

Report of my visit to projects in North Sri Lanka.

Sunday, February 17

I traveled by bus from Negombo to the north. Sister Chrishani had arranged a bus, an Easybus, a coach with air conditioning. After a 5 ½ hour trip with a lunch stop in Puttalam, I arrived in Mankulam. I was picked up by one of the girls and at the house I was warmly welcomed by the other girls and the sisters, this time again with a flower wreath. After tea and some rest I opened the toilet block under the guidance of the girls and the sisters and the mother of Chrishani. She is here temporarily to help, mainly in the kitchen to support the helpers. These are older girls, who do not continue their studies and take care of the younger girls. They also receive a small salary for this.



I felt honored to do the opening. After cutting the ribbon, the girls ran into the toilet block. A beautiful building with 2 toilet groups, each with 4 toilets. One toilet group is painted with bright colors, the other has a more neutral color. The toilets are beautiful, all squat toilets. I handed the Horizon sign over to Sr. Chrishani, she was very happy with it and enjoyed it very much, especially when she heard that the children of our school had searched for our school name in the pictures of the shower building. She promised to hang it next to the HAVONOS and SEHH donation board.



In the evening with Sr. Chrishani, Sr. Assumpta Mariya, Fr. Mariyadas, who is the parish priest, and driver Dina we went to Mullaitivu. The parents of the parish priest were married for 46 years. He wanted to celebrate this with the sisters and his family with the cake ritual and eating together. The priest is also involved in Anna's Home, he celebrates the masses there and lives next to the children's home grounds. It was special to experience this party.

Monday, February 18

After a good night rest and a nice breakfast, Sr. Chrishani and I visited Fr. Ramesh in Annai Illam in Killinochchi. We went with the bus, because the driver had to be at the garage in Killinochchi. It was a nice visit, good to see Fr. Ramesh. He is very busy teaching students and of course celebrating masses. He is no longer working for the projects. A pity, a very inspired and intelligent man.

On his way back the driver arranged all sorts of things for the bus and we did some shopping. After lunch I visited the girls school. The classrooms are sober and the furniture is very outdated. For me 50 years back in time. English and geography were taught that afternoon. The teachers do this in

addition to their morning classes to earn extra money. Their wage is very low. These are extra lessons for the children in addition to the regular morning program.

In the evening there was a mass by the parish priest. The children had been waiting for some time. They were already praying and singing. Respect! They stayed so quiet. The helpers and Sr. Assumpta



Mariya prepared everything for the service in the chapel. When Fr. Mariyadas arrived, mass started. The older girls were reading and doing their prayers and one of the girls always started to sing. Everyone sings and prays along, everything by heart. A lot of recognition, even though I don't understand the language. Good to experience this.

Tuesday, February 19

The children were free, full moon day. After breakfast I watched the computer lesson, which is given in a part of the sitting / playroom. They have 6 obsolete tablets and there were 12 pupils. The teacher has a computer and projects the images onto the wall.

Then I walked around the building with a number of girls and took pictures of everything. It is a large building with many spaces.





hoofdingang Anna's Home



Anna's Home



patio



keuken



studiezaal



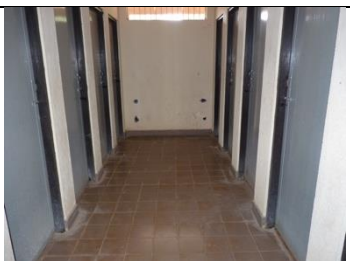
studiezaal



zitkamer met computerklas



computerklas



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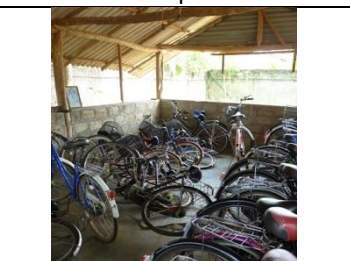
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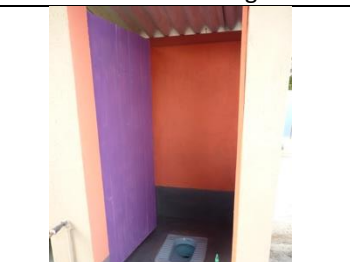
douches



douche(achteraan op foto)- en
toiletgebouw



toiletten



hurktoilet



waslijnen in schuur



waslijnen buiten



speeltuin



Good shepherd bus

The girls enjoyed taking photos with me. Everything had to be photographed. They also loved being photographed themselves, but also taking pictures with my camera. A few girls tried to teach me Tamil language. It is a difficult language, the sounds are very different from Dutch. They laughed when they heard me talking in Tamil. One of the girls wrote down all their names for me.

This day was a bit of a party. Jamira, a Sri Lankan girl who lives with her parents in Switzerland, turned 4 years old. The parents know Anna's home through a local sponsor and they wanted the girls to celebrate their daughter's birthday. They payed for the lunch and



the pie. The food was prepared by the girls. Really great to see this. Deep respect, they are very independent. They all help each other and the helpers ensure that everything runs smoothly, they do a lot themselves and divide the tasks. A number of girls



were doing the laundry. Others were studying in the study room or playing or relaxing on the property. Lunch was really a festive meal for the children. They even got ice cream for dessert.

