



Dear Friends,

I had not intended to send out a letter from S.C.S., before Christmas until a plea from a lady in the UK set me thinking. What follows is not only on behalf of the S.C.S., pensioners, it is on behalf of all the lonely, forgotten, pensioners on this planet during this special time of Christmas.

A concerned lady, whom we will call 'A' whom I have never met, expressed to me her concern of a pensioner 'B' aged 80 years old. This aged lady is not related to 'A' but an old friend of her deceased mother. Mrs. 'B' is living in a retirement complex here in Bulawayo. Recently, she was forced to move from her large cottage into a small flatlet because of rent arrears.

She had to pack all her many years of belongings herself and get them carried to her rather small 'new' home. They say that one of the most traumatic things you will encounter next to the death of your partner is moving house. Imagine then, this widowed 80 year old having to cope by herself. At this moment she is suffering from the onset of Parkinson's disease surrounded by boxes upon boxes of belongings. This lady needs some family to assist with sorting her belongings and settling her in her 'new' home. She would also benefit from family being there for her and perhaps arranging some home help. You would then think that she has no one in this world? You are wrong, she has a daughter in South Africa who refuses to travel here to help her mother. Mrs. 'A' is at this moment paying off her arrears in rent and has now asked me to buy some Christmas treats for this confused, abandoned, lady.

My point to all this is, please, please, if you have parents, grandparents or even great aunts and uncles is to think about them, not only for this Christmas but also for the rest of the days in the New Year and beyond. People, who built countries, fought wars and made sacrifices when raising their children. Take a moment to listen to them, for they have had interesting lives too. They are not old, useless people.

At S.C.S. we have over 250 people on our books requiring medical assistance. If their families cared for them as they should, they would not have to rely on us.

As an example, one person in particular who has family comes to mind. This lady has an ill fitting artificial limb which is causing sores on the stump. She needs a new artificial limb at a cost of \$600 or £400 which we cannot afford to buy. As a result she is now in a wheelchair.

Please, at this special time and in the days and months after that, give your elderly relatives a call, or, even better, go to see them, give them a hug, let them know that they are not forgotten but appreciated. Let us have less elderly, lonely, forgotten people on this planet.

God bless. Dave Gill, for S.C.S