

CMS

VICTORIA

branch matters

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**Lives Transformed
by Jesus love**

Proclaiming life through Christ





Paul Arnott

Just Dust on the Scales!

The death of Libyan despot Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, which will be old news by the time you read this, reminds us of the transience of human leadership.

Even though Gaddafi was in power in Libya for 42 years his passing is a timely reminder that ultimate power is in the hands of One far wiser and stronger, and that 42 years is but a breath in terms of eternity.

As we, this Christmas, reflect on the first coming of Christ into our world and long and pray for his second coming, let's take time to think about God's bigger plan.

The prophet Isaiah writes, *"All the nations of the world are but a drop in the bucket. They are nothing more than dust on the scales. He picks up the whole earth as though it were a grain of sand ... The nations of the world are worth nothing to him. In his eyes they count for less than nothing — mere emptiness and froth."* (Isaiah 40:15, 17)

Many of us will remember the leadership of Winston Churchill, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr and Robert Menzies. However, most leaders have had feet of clay. Nations and national leaders can appear impressive, but are quickly gone.

Isaiah reminds us that compared to God human authority is puny, flawed and weak. The prophet likens them to "a drop of water falling back into the cistern when the bucket is pulled up or a speck of dust on the pan of the balance scales that does not even cause the scales to flutter."¹

This kind of power fails to impress God. Jesus modelled the kind of leadership that God wants, that of the servant who lays down his life for the sake of others, not someone who lords it over people. One who was prepared to come into our world in the form of a baby and to lay aside his authority as the Second Person of the Trinity for our sake. May we live lives of service which follow in the footsteps of Jesus.



Image: Libyans celebrating a new era of freedom

Earnest graduated from a Bible College in Pakistan in 1990 and has had a remarkable ministry of distributing Bibles since then.

Earnest joined the Bible Institute after a dream that led him to thinking that God was calling him to serve. He was hungry for more knowledge of the word of God, so he could work for the Lord more effectively.

Upon graduation he set himself a goal to distribute 50,000 Bibles or New Testaments. It took him until 16 June this year to complete his target - 42,000 New Testaments and 8,000 Bibles! Only 10% of the recipients were Christian.

Earnest began his ministry in a Christian hospital in the remote mountain area, where none of the patients were Christian. He would pray and share with the patients, alongside performing his administrative tasks.

After two and a half years he moved to a large city to work with a team which sold literature and Bibles in the street. Here he served for six and a half years, learning how to answer difficult questions and to point people to the merciful heart of God. He learnt how to show respect, and to ask questions to arouse interest and awaken people to think about spiritual matters.

In 1998 he began selling Bibles on his own as a full-time ministry. He worked from 9 till 4, six days a week, taking a bag of Urdu and English Bibles with him each day. He walked through markets, bus stops and visited chai shops.

One day as he was selling Bibles in the bazaar, a policeman came to him and



Image: Local bazaar

stopped his work. He was apparently upset, not just to see the Bibles on sale, but that people were buying them. He pushed him away from the place. Earnest remarked that he did not need to push him, as he would willingly go. After two weeks, as Earnest was passing by the same spot, the policeman stopped him as he wanted to apologise, and admitted that what he did was wrong. Earnest had a good chance to share with him more about his work.

When asked if his work has been affected by the last ten years of unrest and terrorism in the country, Earnest emphatically answered "No", and that actually more people are interested to read the Bible to look for answers for life issues. He even mentioned that College students are curious to read, and he says that this is something new.

Earnest has persevered in a hard ministry. He is always looking for lost souls. Few have patience and resolve to serve Jesus the way he is doing.

1. John Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah Chapters 40-66, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, p61.

Global mission, locally



by Andrew Harper, Vicar, Holy Trinity Upwey

Upwey Parish is linked with CMS Missionaries Ken and Ally Thompson in Cambodia, but also have other connections with Cambodia, which have led to links with Cambodian people in Australia.

It has been quite interesting and exciting for us at Holy Trinity Anglican Church Upwey to see how a number of Kingdom passions have revolved around the country and people of Cambodia. We of course support CMS missionaries, Ken and Ally Thompson.

Mary, one of our church members, travelled to Cambodia several years ago on a holiday, and has a number of Cambodian folk at her place of work. She has been praying for this country for several years. Another church member Jenny, participated in the TEAR summer educational tour of Cambodia in January 2011. We share in several TEAR projects around Phnom Penh.

We held our first Cambodia dinner in July. A fantastic all age community of 85 people enjoyed a Cambodian feast prepared by Mary's Cambodian friends, who wore beautifully coloured traditional costumes. We had a quiz to help us learn some facts and figures and customs about the country. We had flags, photos, and Cambodian music. Jenny spoke about her TEAR trip, and helped us understand some of the very complex matters regarding development.

We were brought up to date with some of the issues facing Ken and Ally Thompson in Modulkiri. We heard how Ken and Ally are making a difference in the name of Jesus Christ. And we prayed for the goodness of God's Kingdom to be released into this beautiful, but still hurting country.

Some of our older Cambodian guests told us, mostly in private conversation, some of their memories and experiences of the Killing Fields, from the Khmer Rouge murderous regime under Pol Pot. We are considering how we may continue our relationship with these people in Melbourne, who still carry the memories of this terrible legacy. They have been so excited that we want to do something, even if it is small and grassroots, to support their country.

Here at Holy Trinity Upwey, we have seen our God work through a number of means to focus our missional and development involvement on one country. This has led us to form the beginning of relationships with another cultural community in Melbourne, and a great chance to build Christian community.

As we look outside of ourselves with the great news of the Kingdom of God, our own lives are being enriched and matured. Praise be to God!



Ally Thompson holding a baby

Check out the recent amazing story from Ally of delivering a baby.
Go to www.cms.org.au/vic

Tell us about this Jesus man!

Carolyn English is a CMS Affiliate working in rural Cambodia teaching hygiene and ante-natal classes. She has visited Cambodia for the past three years. This article is from her last trip. Please pray that she will be given the opportunity to further this work.

Neak kroo, neak kroo' (teacher, teacher), tell us about this Jesus man greeted us on Monday morning when we arrived to begin the second week of training classes."

I was training traditional birthing attendants (TBA's) from the remote commune of Beuong Pram. They had been sponsored by the Christian NGO for whom I was working to come to town for two weeks for both training and retraining. Of the six, two were Christians and members of the church in the commune.

Six very excited women greeted me and Meiling (my wonderful translator) that morning. Why? Because on the Sunday a tuk tuk had been organised to collect them from their accommodation and bring them to church where they had heard the gospel message of the love of Jesus.

"My heart is very full of love. I want to know more about this Jesus person – who is he, what does he do as he has made me feel so happy?" "Can you get this book for me, the Bible, so I can read more about Jesus?"

Can you imagine how hard it is to impart the gospel message when your Khmer is poor? After many attempts to explain in my limited words I handed it to Meiling to tell them about the message of Jesus in the breaks we had during our daily teaching time. They sat transfixed, asked heaps of questions, made many comments about the "lively" service they had attended – the

music was alive, people clapped, and "neak kroo, you were off somewhere else!". Yes, the Spirit was very much moving in that service; it had an impact on me too. My friend had tears rolling down her face and I was close to being the same. It was a powerful message that day.

As the week of teaching was coming to a close, one of the younger women was given the Bible she requested. She was one of the few in the group who could read and write.

On visiting the commune in late November, I attended the church service. There was that same young woman, clutching her much handled Bible. In the space of just a few weeks she had given her life to "this Jesus man".

The two women who were already Christians made comment that their faith was now much stronger than before they came to Battambang. The big smiles on their faces told it all. One had been battling frustration & anger. We had provided her with some counselling whilst in Battambang. She too was happy and now coping better with her family issues. God had worked in many lives that Sunday.

Not only did the six women get training in how to deliver babies safely, but they had the opportunity to hear the message of the saving grace of Jesus. It is not often we get such an opportunity to share the gospel, but for Meiling and me it was one we gladly accepted. What a privilege!



TBA learning neo-natal health care

What's On

Dates for Your Diary this

December
January

Tavis and Kate Beer's Commissioning

Wednesday 11 January at Glen Waverley Anglican Please join Tavis and Kate for a BBQ (gold coin donation) at 5:30 pm and Commissioning at 7 pm. Please RSVP for catering tkbeer@cms.org.au

1MPG (First Monday Prayer Group)

doesn't meet in December and will return in February. Call Hugh Prentice on 9014 0968 for more information.

