

Liz and Sergio Vilela

Be still and know that I am God!

April 2020

www.bmsworldmission.org/lsvilela



Dear friends, it is great to be able to send out Information to you at this unstable time around the world.

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble... He says, "Be still and know that I am God... The Lord Almighty is with us."

Psalms 46

There is not enough space here to write out the whole Psalm but at this present time it can bring us hope these uncertain times.

It has been unfortunate that Liz has had to stop her play therapy work temporarily while we are in quarantine. She is currently working with five different children with varying difficulties. Children aren't able to express themselves through words like adults can, and play is their most natural way of learning and expressing themselves. In a safe and supportive environment, the child is given the opportunity to work through how they are feeling, learn about themselves and they find their own ways of dealing with their situation, either consciously or unconsciously.

Even though my area is play therapy, it is very difficult to not want to be everything to everyone. For example, when a child with a speech difficulty needs speech therapy, or a child has health issues and needs specific medical support. This support isn't easily available here but you want to give each child the best opportunities of life possible. We can only work within our own limitations and trust in God, praying for initiatives and that the country continues to develop their health system. An article in The Guardian (3/4/20) was written about a rise in domestic abuse in the USA during this quarantine time, and children can be more vulnerable to abuse when they spend more time at home, particularly in a country like Mozambique. We pray for God's protection and intervention for families in these situations.



We are all doing well, considering that life has changed a bit in the last few weeks. All educational facilities closed two weeks ago so Chloe and Joshua have been at home, completing school work as well as making a good amount of noise and mess. Liz and Sergio's work in schools, PEPEs and institutes has stopped, at least until the end of April. We are staying home as much as possible, even though we aren't in total lockdown yet, but it is nice to have a morning stroll on the beach each day. We are blessed to have a good garden space where the children can run around and play. There are still not many 'official' cases of the virus but with few tests available it is hard to know the current situation so we pray and wait in hope that this virus won't affect us in such a big way that some have suggested.



It has been difficult to know the best way to help people at a time like this, but Susanna, who is part of the Mozambique BMS team, got involved in helping to coordinate an initiative of sewing 30,000 masks for ill people who arrive at the hospital in Maputo. Masks are difficult to find and even though proper medicinal masks would be better, these cloth masks will at least help to prevent some of the spreading in the hospital. There is also a similar initiative happening here in Beira through other organisations. We are also thinking of other ways that we can help people at this preventative stage of the virus and we will tell you about this in future prayer letters.



All countries are suffering from the coronavirus pandemic and in Mozambique it is no different, but as one of the poorest countries in the world, the pandemic is accompanied by other devastating consequences such as increased hunger. About 70% of Mozambique's population literally works today to eat tomorrow and social isolation is a luxury that most people cannot afford.

The Government has reported only 10 official positive cases, but there is a possibility that this number is much higher, as there are only tests in the capital and we live 1300 km from the capital. As I said, the biggest challenge for people will be hunger and the lack of hospital conditions. Most of the food comes from South Africa and with the closing of the borders there is a great possibility that there will be a lack of food to buy and the people may not have money. We as a family have been taking care of ourselves and the children are doing home school. We have seen that the population have put preventative measure in place like hand washing before entering shops and using masks. I hope this is enough to try to stop the virus from spreading.



We are praying for you at this difficult time. For us, please pray for:

- Liz's play therapy clients and vulnerable children and families.
- For continued good health and protection for our family.
- For the masks project, giving thanks for all those who are involved and pray that they will really help to combat the spread of the virus.
- That the virus will die out and that as Christians we can shine His light in these dark times.

May we remember that God is with us and we can be still and be hopeful in His presence knowing that He has the world in His hands and He is a faithful God who loves us.

Liz and Sergio

If you would like to support Liz and Sergio Vilela by prayer and committed regular giving, visit bmsworldmission.org/partners or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.

