knew someone would always be there; this in itself is very comforting. As well as experiencing culture, I got to experience Zambia itself. I saw a wonder of the world Victoria Falls. Heaven on Earth, it is truly a marvel to gaze at. I travelled also with the leaders for spiritual camps and leadership training.

While City of Joy is a fantastic place, without the support of volunteers, generous donations of all varieties, ongoing fundraising and the Salesian co-operators, it would not be possible. Volunteers provide new perspectives and ideas, as well as giving the girls positive role models that they can talk and relate to. I cannot emphasise enough just how important each one of the extraordinary volunteers I met were, each bringing something new and exciting.

Emma's story of her time in Zambia is inspiring and shows what a positive impact presence can have on young people's lives. We thank Emma for the 10 months she dedicated to volunteering at the City of Joy.

Remembering 2014...





We thank all those that have supported the Cagliero Project this year and volunteer placements in Cambodia, Samoa, Thailand, The Solomon Islands and Zambia.

May this Christmas be full of joy and that the New Year brings much happiness.

May the star of Christmas shine upon you your family this Christmas.

