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www.beliefmore.it sostiene la missione Sao Miguel Arcanjo Sao Miguel Arcanjo Barbacena Minas Gerai Brasil

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After 26 years since the foundation of the mission, I believe that 2024 was a year that passed so quickly that it seemed impossible to find myself already writing the Christmas letter. We find ourselves once again on the threshold of a new year, and I would like to share with you some important moments experienced in these months, moments that were only made possible thanks to your help.

Our orchestra has continued to grow: today it has 55 children who play a repertoire that ranges from light and pop music to the most erudite classical music. There are still many children waiting to be able to take an instrument in their hands and, finally, we have managed to found a conservatory within the mission, equipped with large spaces for teaching and for their entertainment.

Whenever children perform in front of a large audience and are applauded with standing ovation, I think most people don't understand how their music has a special meaning: many of them have difficulty reading and writing, but they manage, with great ability to read a score. It is difficult to imagine that the little girl who plays saw, just some time ago, her father kill her mother in front of her, and then commit suicide by setting himself on fire. Her little sister always carries a newspaper clip with a photo of her charred father in her pocket and, when she says she has a stomach ache and asks to be held, she inevitably shows that atrocious image.

Those are mission stories that offer us, every day, the motivation to continue, knowing that, unfortunately, if we don't do it, no one else will.

Sport has also brought great satisfaction: our boys have won almost in all the championships in which they have participated. It's nice to see them arriving, proud, at the sports centres, sometimes with slightly old tracksuits and perhaps out-offashion donated sneakers. Athletes in sports clubs from higher social classes often look at them with a certain snobbery; but they don't know that they will soon be defeated by those who they see as "poor people" and who, even with less technique, win thanks to their will. Precisely to reward their commitment, this year we managed to cover the 2,000 square meter gym, finally making it usable during the rainy season.

Our kindergarten has also grown, now welcoming more than 200 children: not as much as would be necessary, but it is already a great achievement. We have added a small building of 120 square meters, with many colors, to the delight of the little ones.

The home for the elderly, made increasingly lively and serene thanks to the many activities with children, will be expanded next year thanks to the donation of a Brazilian bank. This small town, called "St. Michael", where around 800 people live every day, including children, elderly people and employees, continues its existence amidst sacrifices and great blessings. Despite the many difficulties, there has never been a single grain of rice missing on our table and, as far as I'm concerned, I have seen these thirty years fly by and I feel every time in the close embrace of the children that in the end, all of this has been a gift.

I embrace you wholeheartedly, on behalf of myself, the children and the elderly, wishing you the holiest Christmas possible. With love. Abraco! (Hug).

Con affetto, Abraço Marco Roberto Bertoli