

17 October 2006

Hi.

Things have been extremely busy lately with the result that this newsletter will have to cater for September and October!

As can be expected in an organization like Combined Christian Ministries to the Poor, and with consideration given to the handing over of leadership and implementation of new programmes and operating methods since the beginning of 2006, CCMP has gone through a few distinct phases over the past nine months.

There was the initial excitement and energy that something new often brings. We were bombarded with hundreds of people looking for the kind of help we felt called to give. Many others came forward wanting to contribute, offer their ideas and input and resources. And still others came to offer their time as volunteers.

Next came a time of commitment. A time to bring all the needs, the help, the enthusiasm, the expectations, hopes and dreams together. A contribution of time, participation and commitment was asked from those who were looking to receive help, and for those who were looking to give help, the opportunity to act was given.

Then there came a time of reckoning. It seems that some who had come to us for help felt that the expectations placed on them were maybe not worth their effort and slowly they stopped coming. Maybe they didn't really need the help in the first place or the help that was given would have simply been abused down the line. Having said that, we still have the regular participation of 86 adults representing poverty bound households and 538 individual children, who live in poverty, attending programmes that enrich their lives.

And then some who were eager to get involved and be a part of what CCMP does, but of whom we have seen or heard little, are maybe still weighing up the cost of actually making a meaningful impact on the lives of those less fortunate than themselves and are still building up the courage to step out in faith (faith is a kind of courage) and get on with it. It is always one thing to talk and a very different thing to do. I have discovered that it is only in giving and acting mercifully that we can truly understand the faith we confess.

Many however have responded with commitment and with vision and with heart. After counting the cost and finding it a worthy price, so many who can contribute to the upliftment of the lives of some of the poorest of the poor families in our city, are doing so with gladness and joy, and so many whose lives are so burdened under crushing socio-economic circumstances are rising to the resources we are able to bring to them and working hard at developing and improving their lives and the futures of their children.

What pleases me as I look back is that the hype seems to be over and what is left are those who really are poor but committed to working towards a better future, and those who are committed to following the call they feel God has put in their hearts to help these people, just getting on with it. They are living the love and grace of God

as shown through Jesus Christ and, as we continue to work, I am certain that many more will be encouraged by what they see others doing and will find the courage to get involved and do similar things to share the grace God has given us to bring His salvation to a decaying, groaning world and build a better future for our city and our children to whom we will have to give it one day.

To those of you who have given to the work of God through CCMP, whether it be financial support, food, clothing, time, expertise, training, prayer, resources, etc and trusted that we will see that your contribution is not wasted but put to worthy use – Thank you.

Sincerely.

**Mark Lawler**  
Ministry Director

PS: I'd just like to thank those of you who responded to the needs I listed in the last letter. I now have 3 ½(!) new R100 supporters – only 10½ out of 50 to go! It has been so encouraging to see God provide, through your giving, what I need so that we can keep on working. We also received money to buy a trailer, which has already been put to good use, and we have also received some other items that are making a big difference. But – no one has come forward with old cameras yet! (For taking pictures of the activities of some of the community projects we support) I know they have to be out there! I'm sure everyone's just waiting to see if they gonna get a new one this Christmas first, huh! Blessings.