

World Aids Day IHM Prayer Service addendum December 1, 2022

Text to accompany video done by Peg O'Shea <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iPONb4oXik&t=3s>

Roshni

“Hi! I’m Roshni. I work with Sr. Peg and Mavis at the Pre-School in Howick. We started a support group – Mavis and I and my son Pratish - after looking at the ladies and the situation that was so bad. So we decided that we’d have a group once a month when we’d get all the ladies together, give them a meal, and talk to them and counsel them and give them support whereby they’ll be encouraged to take their medication and take good care of themselves and practice proper hygiene so that they don’t get sick again. During COVID we had a lot of challenges, where ladies were sick and we had to take them to the hospital and we had to provide food for the grandchildren that were at home. And we had to, we also had to give them food at home.

At the moment we have 52 ladies because some of them have died and some of them have dropped out, but we are trying our best so that they can go to the hospital, they can get their medication, they can get a plate of one meal of food from us every month.

My son Pratish helps with checking the vital signs, looking at the clinicals, and helps to take them to the hospital where they can get treatments for the hives and rashes that’s from the reaction to the medication. During COVID also, lots of ladies were sick and we had no chance, and no means to get them to the hospitals and some of their conditions have deteriorated, but we are trying to get them back in shape again. Thank you.”

Mavis

“My name is Mavis. As I am a Zulu I can speak the language of most of our ladies, and since I live near everyone I can see with my own eyes what is happening. Many of our ladies are old and have little support from family. Young people also came to talk to me when they learned that they are HIV positive. Some want to commit suicide; others drop out of school so no one there knows their status. During COVID, some get only the little available at the clinic.

Government hospitals in South Africa ran out of free medication. Sometimes people formed a queue at 5:30 in the morning. Before COVID some of our group were doing so well that HIV was not detectable in their blood. During COVID, many of the people got hives and suffered terribly. The cream to soothe the itching is too expensive for people who can’t even afford food.

I can say it in Zulu: *Mavis speaks Zulu for about 30 seconds.*

Those old people, I'm telling them when they're going to go to the clinic and check for them, when they go in. And then I wake up in the morning sometimes to queue for them, you know they are old, they didn't come, and can't stand in the line. I know these people: I feel for them. I do what I can to help. Thank you."

Pratish

"Greetings to one and all. My name is Pratish, and I am a nurse and phlebotomist, working at the area's hospitals through a nursing agency, because a permanent job is very difficult to find.

Being a nurse, I am connected to Mavis and Roshni, who's my Mom. So I help out at Mavis' AIDS Foundation by checking the blood pressures, checking the temperatures, the sugars and of course the medications, educating them about the importance of their medications, reminding them of the appointments for collection of the tablets, and in general, reassuring them, since lots of our residents are suffering from depression and, they just feel down, and their entire focus is on trying to get money so that they can provide for their family and get food rather than their health. Their health is something they put last.

And I just want to say thanks to Mavis because she is one of our only isiZulu speaking ladies, and it is difficult to communicate. There is a huge communication barrier but Mavis is able to cross that bridge by speaking the home language which is isiZulu.

And we want to say a big thanks to Sister Peg because she is the bridge from South Africa to America. Without her we wouldn't have received help from you guys in USA.

And most importantly, and lastly, I would have to say thank you to Dignity Detroit and Tias Arms for providing us with funds. Without you guys, our Foundation would collapse. Thank you."

Sister Peg

Thank you for caring about our situation here in South Africa, 8,000 miles from Michigan.