

April - June 2021 Appeal

ST VERONICA WELFARE COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 5098, WEST END, 4101

APPEAL FOR FUNDS TO ASSIST THE BETHANY FATHERS PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FOR PODOCONIOSIS SUFFERERS AND TO REDUCE CHANCES OF ADDITIONAL INFECTIONS IN THE COMMUNITIES OF SIRE, LEGAMARA AND GABASAMBATHA, ETHIOPIA

Podoconiosis, a disease of the lymphatic vessels of the lower extremities, is characterised by prominent swelling, disfigurement and disability and possible stigmatisation, discrimination and mental distress. It is believed to be the result of chronic exposure to the red volcanic soil which, combined with a genetic susceptibility, has contributed to podoconiosis being endemic in Ethiopia. Methods of prevention include wearing shoes and hygiene. Treatment includes conventional and herbal medication combined with daily foot hygiene and compression bandages.

In 2020, 3,500 patients from poverty stricken local communities in Sire and Legamara benefitted from the medical treatment and assistance provided by Father Augustine working with the local community. The program temporarily ceased in the face of Covid 19, but has now recommenced and is being extended to the neighbouring village of Gabasambatha.

Currently, a medical team visits Sire twice monthly and Legamara once monthly to provide treatment for patients - around 500 patients attend for the medicine which is supplemented by health education and preventative and curative measures including washing legs with herbal water, the provision of herbal medicine, basins, socks and shoes to patients. Many patients have been cured.

To reduce the cost of the program, Father Augustine has established an herbal garden and, due to the rising cost of protective footwear (approximately Au \$20 pair), requires patients to provide a small financial contribution towards the costs involved.



Photos: Clockwise from top left:
1. Podoconiosis education program at Legamara
2. Podoconiosis patient in Sire
3. Local community involvement in the program
4. Father Augustine bathing patients with herbal medicine

To: St Veronica Welfare Committee – APPEAL FOR FUNDS TO ASSIST THE TREATMENT AND PREVENTION OF PODOCONIOSIS IN SIRE, LEGAMARA AND GABASAMBATHA, ETHIOPIA

NAME:

ADDRESS:

Amount: