

May 8, 2009 from Blantyre, Malawi

Hello beloved prayer partners,

Charlie and I write this to you with our hearts so full of joy at God's blessing with this ministry to our beautiful village orphan girls. We have just spent the most glorious day with these amazing teenagers! They are so intelligent, so focused and determined to be the best daughters they can be for God. Two of the nine want to be doctors, they all have high aspirations to be educated. And their dreams are becoming reality thanks to the support of Miqlat and their sponsors. Glory!

Let me just tell you a couple of funny snippets from our day. First of all, you must remember that these girls have never experienced having electricity or running water. So even our very humble accommodations here at Chichiri Lodge have completely dazzled them! Their daily routine involves fetching large heavy buckets of water from the borehole near the Hope Center. Imagine their complete delight when they simply turn a little handle and water comes out! And when we told them that HOT water comes out of the other faucet, they were simply amazed. They jumped a foot when we had flushed the toilet to demonstrate it, the concept was completely new. You SIT on a toilet??? Who would have ever thought of such a thing? Such joy to watch them adjust to conveniences we take for granted.

So after we have totally overloaded the girls with the delights of running water, we take them to the local Shoprite (a medium sized grocery store) to shop for the items we need to cook for tomorrow. Their eyes were stretched as wide as you can imagine to gaze upon all the items available for sale. Salad dressing? Who buys such things? They simply loved the excursion and took great delight in pushing around a shopping cart. What kind of crazy person thought of putting meat inside of cellophane packages? Bagging the groceries was a huge treat, and they were quite proud of themselves for surviving the Shoprite experience.

Then we took them to an outdoor restaurant and ordered pizza. We must have heard them practicing saying the word pizza a hundred times. We had mixed reactions to the pizza, but they all agreed it was "nice". Sausage was the winner. But the most fun part of our excursion was when Papa Charlie treated us all to an ice cream cone. The expression on their faces was priceless when they tasted ice cream for the first time in their lives. When we explained that the cone was a cookie and they could eat it too, there were whoops of delight. One girl ate her cone in two huge bites. Big sticky grins all around!

We had a sweet time this evening talking about prayer, and then our beautiful girls were grateful to head off to bed. Their poor tired brains simply couldn't absorb one more amazing thing.

Charlie and I are blessed beyond all reason to have the opportunity to love these girls with the perfect love of Jesus. Thank you, thank you for your prayer coverage for this retreat. We could never do this without the spiritual and financial support from you. The accommodations at the lodge were not fully resolved, but we are making the best of it, and the girls are safe and happy. We will be sending photos tomorrow of "Charlie's Angels" so you can see these faces for yourself.

Love,
Laurette and Charlie