



Grain of Wheat
INTERNATIONAL

- SINCE 1948 -

“Bringing hope
to children”



NEWS | Winter 2022

Perseverance



CONTENTS

- 4 SOUTH AFRICA**
PERSEVERANCE THROUGH PRAYER
by Director Johan Vos
-
- 6 MYANMAR**
LIVING BEYOND FEAR
by Director Jubilee Thanga
-
- 7 ARGENTINA**
TESTIMONIES OF ENCOURAGEMENT
by Director Marcos Oszurko
-
- 8 ARMENIA**
A YEAR OF FASTING
by Director Karen Ghazaryan
-
- 10 RUSSIA**
THE POWER OF PRAYER
by Director Boukje Fokkema
-
- 11** Pray for the Children
-
- 12** Acknowledgments & Contact

HOW TO SUPPORT US

To support our work among the children:

Switzerland: Wire your donation to this bank account (IBAN): CH72 0900 0000 1748 7675 5

... or send your cheque to:

USA: Grain of Wheat International,
P.O. Box 1125, Wheaton, IL 60187, USA.

UK: Grain of Wheat International,
HSBC, 21 King's Mall, King Street,
Hammersmith, London, W6 0QF, UK.

*Donations made to Grain of Wheat
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www.grainofwheat.org/donate/

EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

In this final newsletter of 2022, we are highlighting some of the challenges that often occur as we minister to children and their families. We may call them problems, or negative experiences, but they can't be ignored and need to be dealt with.

More than ever, this year has brought to light the human and a spiritual aspect of GWI's ministry. We have clearly experienced that, *"our enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, fiercely hungry, seeking someone to devour"* (1 Peter 5:8).

So often his destroying work is aimed at children because he knows that when he harms children, he also harms the family, the community and even a country. Our best weapon against his strategy is prayer. However, we tend to act first, instead of praying. For this reason, we have begun a prayer network to support, protect and strengthen our ministry, as it is simply impossible without prayer to overcome all the challenges we face.

Now and into next year, our greatest need is for you to pray with and for us, as *"the prayer of a righteous believer is able to accomplish much, when put into action and made effective by God—it is dynamic and can have tremendous power"* (James 5:16 AMP).

We can't thank you enough, as your support and prayer have made all the difference in advancing God's Kingdom in the hearts of children worldwide!

We pray that your Christmas is beautiful, and your New Year is filled with God's richest blessings.

Rob Hondsmerk, on behalf of us all.

CEO Grain of Wheat
International





South Africa

4

PERSEVERANCE THROUGH PRAYER

My name is Johan Vos. In 2002, my family and I moved as missionaries to South Africa with the dream of building a Day-care Center that would educate and bless children with the grace and love of Jesus.

Soon after arriving, our hearts were broken by the inescapable suffering due to the abject poverty those in local townships (slums) endure. We began our outreach by providing children at a local daycare center with healthy meals and brought food to many families.

Two years later, we opened the doors of our own Daycare center called *Noah's Ark*. Our goal was to provide an early education for young children in a safe environment and give them a good meal every day. There were so many parents knocking on our door asking if their children could come to our school, that within two years we needed to

move into a larger building. Just a year later, we realized that to accommodate all the children that continued to come to us, we needed a much larger facility.

There are times I forget what has happened in the past, BUT I will never forget the week in December of 2007, when the Lord gave us the idea of a castle school.

Later that day, I made a pencil drawing of what the Lord had put on my mind, then I asked an artist to make a sketch of what he thought a castle school would look like. I was almost in tears when I saw that his sketch was exactly what the Lord had shown me!

The following year, I met with the director of Town planning, who did not show much interest, but told me there were seven acres of land available that had already been zoned for education. To move forward with securing this, he wanted me to help pay for his children's university tuition! Or course the answer was, "no!".

But this was only the beginning of the challenges we would face.

We were convinced that the castle school was God's will and began holding the project up to Him in prayer. There were almost 50 people at our first meeting, but by our third meeting only six people came.



