

A Story from Nangodi, Ghana

During my trip to Ghana and our sister parish this summer, I was privileged to be at the commissioning of the well (borehole to the Ghanaians) at Nangodi that MQP donations provided for. The commissioning ceremony was replete with wonderful dancing and music, speeches, and gift-giving. The dancers were amazing, never tiring in the heat of the afternoon (though we spectators were wilting!).

As part of the gift-giving, we gave the village a suitcase full of soccer balls, books, school supplies, and solar lanterns--all items donated by MQP parishioners. These items are given to the village's teachers to decide on the best use for the village. Of course the children raced for the soccer balls. One little girl, however, came up to me and said, "I want to read those books." Her name was Modesta and she was nine years old. I told her that she should ask the teachers as they were the ones who could distribute the books and loan them out and that I was sure they'd be delighted that she wanted to read the books. Modesta had the shaved head of a student, so I knew that she was in school. She held my hand for the quarter mile walk to the site of the borehole, where I cut the ceremonial ribbon on borehole and drank from the first bowl of water from it.

Following the ceremony, Modesta again came up to me and took my hand for the walk back to where our van was parked. She said to me "I want to read those books now." Modesta was a girl of few words but laser-like focus on, and thirst for, books. I predict that she will embrace learning and grow up to develop her God-given talents. Who knows where that will take her! It was humbling, actually, to see how important our gifts to the village were, though in the grand scheme of things, we really brought very little. But to Modesta, it was a very big thing.

— Barb Luxenberg