

Link Letter No.13 November 2012

Hi you guys!

Well what a summer you have had in the UK?! First a four day weekend for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, and then the summer of sport with the Olympics and Paralympics! I kept seeing pictures of different friends holding the Olympic torch, or being at different venues as they were there watching!

I have to admit that I was a little jealous indeed to have missed it all! But then I thought, how amazing that I was here in South Sudan last year when it gained its independence, and we can't have everything we want can we? But I hope you have all had fun over this time!

I have been thinking about something a lot recently, and that is child rights! I am sure you have heard of them. Every nation who signed a special document about this agreed that children are very special, but sometimes are not treated as well as you should be. Therefore we adults need to do something to make sure that you are all able to grow as God intended, to be able to be involved in life as God intended, not to be hurt,

Sunday school teachers learning about rights and responsibilities



Ruth Radley CMS mission partner **South Sudan**

Ruth is a CMS mission partner seconded to the Children's Department of Across and serving in Yei, South Sudan. Across is an interdenominational Christian NGO that has worked in Sudan for over 30 years. Ruth's ministry involves a wide range of issues from developing child protection policies to trauma workshops to training Sunday school teachers. The years of war in Sudan make this work so vital to a future generation of Sudanese.

but to be cared for during all the years you are growing – your parents and others who care for you have a huge responsibility, and it is not always easy for them either!

But did you know that you don't have rights alone? No one has rights alone! The reason anyone has any rights are because we believe that people have a dignity which needs to be protected – and as Christians, we believe that this dignity comes because we are made in the image of God, and that needs protecting.

Can you think of some salt! What would happen to

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Playing a game to learn more...



Looking at things that cost little, to make toys from

your body if you ONLY ate salt? Hmmm, yes, you would die (and it would taste horrible!)! It would be very dangerous to eat only salt, like a poison in your body. But, what would happen if you ate NO salt at all – yes, again you would die! Oh my goodness, that's a funny thing isn't it? Our bodies need some salt to be able to function well and you will be eating it without realising it, in crisps, bread and other things, so you don't need to worry! But alone, salt is dangerous. I think that's a little bit like rights. If we only know we have rights, then we are in the dangerous position of thinking that we are the only important ones, and so long as we get what we need, it doesn't matter about anyone else.

But we know that Jesus shows us a different life. Jesus shows us that it is important to think about other people, to love

them as we love ourselves. This is what led Jesus to allow Himself to die on the cross before He rose again three days later. Jesus had done nothing wrong, yet He allowed Himself to die so that we could choose to have a friendship with God and talk to Him about all things, especially when we do things which are wrong and ask God to forgive us. When we choose to be a Christian, one of the things we choose is to ask God's Holy Spirit to make us more like Jesus.

All through the bible God tells us that we have to protect children, and I believe that these rights are one way in which children are protected, but I also think that if we don't also teach you something which goes with the rights, then we are not being fair to you!

Like we talked about the salt on its own without other nutrients being dangerous, I believe so can we be dangerous, knowing that we have rights without realising that we also have responsibilities. ***But what do I mean by that? Well...***

- If we have a right to live in a clean environment, we also have a responsibility to keep it clean, to put things in the rubbish bins when we have finished with them, to help with the cleaning of our environment too.
- If we have the right to go to school, then we have the responsibility to do our best and to go every day.

With Anita and Hilda, and the yummy cakes we made for the 40th celebrations





This was part of the road on the first day; by the fourth day we had rain and it was much worse!



Can you see the road?

■ If we have the right to a healthy diet, then we have a responsibility to eat the food given to us, not to waste food and not to eat too many sweets or drink too much coke...

Do you get the idea?

Understanding that we have responsibilities as well as rights helps us to live more like Jesus would like us to live. If we have a right not to be treated differently because of the colour of our skin, or the language we use, our faith or things we can or can't do, then we have a responsibility not to treat anyone else differently to us. As we do this, we start to see everyone as equal, which leads us to seeing that everyone is as important as we are, and also needs to be treated well. If we all thought like that in the world, there would be a lot less sadness and hurt around.

Other news...

Sam and I have done a number of trainings over the last few weeks in the communities. For one, I had to drive us, but we had to go on a very bad road as the bridge was broken! One day we went this way, and I did manage to get over the river without getting stuck in it or damaging the car, but I didn't want to do that every day so we used the other road! It got worse and worse each day we went that way, and sometimes we were slipping all over the place, but it was fun! When we go on these journeys, we always talk and laugh a lot as we go!

We have had a fun time here celebrating the organisation (Across)

that I work for 40th anniversary! Across was set up way back in 1972 and for all that time, even when the war was on, there were people working within Across and travelling in and out of the country (they were not allowed to live here at one time) to work with people and share the love of Jesus. It is amazing to be here, knowing how many people in the past have also worked here and to see what they have done. Please pray that as we continue into the next few years, we also continue to be like Jesus to people, speaking like He would, and doing the things that He wants us to do.

I am going to stop writing now, but why don't you think about your responsibilities for a while, look at these 'rights' that you have as a child, and think about what your responsibilities might be with each one.

You can write your responsibilities and even draw a picture on the last page of this letter as you think about them.

Lots of love to you all

Ruth

Thinking about about your rights and responsibilities, what are they for each one?

■ I have the right to good health care

■ And the responsibility to...

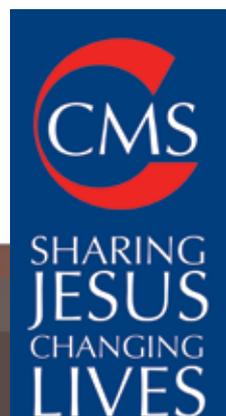
■ I have the right to share my view and for it to be listened to by others and taken seriously

■ And the responsibility to...

■ I have the right to be loved and protected from harm

■ And the responsibility to...

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