

KENYA—Our new Holy Father, Leo XIV, stated that he took this name mainly because of Pope Leo XIII's historic social teaching encyclical Rerum Novarum. In that encyclical, Leo XIII stated, "Nothing is more useful than to look upon the world as it really is, and at the same time to seek elsewhere...for the solace to its troubles."

To me, this does not mean that we absolve ourselves and leave everything up to God, but rather that we allow God to work through us, while trusting that he will bring good out of even our feeblest efforts, so long as we do them with love.

I use this as the guiding principle of my ministry work. Sometimes things work the way I hope them to and other times they don't—or at least not entirely. This used to really bug me, and I have to admit that it still does, but just not so much. I've come to realize more and more that all I can do is my best and leave the rest up to our Lord. What really matters is that I do what I do out of love. With God's grace, many times things eventually turn out the way I dream they would.

Mwanahamisi is a 30-year-old single mother of six children. She dropped out of school in fourth grade as her family could no longer afford to pay for her education. She began earning money by cleaning, cooking, and doing laundry for people. She was forced into marriage at the age of 17.



THE HOPE PROJECT STARTED SUPPORTING MICHAEL AND WINNIE AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR. AS NEITHER HAD EVER ATTENDED SCHOOL, DESPITE BEING 13 AND 10 YEARS OLD RESPECTIVELY, THEY BOTH JOINED SCHOOL IN GRADE ONE.

The first several years of Mwanahamisi's marriage were blissful. However, after the birth of their third child, her husband, Juma, started drinking, having extra marital affairs, and became abusive. Mwanahamisi endured the abuse hoping that Juma would change. Meanwhile, the children also suffered as Juma was drinking all the time and wasn't working regularly, so the children were never sent to school.

In early 2024, Juma left Mwanahamisi and married another woman. By this point, Mwanahamisi and Juma had six children. Worse still, Juma took two of the children, the two middle children, away from Mwanahamisi to live with their grandmother, Juma's mother. Juma left Mwanahamisi with Michael, who is now 13 years old, Winnie, 10 years old, and the twins, Lamech and Liam, who are 2 years old. Mwanahamisi has had no contact with Emmanuel, 8 years old, and Samson, 6 years old, in over a year.

Juma provides no financial support to Mwanahamisi, Michael, Winnie, Lamech, and Liam. Mwanahamisi washes clothes to earn money, but it is barely enough for the family to survive, let alone to send the children to school.

The HOPE Project started supporting Michael and Winnie at the beginning of this year. As neither had ever attended school, despite being 13 and 10 years old respectively, they both joined school in grade one. Fortunately, Mwanahamisi taught Michael and Winnie some basic reading and writing skills so that they were at least able to join the first grade. Sadly, Michael should be in seventh grade and Winnie should be in fourth grade, but at least now we can make sure that both children get an education. Thankfully, Michael and Winnie are now doing well in school. In fact, Michael recently got an award for his performance in school.

The family lives in a tiny mud house without water, electricity, or basic sanitation facilities. Mwanahamisi's mother also somehow fits in this very small structure and lives with them. The family was sleeping on the ground on flattened cardboard boxes, so we delivered two new beds to the family in February. When Michael and Winnie saw us approaching carrying the new mattresses, they jubilantly ran out to greet us, wanting to help carry the mattresses into the house. They had never slept on a bed before in their lives.

We routinely help the family with food as part of our monthly food distributions and provided the family with a water tank to store clean water for drinking and cooking, as well as solar lamps. We wish we could do more to help them, but at least we can make sure the children are able to go to school and that the family has enough food to eat and beds in which to sleep.

Mwanahamisi is so grateful to the HOPE Project. She views the assistance we provide her and her children as miraculous and said, "I saw Jesus visit my house and I saw him with my eyes." Being Jesus to others is what life is all about. Thank you to all our donors who work through us to be Jesus to others.

God is good.



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