



St Andrew's URC (Walton on Thames)

ARTPEACE (Zimbabwe) Initiative

'If you hear him singing you might think Jesus is coming!' said

artist Lovemore James. 'We believe we are in the image of God and are so blessed. We are a people together when we can work, talk, see and do many miraculous things in our everyday lives. I felt the presence of God in one man called Timothy Chizuzu (25). Oh! I was so surprised this poor man can do what other able bodied men cannot do. He lives with his young brother who is unemployed sharing one room in Mabvuku. As the photos (left) show, he is making wire toys trying to raise money but life for an artist is hard in Zimbabwe. He is talented and can sing gospel. If you hear him singing you might think Jesus is coming! I ask myself why God has made him like this, but God has a purpose for everything and wants people to see his greatness through Timothy. He needs a modern wheel chair as his present one is old and too heavy to wheel. He can stand but has no balance to walk: he suffered from Polio when young. He is independent and does not like asking people to push him. His wish is to be able to afford better food and clothing. His dream is to run a grocery shop to pay bills & buy wires for his art. He depends on well wishers but they are few. I was very touched by Timothy and wish I could help him.'



'An amazing lady!' said artist Lizeni Nasho describing 70 years old Elizabeth Zisengwe.

'Widowed since 1995, Elizabeth brought up her nine children alone: fed them, got them through school and gave them the guidance and care of a good mother. As if that was not enough she looked after her grandchildren when her own family died. Since then, she has started to care for under privileged children especially orphans. Most of the children are HIV positive. Rudo Tomu a volunteer (red sweater) helps Elizabeth from morning to night teaching the children to read and write. They look after 40 girls and boys but 15 of the kids stay with Elizabeth full time. They also cook for the children and Rudo returns to her little home at night. Elizabeth used to stay at a place called Kamombe but was evicted because the land was sold to land developers who then sold it to rich people who can afford to build big houses. Now, like so many others, she stays at Caledonia Farm the displacement camp. Mrs Elizabeth needs help to buy food, pots and plates, buckets for fetching water, blankets, exercise & reading books and last but not least soap and detergents to clean the toilets to avoid the spread of diarrhoeal diseases. One child born HIV positive called Buhlenkosi touches me deeply as her mother, a good friend, passed away two days after giving birth: the father disappeared! Yet again, a day after these inspirational stories reached me, a generous donation from a member of the congregation popped through my letter box and has now reached Elizabeth and Timothy!'



Ed to the rescue! Artist Mike Masedza (left) has had a wretched month! First his rural home housing his old mother burned down, then whilst walking home one night, he was robbed



at knifepoint and had his mobile plus the clothes he was wearing stolen. A shaken Mike was in tears as he had saved up many months to pay for his mobile - a lifeline, not a luxury. Fortuitously, Norma our splendid editor was in the process of upgrading her mobile. She was so moved by Mike's plight that she generously gave me her old model which is now in the hands of an overjoyed Mike! Bevan, the poor stone breaker (right) also received his first mobile to help him keep in touch with his family. Joy all round!



Southwark Cathedral Shop: Sales of Artpeace sculptures are proving a useful source of income for our friends. Although we are still finding our way regarding



pricing and styles, manager Jon Dollin is pleased with progress made over the last 2 months, so much so that

he now has authority to purchase a new glass cabinet with LED intensity lighting specifically for the display of Artpeace crafts. The cabinet should be in position by September, well in time for the Christmas build up so their work will at last be shown in its full glory. The race is now on to try and get



as many pieces over before the season starts! Jon feels that his customers will be looking for something different and Artpeace fit the bill! Other poor artist friends of the group are providing more variety by supplying different crafts made from beads and wire, various woods or maize leaves as above, all so much lighter for couriers and buyers alike to transport, especially by air. At present, all pieces taken over by couriers are on the small side owing to flight weight

restrictions. Perhaps once the situation improves in Zimbabwe, Artpeace will again be able to buy large stones from the mines. They love working on large rocks using their skills and tools to the full and expressing their inner feelings aka David White's unusual masterpieces seen left: (the bird carving is based on Zimbabwean folklore). One of David's stunning heads titled 'My Beautiful Hair' in opal stone is currently on display in the Cathedral Shop offering a rare opportunity to purchase



his art (photo by Mike Masedza). Pieces can still be bought from 'the shed'.

Johnston Simpson

