

THE INAUGURATION OF THE YOUTH CENTER IN HEBO

It was the early morning of Sunday April 18th when we moved from Asmara to reach Hebo, excited for the expectations of the day. The group was composed by the reverend Abba Zeracristos, the Visitor of the San Justine de Jacobis Province, my wife Silvana, Laura my daughter and myself. A three hours driving through the scenario of the Abissinian High Lands.

Coming from the narrow valley that leads to Hebo coming from the small town of Segheneiti, after having crossed the plain of Sycamores and driven for 10 km in an un-maid road, suddenly appears at the end of the valley the village of Hebo.



The plain of the Sycamores

And at the center of this enchanting view the Sanctuary of San Justin de Jacobis rises up, surrounded by the facilities of the Congregation of the Mission: the house of the Congregation of the Mission with the Seminar, the House of the Daughters of the Charity with the Orphanage, the primary and the secondary school for the boys and girls of the village of Hebo and the nearby villages. And now at the left side it appears the Oratory with its brightening roof under the rays of the sun in a shining spring day.



Hebo village

A crowd was waiting for us at the entrance of the village, almost all the community of Hebo chanting the glory of God. Priests, sisters, women, men, boys and girls. It was their day.



The community of Hebo

The procession moved till the entrance of the Oratory building where, after a devoted pray recited by the all people, I had the honor to cut the classic ribbon.



Silvana and Franco cutting the ribbon

A smaller procession guided by the Parish Priest Abba Johannes moved than along the internal and external periphery of the building for the blessing with holy water. Back to the main hall the bureaucratic ceremony started in front of the people of the Hebo community.



blessing the building

Many speeches after the introduction of the Parish Priest, including the local authorities. My speech was specifically addressed to the Youths, regardless their religion.

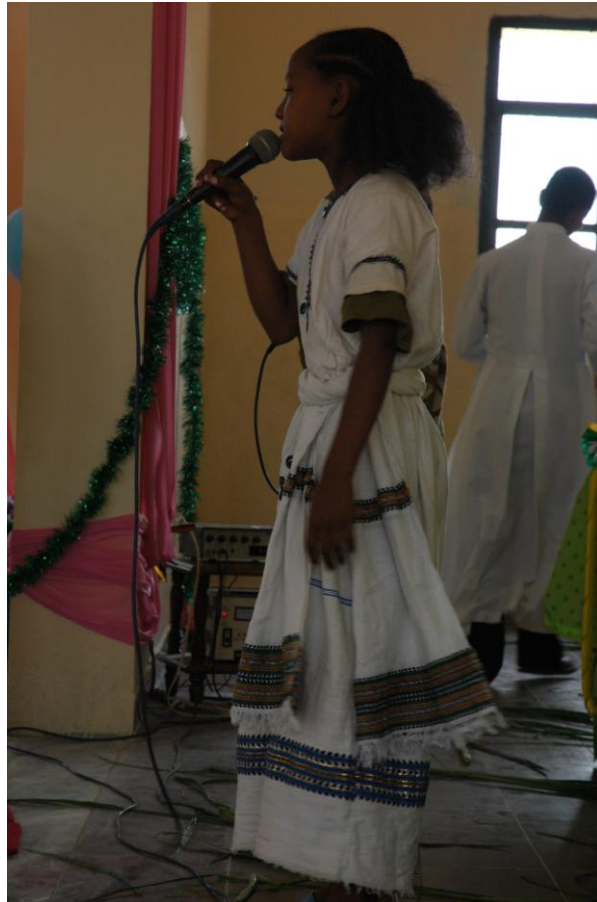


"The Oratory structure is only a box, it is nothing without your commitment to make the Oratory a living tool for your growth. We as Amici di Marco Onlus will help in sending equipment and materials for audio/ video, sport, library. For the moment we sent 8 computers that are already installed in a dedicated computer room."



The session was closed by Abba Zeracristos that synthesized the steps taken to achieve the target, the purposes and the expectations.

And than the feast started with the young boys and girls singing with their soft voices accompanied by the rhythmic momentum of the drums. A meal was served to all the village and after that all participated to the dances.



a girl singing at the inauguration



the meal for all the village



the coffee ceremony



Silvana and Franco dancing with the people of the village

Franco Ladavas

May 4, 2010

TECHNICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

- The project as it has been finally approved by the competent authorities is composed by two buildings. A general lay out shows the precise location.

The multipurpose hall and parish office, and a separate services building which has been located in the far right side of the complex.

- The building is 40.8 m x 17,1 m (almost 700 m²)x 6m. The ground level is 3m below the level of the other buildings in part because of the slop of the soil and in part to impact less the view on the other buildings.



the building

- The external walls recall the style of the other buildings ,so the new installation remain well integrated in the overall complex.



the Oratory, the House of the Fathers and the Sanctuary

- The services (toilets) building has been located in the most discrete position but it is bigger than previously planned, since the authorities requested to make available toilets also for the pilgrims coming to the Sanctuary. And we believe it was a wise request. Overall dimensions 14,15 m x 6,85 m. are foreseen two separate sections for man and female, each with 9 toilettes and one shower room. The building is not yet completed but all the material are already available on site.



the toilets

- In the area outside the building still some works have to be completed, including the removal of extra materials and proper leveling, cleaning and adjustment of the surrounding ground.



the area outside the building - backside

QUALITY OF THE WORKS

- When referred to Eritrean standard the quality of the work done by the contractor is a first class work.
- All the building is laying on a solid concrete basement.
- Excellent paving and wall finishing
- The doors design in handicraft steel works are very nice and give a touch of personalization.
- A point I would like to emphasize. We did request the contractor to employ mainly local workforce. This helped in an indirect manner the population of the valley that does not normally have many chances to get a job.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE

- Step by step the following will be implemented:
 - A video system capable to receive international broadcasting and to project DVD.
 - Music room: a stereo set, music CD, playing instruments.
 - Library: to provide books and cultural DVD.
 - Sport: to study a concept, up to now it is not clear at all which spaces can be made available and there it is not possible to identify yet any preferential activity. Of course football is always the preferred one but requires quite a lot of space. We remain waiting input from their side.