

A journey of love, service and new experiences: Our Honeymoon in South Africa

Dear Friends,

We're delighted to share a unique chapter from our recent South African honeymoon, where we had the incredible opportunity to volunteer with Sister Martha in Addo, Eastern Cape, South Africa. This journey has touched our hearts and given us a wonderful insight into the privileged work taking place within Addo's local communities. Unfortunately, our visit overlapped with Sister Breda's time in the British Isles, though we kept in touch via video calls, and truly felt the presence of both Sisters in every aspect of our experience.



During our time in Addo, Katie spent most days teaching in the Place of Mercy crèche in Valencia, where she was able to utilise her experience gained from being an Assistant Headteacher in a UK primary school. Mornings were spent with the Grade R children, and were filled with bible stories, singing, maths, reading, writing and creative activities, as well as the occasional obstacle course! Afternoons were less predictable, but generally involved playing, singing and dancing with the babies. Katie also enjoyed spending time in Lwazi crèche in Dunbrody. Spending time with these children was a truly wonderful experience, but Katie was also able to spend time with the teaching staff;

understanding their challenges, sharing best practice, and getting to know the community through working alongside such a dedicated team.

Emerson, meanwhile, not being a teacher, but with plenty of computer experience, took on the role of teaching computing at St Ignatius Primary School. Here, each day saw a variety of classes, from Grades 4-7, get the chance to develop their computing



and literacy skills. On occasions when the computers couldn't be used due to load-shedding power outages, Emerson taught English instead. The children at St Ignatius were a delight to teach, and on our last day they said their goodbyes to both of us through a beautifully choreographed musical number in the playground.

Outside of teaching, our experience was made even more special by supporting Sister Martha in her daily endeavours. We felt privileged to witness and contribute to such tireless acts of service, and could see first-hand the incredible impact that the Sisters have had, and continue to have, on the community. Examples included transporting the sick to and from the local clinic, collecting medicines, soup kitchen, and arranging paperwork at Home Affairs, all while overseeing the crèche and other local schools. We learned profound lessons about selflessness, compassion, and service.



During our 'down-time', we were able to explore the beautiful country that South Africa is. We embarked on unforgettable safaris, ate delicious food, and soaked up as much of the rich and varied culture as we could. Highlights included a local one-night safari, gifted to us as a wedding present by Sisters Martha and Breda, as well as an exhilarating zip-line experience at the local attraction, 'Adrenalin Addo'.

Overall, as we write this piece and reflect on our time, we feel thankful and blessed to have been able to be a part of the work taking place in South Africa. The smiles on the school children's faces and the gratitude in their hearts will stay with us forever, and we are already trying to plan a time for our next visit. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Sisters Martha and Breda, the local communities in Addo, and the school children we were blessed to teach.

With love and gratitude,
Katie and Emerson