Missionary Care Fellowship (MCF)

meets on Wednesday 14 December at 10.15am starting with morning tea. Liz Hawthorne will be the guest speaker. Everyone is welcome, but please bring your own lunch. More details from Marjorie Linton on 9497 1605.

Neville and Elspeth Carr's Farewell

Sunday 29 January at St Alfred's, Blackburn North at 2.30pm followed by afternoon tea. Please bring a plate to share.

All events will be held at the CMS Centre, 9-13 Queen Street, Blackburn, unless otherwise indicated.

Comings and Goings

Coming Home

Monday 5 December Lesley Doy
 Sunday 11 December J&D
 Saturday 4 January Lynne Clarke
 Tuesday 10 January Judith Raisbeck
 Friday 27 January Darren Hindle

Going Out

Friday 21 January Kate and Tavis Beer

Darren Hindle trip to Japan

Darren has just finished his law/commerce degree in Melbourne and will be working at the Australian Taxation Office next year (as a tax collector perhaps). Darren is preparing for long-term mission in Japan, and is currently in Japan, spending six weeks with TEAM Japan in a church teaching conversational English. Add Darren to Day 20 of your Prayer Diary

Are you up to speed with our missionaries?

What pieces of communication from CMS you most enjoy reading. What many CMS members look out for are the missionary prayer points and newsletters. These provide a real sense of the ministries in which our missionaries are engaged and aid our prayer. Recently we discovered that some people didn't realise how easy it was to subscribe to these via email. All you have to do is **log on** to the CMS website and **subscribe** to monthly Missionary Prayer Points or Quarterly Newsletters. Try it...

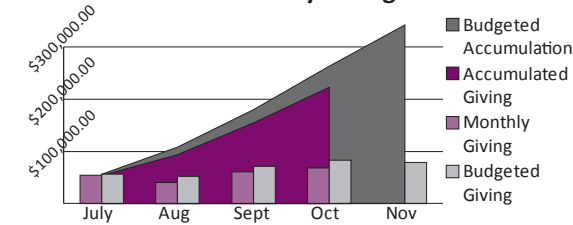
www.cms.org.au/get-involved/subscribe



Thanksgiving for Beryl Smith

Give thanks for the life of Beryl Smith, wife of the late Cyril, and a faithful CMS supporter over many years. Beryl died on 24 October aged 101 years.

CMS Monthly Giving



Praise God for the \$64,700 given in October and \$216,200 so far this financial year. We are however, \$43,300 behind budget in giving. Please pray for CMS Vic finances.

Summer Under The Sun Changes...

At SUTS this year we have Nicky Chiswell leading worship with her band. She will not be using a choir as she commenced rehearsals in October.

My Thanksgiving Gift

MoneyMatters

Yes! I want to donate to CMS to help proclaim life through Christ:

- Here is my cheque/money order payable to CMS – Victoria Inc.
 Please debit my credit card. Visa MasterCard

Card no:

Card holder name:

Signature:

Expiry date:

Amount:

Name:

Address:

State: P/c: Phone:

Thank you for
your partnership in mission!

Please return this form to: Reply Paid 410, Blackburn VIC 3130 BM – DEC 11/JAN12



CMS gives you the opportunity to invest in the perfect gift – people! Everything in the **Looking for the Perfect Gift?** catalogue directly supports the spread of the gospel.

At CMS our vision is to see God's Church growing in all the world as lives and communities are transformed by Christ. Our missionaries work in five strategic areas of ministry:

Church-based ministry, Student ministry, Leadership training,
Mission in Muslim areas, Development and Caring

Drawn from CMS's bursaries and grants budget, each of the gifts in the **Looking for the Perfect Gift?** catalogue supports one of these vital areas of gospel ministry.

If the gift you choose is over-funded, your money will go into CMS's general fund, to support the costs of our missionaries on the field.

www.cms.org.au/gift-catalogue



CMS Family Festival

Saturday 25 February 12 - 3pm
BBQ lunch and Kids Entertainment
Come and meet newest CMS missionaries
Andrew and Claire Livingstone
Free if you bring a friend who is not a CMS supporter
or \$10 a family
GWAC, 800 Waverley Rd, Glen Waverley

