

St Andrew's URC (Walton) **ARTPEACE** Initiative



'WE HAVE NO WORD FOR STRANGER in Shona' said Lovemore James. 'Zimbabweans love one another and each day we greet passersby and enjoy conversation especially about the rains.



We had a wet weekend as God blessed us with heavy rains. At present life is good for most Zimbabweans; the seed bought with URC donations is growing into a bumper maize crop. Around the outskirts of the ghetto you will see folk with hoes walking to the fields. We are praying for more rain as they bring joy and hope for us all. I also pray my sculpture sales will cover the cost of ammonia nitrate fertiliser to further enrich the soil.

Abraham: As if to underline Lovemore's (appropriate name!) friendship comment, the next day Mike stated: 'On my way home from Silveira House after meeting couriers Casey and daughter Kathy, I met a man called Abraham and we got chatting. He had been to SH seeking help but they were overwhelmed by beggars. He was robbed at his home. During the scuffle the robbers hit his leg with an iron bar but despite the pain he could not afford treatment so can't walk properly. I sympathised with his predicament because I still cannot bear to wear shoes after my recent beating at the mine. I gave him a dollar to buy food and asked to take his photo to show St Andrew's. We exchanged addresses and he thanked me again and again. Please help my new friend who lives alone:

his wife ran away due to their extreme poverty.' Despite only having a few dollars to his name, Mike felt obliged to share the little he had with Abraham who is now reduced to begging.

SUPPORT: Casey, an amazing character & Kathy returned with a remarkable 40kgs of carvings in their luggage! (Below left: Casey, a professional musician with air hostess daughter Kathy).



THE SMILES SAY IT ALL: The latest photos above of Fradrek and Catherine show their delight at being able to attend another school year. Their widowed mother is lost for words to thank everyone. Fradrek is now a football captain because of leadership qualities whilst his sister Catherine has been made a class monitor and school prefect. Not so long ago Fradreck used to sleep in a burnt out car and both children helped their mother in the fields as school fees were beyond their means. Another heart warming example of how our support can transform lives.

TRAGEDY: Peter Kananji's family were recently woken at 2am by cries from their five month old son who became very ill. Peter tried desperately to get help but it proved hopeless at that hour:



ambulances are virtually nonexistent and one has to pay for the privilege. The baby died at 4am. Artpeace walked miles to be with the family and scraped together a few dollars to cover the most basic of funerals. Baby Peter was buried at 3pm that same afternoon according to their custom. He had been in good health so the death was and will remain a mystery. He said: 'John, I don't know what is happening to my life – it's so hard. I struggle to pay my bus fare every day to take food to Priscilla my wife who is in hospital with chest pains from shock. I must leave my young children Simbarashe and Kudakwashe at home'.

(Above: Peter on right in red shirt at graveside).

SOUTHWARK VISIT ARTPEACE! It's not every day I receive a phone call from a bishop but two weeks ago, Christopher Chessun, the Bishop of Southwark rang before leaving for Zimbabwe. He was moved by baby Peter whose death was mentioned in Dean Andrew Nunn's blog and on



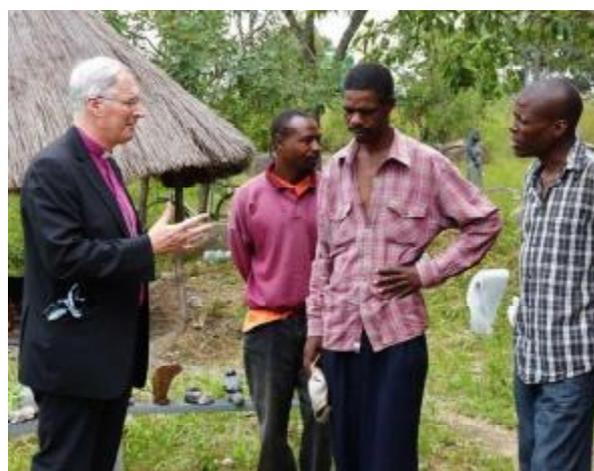
Twitter. Fr David Harold-Barry said: 'For a few days, baby Peter became quite famous. So last Sunday 23rd Feb. the bishop visited the people whose stories he had heard and whose sculptures find their way to the Cathedral shop 6000 miles away. It



was a marvellous visit full of warmth and concern on the part of the bishop and his two friends. Artpeace turned out in full and explained something of their lives and hopes, and also their difficulties in present day Zimbabwe. Artist Peter Kanenji, showed the bishop a photo of baby



Peter, who died suddenly two weeks ago. Bishop Christopher went out of his way to console Peter and had his photo taken with him (left). The bishop and his companions, Fr Mark and Canon Wendy, toured the "workshop" amongst the clearings in the trees, admiring their artistry and the different coloured stones that had been sought out in remote places. He ended his visit with a little



impromptu talk about the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe's five dioceses all of which he had visited during the week and then led a beautiful prayer for all present especially for the sculptors and their families. We were honoured and grateful for his visit and that of his travelling companions.' It will be interesting to see how this relationship develops.

Johnston Simpson