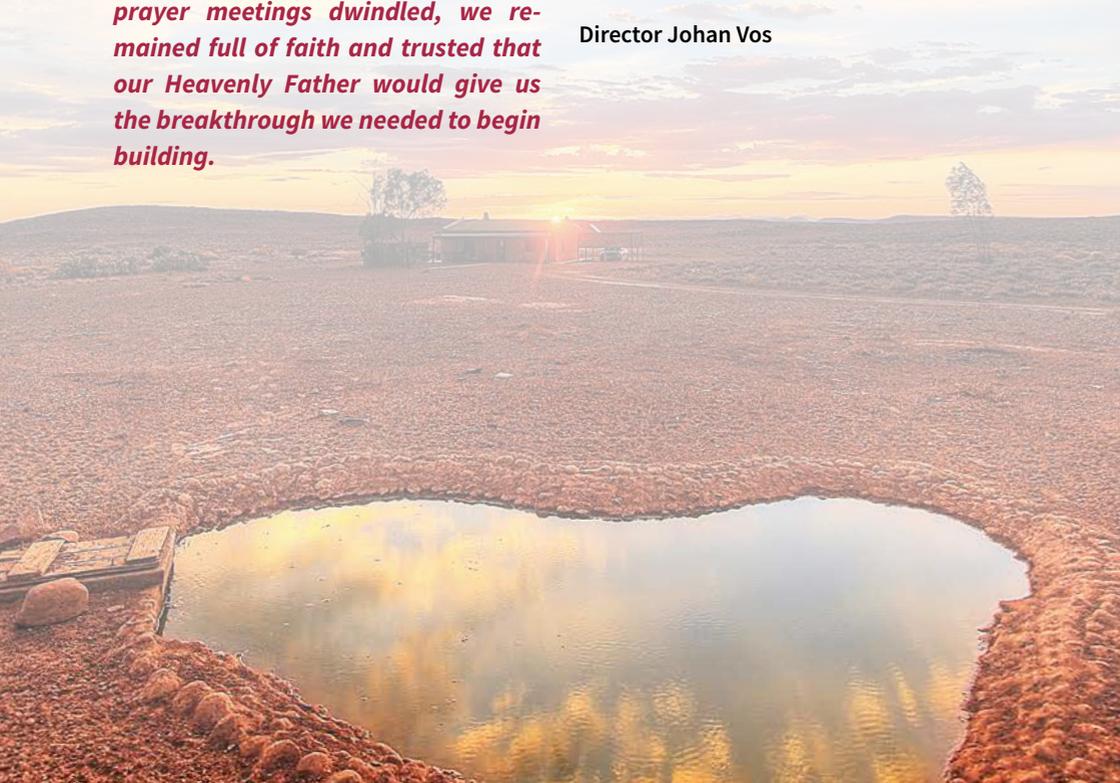
Even though the numbers at our prayer meetings dwindled, we remained full of faith and trusted that our Heavenly Father would give us the breakthrough we needed to begin building.

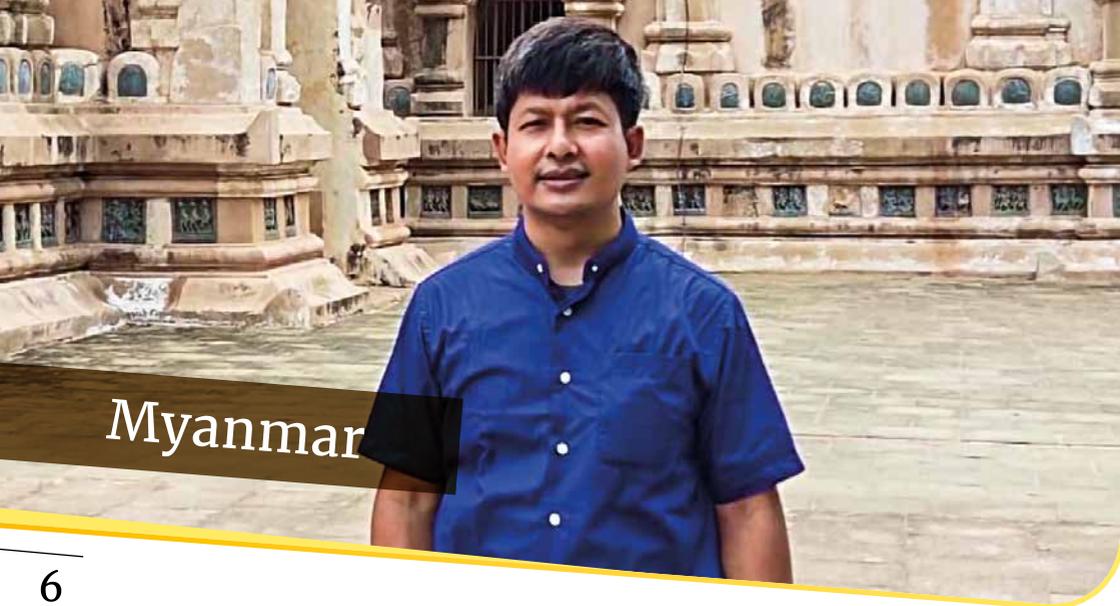
Year after year we continued to pray with those who supported us. Year after year we met with the Municipality. Finally, EIGHT years later, we received a phone call that they had signed off on the building plans!

