

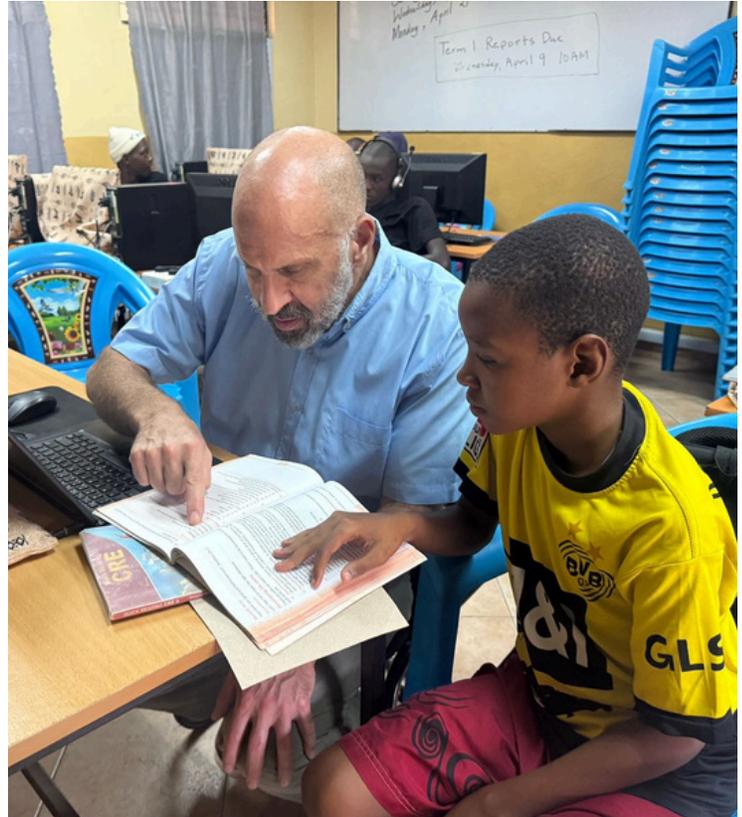


KENYA—I view mission as living out the Gospel in the broken world in which we live, rather than through a social justice lens. To me, mission is about encountering Jesus in others and being Christ to them. Pope Saint John Paul II said that “Jesus is living next to you, in the brothers and sisters with whom you share your daily existence.” In Kenya, this is in high relief for me as I experience Jesus every day in the poor, the hungry, and those, who like me, struggle to live out their lives following God.

I can’t solve the world’s problems through my ministry work. Jesus himself didn’t become man to fix all the world’s injustices. However, through those who generously support my ministry work, I can do my best to help those whom God puts in front of me. Sometimes it’s as simple as providing a bed for a child who sleeps on the ground or paying school fees so that a child can attend school.

Lucy’s husband, Mohammed, passed away in 2020. Mohammed was an Electrical Engineer and provided a comfortable life for his family. Mohammed’s death hit Lucy hard, and she was left to care for her three children alone with no means to support them.

After Mohammed’s death, Lucy’s father gave her a small amount of money to start a business selling vegetables. Tragically, Lucy’s dad died a few months later and her



RICH TARRO HELPS 13-YEAR-OLD ATHMAN GET READY FOR SCHOOL AFTER THE HOPE PROJECT COVERED HIS FEES AND PROVIDED ESSENTIALS FOR HIS EDUCATION.



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mom not long after that. Mohammed's family does not provide any support to help Lucy raise the children. The vegetable business barely provides enough income for the family to survive.

Denis, who is now 24 years old, had to drop out of college the year his father passed away. With no degree, Denis is forced to do manual day jobs, which are hard to find and do not pay well. Denice, who is now 22, had to drop out of high school, even though she was excelling academically. Members of the community generously paid for Denice to obtain a hair dressing certificate. Denice had loved hair dressing since she was a kid as she used to braid the hair of dolls and practiced braiding leaves of grass. She currently earns a small amount of money by braiding the hair of small kids in the neighborhood. If Mohammed had not passed away, both Denis and Denices would have completed college by now and have much better jobs than they currently do.

Lucy's third and last born, Athman, is 13 years old and in grade 6. As Lucy had been struggling to pay his school fees, Athman has been in and out of school due to lack of school fee payments. He is now one year behind in school from where he should be for his age.

With Lucy and her three kids barely surviving, the government demolished the family's house last year. The structure was alleged to be built on government land. The family was not compensated and were forced out on the street. After being homeless for a year, a friend recently gave Lucy a small house for her and the kids to live in. The structure is a tiny mud house with no running water or electricity. The house is not close to the school that Athman attends, and he now has to walk about two miles each way back and forth to school every day.

Getting food and meeting daily needs is still a challenge for the family. The HOPE Project started supporting Athman this month for the second term of the academic school year. We also had to clear the outstanding balance for Athman at the school which Lucy had been unable to pay. Athman is so happy now to be back in school and not having to worry about being sent home because of unpaid school fees.

We have begun helping the family with food as part of our monthly food distributions. We have provided the family with a water tank for storing clean water for cooking and drinking as well as a new bed and mattress.

Lucy is so grateful for the HOPE Project, which she says has brought her smile back. This is what mission is all about for me—personal encounters with people, meeting Jesus in others, and sometimes even bringing smiles to those who feel hopeless.

God is good.

Rich



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