

Pippa and Toby Vokuhl

COLLECTORS ITEMS

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www.bmsworldmission.org/ptvokuhl

£ 18,000 achieved at auction for a set of false teeth?

... My eyes focus in on the BBC news item on the screen, and up comes a picture of the dentures in question. My word, not a pretty sight, but it turns out that for one collector the fact that the fake gnashers once belonged to a certain UK wartime politician (can you guess who?) warrant the significant investment.

What determines the value of an object?

I frequently ask myself this question when observing the ever growing collection of 'precious items' brought into the house by our middle daughter. Stones, pine cones, metal pieces, timbers of all shapes and sizes. No value to the bypasser, and admittedly the parents, but to our daughter each item is precious, has value, and deserves keeping and displaying. In the spirit of father-daughter engagement I therefore helped to construct a display shelf with her last Christmas (image below), and I have to admit that there is a certain visual appeal to the collection as whole.



You may wonder where I am heading with this?

Only just emerging out of the Easter festivities, maybe the message of Easter still rings in your ears too: Christ died for people of all shapes and sizes, the young, the old, the rich the impoverished, the clever, the uneducated, the well dressed and the scruffy, for those inhabiting the Global North, and the Global South.

The 'master collector' has space on His display shelf for you, for me, for your and for my neighbour.

In our case it is a Nepali neighbourhood, and we know that God desires forgiveness of sin, healing, restoration, hope and communal unity for those in distress here. It has been a pleasure to be associated with INF, the local BMS partner, for over six years now, where individuals who may be despised by their own communities because of illnesses such as leprosy, are declared precious, and valuable.

Linking the above to my (Toby's) work, we recently were able to complete a new greenhouse and flower growing facility at Green Pastures Hospital, offering leprosy sufferers the opportunity to develop new skillsets during their inpatient treatment period and rehabilitation. This links in with the recently built 30-bed inpatient ward, which is setting new standards in leprosy care here. Please pray for this service to become fully operational, for patients to start benefitting from mobilization and skill training, and for the hospital community to be encouraged by new flower beds adding visual appeal, and creating an attractive environment for healing. This project links in with the site development plan I have been working on, featuring green spaces across the site for health and environmental benefits.



I have also been involved in trialling new building maintenance systems, and advised on refurbishment of the GPH operating theatre (new floor and ceiling). It really is not ideal when there is water dripping from the ceiling whilst the surgeons are at work....Hopefully this will be resolved before the upcoming monsoon season. Pray for good maintenance systems to be established at all three INF hospital sites, so that services can consistently be provided.

Having managed a team of consultants through the design phase of a new key worker accommodation block for Green Pastures Hospital a few years ago, I was very pleased to recently see this progress to implementation. INF Nepal is currently fundraising, with the hope that construction can commence in the early summer. Do pray for the required funds to come in, and for a competent contractor to be appointed, resulting in a high quality structure. Once constructed, the new facility will help the hospital with HR and financial sustainability, attracting and retaining service critical staff, which presently is a challenge.

INF Nepal has recently gone through different stages of strategy forming and consultation, both for the clinical sites, and also the Disaster Response and Resilience (DRR) and health work in the hill and mountain regions. Please pray for all involved, and that the organisation can position itself well in a fast changing Nepal, financially sustainable, and relevant in terms of gaps within the health system, but also in terms of 'being salt and light'.



We have mentioned the Rukum/Jajarkot earthquake before, where many families have spent the winter in temporary shelters, awaiting confirmation of reconstruction grant assistance from the authorities before commencing reconstruction work. I was recently asked to review an INF concept note linked to recovery, and specifically the shelter/housing element. Please pray that the team here can put together a suitable proposal, and that with the help of overseas funders, INF staff can respond in the most context appropriate ways. I am hoping that the INF Engineers Bishal and Suviksha can get involved in assisting with these efforts.

Above engineers, both from a Hindu background, have recently got married to respective partners, and we do invite prayer for them during this new life phase. Do also pray that the links to a Christian NGO employer and co-workers will enable engagement with Christian truth, and for the Holy Spirit to be at work in their lives.



As a family, we invite your prayer too. Our oldest child, Jakey, recently had a medical incident which resulted in hospitalisation, numerous visits to specialists, and amendments to his daily routine for months. He has recovered well, but is struggling with GCSE mock exams and preparation for upcoming GCSEs, given interruptions to his school schedule. Do pray for God's protection over him during this time, and for focus during exam seasons.

We remain incredibly grateful for the fantastic school our three children are attending here (KISC), and invite prayer for sustainable staffing, and the leadership, as well as departing and newly arriving teachers.

In two months time we will be flying to the UK, and are already excited to see many of you, and to re-connect face-to-face. Do pray for all travel and deputation preparations to come together well. It has been so encouraging to see God's provision in a number of areas. See you soon.

Linked to summer 2024, it looks like there is a new and different season on the horizon for us 2024 to 2026. Our contract with BMS is coming to an end this summer (as country specific BMS partnerships are also changing). However, we still have a heart for Nepal, and have recently seen building blocks for further Christian service in Nepal come together. This will feature Kathmandu based life and work, and in my case, facilitating the construction of safe houses, a school, and a vocational training centre, for survivors of human trafficking, which sadly is rife here. We invite your prayer into all logistics of transitioning, and the many administrative, financial and logistical matters arising.

We will reflect in some more detail on the six years plus of supporting the work of INF in the country in our next newsletter. As active partners, walking alongside us, you have got a key share in that which has been invested in physical structures, processes, but critically also in relationships and people.

I hope that you feel encouraged, as a unique valued 'collectors item' yourself, but also as part of a worldwide collection of treasures which our amazing God is gathering in honour of the Son's sacrifice, as His eternal inheritance to forever be in His presence.

Grateful for the above, and trusting that luckily our own peculiarities can be well accommodated within the Creator's collection, we send you our love,

Toby, Pippa, Jakey, Ella, and Millie

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



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