We will be very honest that over these eight LONG and exceedingly difficult years, we felt extremely lonely at times, as there were misunderstandings and moments of deep hurt. But all along the way, God brought us comfort through our brothers and sisters who surrounded us with the love of Christ and encouraged us by their faithful prayers.

We give God all the glory for the great things He has done, as we would never have been able to stand strong through these challenges to build the castle school by our own efforts. It was His strength and His strength alone that brought us through this experience victoriously!

Director Johan Vos





Myanmar

6

LIVING BEYOND FEAR

If not for God, my ability to serve children in Myanmar would be impossible. First came the military coup, compounded by the pandemic, and now a civil war.

The nation has collapsed, economically and is morally corrupt. Churches have been burned down and over a million have been forced to live in encampments, in the jungle or flee to neighboring countries.

As a director, I was very discouraged and depressed as Covid took the life of my father, many relatives and almost took my life as well. My family and I were grieving, and weak in every way. Throughout this, I leaned on God's Words, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

By the prayers and support of my fellow GWI leaders, my passion to reach the millions of suffering and hopeless children with the eternal hope only Jesus can give was rekindled.

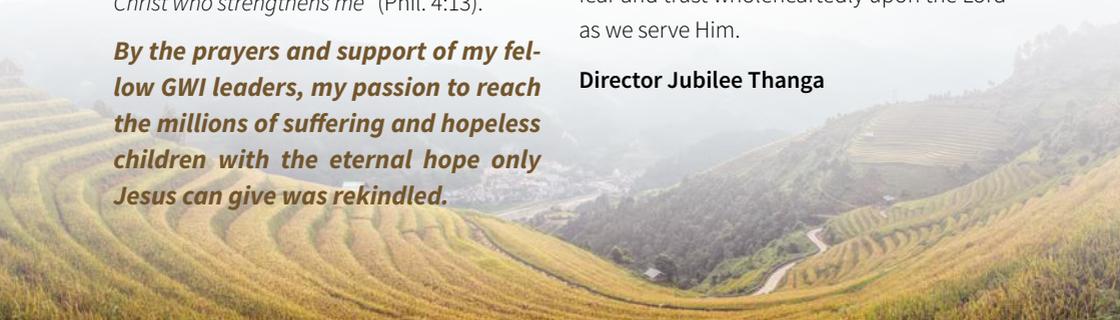
Then the Lord gave me the vision of holding training seminars that would mobilize church leaders to reach and disciple children in their regions.

Now, over 1,200 children's ministry leaders have been trained. Where civil war keeps school closed, we have opened 100 learning centers. 2,100 students are attending class daily in homes and churches until government schools open.

Now, I want to encourage you to live beyond fear, as fear robs us of the power to help the needy. Instead, I urge you to be empowered to help others by trusting God and relying upon Him.

As for me and my family, we will live beyond fear and trust wholeheartedly upon the Lord as we serve Him.

Director Jubilee Thanga





Argentina

7

TESTIMONIES OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Something every country director can be certain of, is facing conflicts, rejection and obstacles. Rosana and I have been no exception to this.

One of the greatest storms we have weathered was being caught in the middle of a church conflict. It was all we could do to resist the temptation to leave, but we were not going to abandon the children and families we served.

As we sought God's guidance, He spoke to us from His word, *"You will not leave in haste... for I your Lord, will go before you and be your rear guard"* (Is. 52:12). As we fixed our eyes on this promise, Jesus gave us the courage to stand victoriously until the end of the year.

Then came the heartbreak of rejection by the very people we knew God had called us to serve. We were taken back when instead

of welcoming us, they treated us harshly. Time after time God impressed on our hearts, *"The LORD Almighty is with you... Be still and know that I am God; I will be your fortress"* (Psalm 46:7,10). In time, hearts softened and today this ministry is thriving.

Next it was the roadblock of COVID. As we trusted God to make a way to hold camps where there seemed to be no way, the idea of holding "Camps at Home" came to us. We would provide the necessary resources to give families the ability to enjoy camp together at home!

Embracing God's call through the fires of testing was worth all the pain.

Today we are awed by the fruit that blossomed and continues to grow through each of these ministries. To God be the glory for the great things He has done!

Director Marcos Oszurko



Armenia

8

A YEAR OF FASTING

This story is not so much about purchasing a building or land, as it is about following God's leading and seeing His perfect will come to fruition in a miraculous way.

