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lay missionaries

RICH TARRO'S



SPRING NEWSLETTER



Missioner Update

Sarah's Plight to HOPE
The story of a Kenyan widow
and how desperation
brought her to the
HOPE Project



As we prepare to celebrate Easter, we remember Jesus's promise from Revelation 21:5, "Behold, I make all things new." Although there is no Gospel account of Jesus using these words during his earthly life, Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* portrays Jesus saying "Woman, I make all things new." to his mother as he lies on the ground under the weight of his cross on the way to Calvary.

These words mark Jesus's promise of a restored and perfected creation, where God will dwell with us forever. Until then, we are in a state of journeying toward that ultimate perfection as we take up our crosses and follow Jesus. How we carry our cross makes all the difference.

Sarah is a 48-year-old widow. She married her husband Frederick in 2003. While she was pregnant with their fifth child, he died of meningitis in 2016. Frederick had refused medication to treat his condition as some associates convinced him to not put "chemicals" in his body. Frederick's family blamed Sarah for Frederick's death and even chased her away from the burial.

By the following year, Sarah was struggling to provide for all five children, so she sent the 10-year-old, Leonard, away to live with a relative. Leonard received beatings from this relative and was treated so poorly, that he ran away and ended up in a children's home. Sarah lost contact with Leonard uncertain if he was still alive or not.



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Soon after sending Leonard away, Vincent, who was 15 years old started complaining of headaches. Unable to afford medical care, he passed away a short time later. Within the span of a year, Sarah's husband died, her middle son went missing, and her oldest son passed away. She was traumatized.

By the end of the year, Sarah and her remaining three children went to Mombasa to be with her aunt. Unable to earn money to help pay for the expenses, her aunt could no longer afford to house them, and they were asked to leave. Eventually, Sarah found work at construction sites and carried heavy bags of fertilizer to earn money. This provided some level of income to help support her family. However, due to the brutal, physical work, she developed physical issues, including severe chest pains, and had to give up these types of jobs. She now washes clothes to earn money, but she makes very little and therefore struggles to support her children or make rent, even with how small it is.

Sarah and her youngest two children live in a small one-room dwelling with no kitchen, no running water, and no electricity. They share a bathroom with other residents in the building while "fetching" water for bathing or washing clothes, and they cook using a propane cooking unit.

Throughout all the trials and suffering the family has endured, Sarah had managed to mostly keep her children in school. Sarah's oldest daughter was able to receive help from government bursaries and is currently away at college studying to become a teacher. Unfortunately, for the younger children the school refused to allow them to continue without paying their tuition. Sarah knew her youngest children were at risk and desperation took over. A friend whose children have been sponsored by the HOPE Project introduced her to us.

Sarah came to our office to ask for help. At the time, she, nor her children, had eaten since the day before. After providing them some food, we were able to enroll them in the new school year. We provided them with school supplies and everything they need for classes. Today, the 13 year says he wants to be a doctor. The youngest, who is 8, is more reserved.

They are now one of nearly 70 families we help each month with food. We were also able to provide them with a new mattress, so they have a decent place to sleep.

That's not the only good news for them. In December, after not knowing whether or not he was alive for the past 8 years, Sarah learned that Leonard, was not only doing well, but had been receiving an education all these years thanks to the children's home and was away at a boarding high school.

With your help, we can continue to give this family a better future.
Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

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