



THE COLLINS CONNECTION

December 2005

Hello the Salesian Family

I remember telling you that I have been asking Santa, Fr Declan and God to drop by and place a piece of land and a suitable building in my stocking this Christmas. Well, they may just have done that small thing for all of us!

Sister Margaret Sweeney, Grace Alfinete and I went on yet another tour of Ennerdale looking for a site that could accommodate the Declan Collins Educational Centre and perhaps also house the expansion of the current Don Bosco Educational Project in Finetown. Sure enough we came across a site that is very well placed for both projects and already has on it a starter building that could be used for our purposes. We set our hearts on it.

The wonder is that I discovered that the property is not being used and is privately owned by a company, 'Business Partners' in Johannesburg. Their mission is to financially assist and help train emerging entrepreneurs!

With the Steering Committee's blessing I have contacted them and they are willing to consider a proposal to sell or lease the property. The proposal was submitted on 7 December. I also asked them to consider donating it to us. We will know what their response is when their offices reopen in January. They have already handed the matter over to their attorneys. Should our negotiation be successful, we will not have to wait out the months it will take for the City Council to respond to our first application for a site.

Another Christmas gift received for the Declan Collins Educational Centre was a donation of R10 000.00 from the Salesian Missions. We are

very grateful for all their support and generosity. The money will be put to very good use.

There have been some responses from our questionnaire given to youth on 20 November at Fr Declan's memorial Mass. We are considering courses that can be run from the All Saints Parish Centre next year. A young woman volunteered to do some training in IT and Bookkeeping! We will hold a meeting with interested candidates early in the New Year.

I have continued visiting local businesses and the local Panel Beater has joined those who are ready to discuss what training possibilities can materialise.

All in all, I have been richly rewarded in my work here and continue to enjoy the mission and the challenge. The Collins 'Takkies' have a new spring in their step!

We wish you a very peaceful and joyful Christmas as we close this exciting year. Please continue to pray for us.

♥

Bernie Mullen