For many years, the building we rented for holding camps was in great disrepair and had electrical issues we couldn't repair ourselves. Year after year, these problems grew worse to the point that we were no longer able to hold safe and comfortable camps for the children to enjoy. Gradually it became quite clear that it was time to move, but unfortunately, we had nowhere else to go. In view of this, we concluded that we needed a permanent campground owned by Grain of Wheat.

This seemed like an impossible dream, so our team committed to a year of fasting and held special days of prayer to ask God for guidance and to lead us every step of the way.

During that time, the Lord's Word was with us: "Now all glory to God who is able to accomplish infinitely more than we dare to ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3.20).

Even though we didn't have the finances in place, we began to look for property. After a long search, the Lord brought us to an area that would be perfect for our camps. When we presented the project to our international friends, they were very excited and willing to help us achieve this vision.

For almost a year, they presented the vision for this project to potential donors. Finally, they gave us the long-awaited news that all the money we needed to buy the campsite had been donated. We rejoiced that we now had the finances we needed to buy the property, but little did we know this was not the end, as new problems were waiting ahead.

Because it was now a year later, the owner had significantly increased the buying price due to inflation. Not only this, but new buyers were now interested, and we found

ourselves in the midst of negotiations which was an unexpected turn of events.

At this stage, we faced many seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and were often filled with overwhelming and difficult emotions. But God in His loving kindness reminded us to *"Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord"* (Psalm 27.14). It was during this time that we knew the stony road we were traveling on was leading us to the place where we would soon see the glorious culmination of this long journey.

After two months of negotiating, God miraculously brought together all the details for finalizing the purchase of this beautiful property.



Now as we welcome children to our new campground, our hearts are filled with gratefulness and awe at how God made this impossible dream come true.

To Him be the honor and the glory for the great things He has done!

Director Karen Ghazaryan

Russia



10

THE POWER OF PRAYER

I could hardly believe my ears, when the mother of a family living in the Netherlands shared with me that as a family, they read our ministry newsletter at dinnertime and then pray for the children in Russia. I responded, *"You will never know how very deeply it touches my heart that a family like yours, is faithfully committed to partner with us by prayer."* She then added, *"Oh, but our 7-year-old daughter, prays almost every night for you and for the Russian children."*

It brought tears to my eyes as I pictured this young prayer warrior, folding her little hands together and praying so faithfully for her peers in a country she herself has not been. A pure and sincere prayer ascending like a pleasant fragrance to the heart of God. Without a doubt, prayer is the most powerful tool we have here on earth.

Over and over, we have seen how prayer is the mighty engine that empowers our outreach, and that without it, our efforts would have no spiritual impact.

It is only by prayer that we have seen the unexpected ways God has answered, by making a way, where there was no way.



No matter our age or place in life, God calls us all, both young and old to be intercessors with hearts big enough to reach out in prayer for those we have never met in places we've never been. Even if you never personally see God's answers here on earth, one day in heaven you will rejoice as you meet those who came to Jesus because you prayed without ceasing.

Director Boukje Fokkema

PRAY FOR THE CHILDREN

Franciscan blessing prayer

*Written by
Benedictine Sister Ruth Fox*

May God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.

May God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, hunger, and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

A phrase found in several letters of the apostle Paul say: "Pray for us". The role that the apostle Paul played was crucial to spreading the Gospel. He knew that in answer to the prayers of his fellow believers, God would give him the power and strength to carry out his mission victoriously, in spite of the severe persecution he experienced by those who rejected his message.

Even today, those who serve Jesus through Grain of Wheat face spiritual warfare of all kinds that threaten to hinder their work with children. Like Paul, they too ask us to strive with them in God's work by our powerful and effective prayers.

Let us pray:

- For the physical and spiritual health of Grain of Wheat's national directors and their families.
- That God will guide them in the good works He has prepared in advance for them to do.
- That God will bring men and women alongside each one to support and encourage them.



The Family Corner

Have each child draw a picture of someone who cares for him/her outside the home (at school, church, etc.) and hang them in plain sight. Then every Tuesday, ask God to bless each one and meet their special needs for that day.



Acknowledgments & Contact



SPORTS



ARTS



CAMPS



TRAINING



CLUBS



HUMANITARIAN



PRAYER

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Vision

We see every child becoming an **ambassador of hope** through Jesus Christ.

Mission

Grain of Wheat is an international Christian organization. Its mission is to encourage and equip the maximum number of children in need, to develop their potential and help them become **agents of transformation** in their community through the message of God's love.

Strategy

Grain of Wheat engages with children regularly throughout the year. We partner with local churches to train leaders, hold weekly children's clubs, camps and events. Through this, children grow morally, socially and spiritually through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

GRAIN OF WHEAT INTERNATIONAL

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