The sign of the Horizon is now also hanging on the wall of the shower, next to the large sign of HAVONOS and SEHH.

At the end of the afternoon a tractor with a threshing machine came to the site to thresh the rice plants. The rice is for their own use and also to be sold. Here too the older girls helped with Dina, driver and caretaker (caretaker). Towards the evening, when it was a little less hot, we went to play volleyball, badminton and on the playground equipment.

In the evening we celebrated Jamira's birthday with the birthday ritual with cake. The two youngest girls played Jamira. Everything was filmed and sent to Switzerland. Then there was dancing. Those girls can dance! Great to see it and a nice end of a holiday.



Wednesday, February 20

We went to the Havonos project in Iyakachchi, the apprenticeship farm. We hadn't hear from Fr. Seger anymore, he said he would send a message. We went anyway, with the Good Shepherd bus with driver Dina. I asked him yesterday if he wanted to drive us. In Iyakachchi they didn't know we were coming. Father Avelyn was not there. Fr. Stanny, his assistant was there. He showed us around.

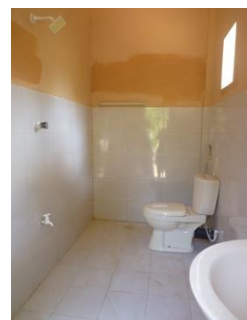
Beautiful things have been realized here. The pig barn looks good. The pigs have a lot of space and can bathe in the mud. There were also a lot of piglets. There were broilers in the chicken coop

A few chickens had just been skinned. There were dairy cows in the stable and in a meadow we also saw some. The priests are busy building a guard house for site security. The foundation already is finished. At this place they you have a good sight of the terrain which you don't have from the main building. Thieves come from the jungle behind the site and there is now the house.

Because of the drought the peanut plants don't grow yet. It is very dry at the moment. The terrain is very sandy and therefore difficult for the tractors and the like. We drank tea together and then went away. No widows with children seen, they come in the afternoon. It is not clear to me how many widows work on the property.



Then on our way to YEC in Jaffna, where again they didn't know we were coming. Fr. Stanny from the apprenticeship farm had contacted Fr. Philip. He was on his way and happy when we arrived. Proudly he showed us the new building that looks beautiful, just finished as it was. The new part was opened the day before by the General Counselor from Rome. Too bad I wasn't here as a representative of HAVONOS. We visited everything. It needs to be further arrangements. They will do that bit by bit.



We have been talking for a while about the contact between Fr. Seger and me. What would I have had to do if Sister Chrishani had not come with me? On my own I had never found the places. I am very disappointed in OMI and felt abandoned. Fr. Philip found this very annoying and was very surprised about the situation himself.



On the return we got out the bus in Killinochchi, the driver had to arrange more things for the bus. Sister Chrishani and I went on the regular bus. It was an experience. The boarding has to happen very quickly, otherwise the driver leaves without you. Chrishani just stood with one foot on the shelf and then he already departed. I almost fell on the ground, could just grab hold of a rod. The bus was full, but we could sit.

After lunch, Sr. Chrishani and I went to a house with handicapped children. This house was founded by a sister from Canada. She wasn't there herself. It is a small house where 7 children live with their supervisors. They are lovingly and medically cared for and receive education, all with a minimum of materials. Sr. Chrishani will give them some of their toys. There is a boy who is physically disabled, spastic, he can walk a bit now. He is very intelligent and makes music with everything. Another boy cannot talk and hear. One is less gifted and another has Down's syndrome. A mother with a baby is now also living there temporarily and her oldest daughter is disabled. She can't walk and slides across the floor. A new house is being built for these children. In the Mullaitivu district there are about 400 handicapped children who need care. The construction takes a long time, the government works against it. It does not want to sell all the land around the house.

They need this land to grow all kind of products for themselves and for selling, so that they can maintain themselves at some point. The house is almost ready. Hopefully they can get in quickly and I can visit it on a next visit to Sri Lanka.



Another church service with Fr. Mariyadas. After the church service I said goodbye to the girls. I gave them bracelets, studs and hair bands and candy. The girls all reacted so sweetly. It was good to stay here for a few days. This way you really experience the daily life of these girls. The next time I like to stay here again, but then a little longer, so that the program can be spread more over the days and I can spend more time with the girls.

Thursday, February 21

With the bus, again an Easy Bus, back to Negombo. But first we visited the kindergarten (pre-school) near the house. It is a small dark building, 24 children from 3 to 5 years old. Very nice to see. They already learned a little bit. When I was there, the 5-year-olds wrote down numbers in a notebook. Figures up to 100. I saw few toys. The children go to school until 12 o'clock.

This school is also on the ground of the parish. I said goodbye to everyone with pain in my heart, and locked all these people in my heart. Together with Sr. Chrishani and one of the girls I walked to the bus stop. The bus was very late.

It was nice to have Sr. Chrishani with me these days. She arranged a lot for me, that was great. I don't



know how I should have done this alone. The bus trip also went well this time. In Negombo my friends were waiting for me with a tuk-tuk. Nice to see them again and to stay with them for a few more days.

