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# Not what we planned...

**How different my Christmas will look this year.**

Christmas 2018

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This is how I found the Teacher Training College on my return to Rwanda in October. It has been used for various functions already and Bishop James has moved into his new office downstairs. I am yet to move my desk over but look forward to doing that in the new year.

The upstairs is an empty room, that has been tiled and hooked up with all electrical work. The greatest need before starting classes is to obtain some desks and chairs for the students to use.

I am learning not to say when exactly, but we are looking forward to hosting an open day for the Principals of schools in the area to come and see what we have to offer their Teachers in training. We are also excited about visiting nursery schools and then interviewing potential students.

The school calendar is changing in Rwanda in 2020, so 2019 will look like a long year with few breaks for holiday times.



Nan and Pa came to visit Flora

When I returned from Australia at the end of September, I travelled 'home' with my Mum, Barbara and my Dad Derek. They came to Rwanda - Dad to meet Flora for the first time, and both of them to spend as much time with Flora as possible while also enjoying some sights of Rwanda. Well, on day 4, my sweet Mum slipped on some water on the floor and broke her left hip. She stayed in traction for four days and then underwent a full hip replacement in Rwanda - while she stayed awake - talk about stoic! While this was not exactly the itinerary that we had planned, we certainly got to spend a lot of time together as they ended up staying for nearly five weeks, Mum and Dad both enjoying lots of 'Cups of tea' made by Flora and being the patient while Dr Flora fixed them up!

Flora thoroughly enjoyed her 3rd birthday and of course opening the presents were a highlight. We had a 'Emma Wiggle' party planned and had to cancel it three times - due to various illnesses and things. She was a trooper and patiently waited for the real day!

Last Saturday we went to the Christmas markets and just have a look at who we found - the real live Ho Ho - she was so excited and loved to visit Ho Ho - she hasn't quite got the idea that he brings presents yet but was just as happy to visit him. Last year Santa had an African face and this year he had a European face - she was non the wiser but Mummy was completely taken a back!

She was given a children's bible for her birthday, that you can read a chapter a night as an advent and the lead up to Christmas day - so she is loving reading her bible each night as we try to embed the story of Jesus' birth into her while putting all the pieces together of baby Jesus and Santa.





My eldest nephew Glenn, aged 31, died suddenly yet peacefully in his sleep on December 6th. It has been a huge shock to our family, as it was so very unexpected. Glenn had type 1 diabetes and has had a few times when he has been quite ill from his diabetes. Last week he had done a few night shifts and he probably went to bed exhausted and peacefully slipped into a diabetic coma. Its reassuring to us that he didn't suffer in his death, but such a shock that an otherwise fit young man should leave this earth way too soon.

His funeral will be on Thursday 20th December at Woronora in the South Chapel at 10am.

I will leave Rwanda on Monday 17th and arrive 'home' on Tuesday 18th. I will be in Sydney until the 9th January, and as you can appreciate this trip is one to spend time with my family as we remember, grieve and mourn our loss this Christmas of our dear Glenn.

*Please remember us in your prayers by praying for...*

- My family as we navigate our unexpected loss of Glenn.
- For comfort and peace as we say our goodbyes to Glenn next Thursday.
- The bittersweet time that we get to spend as a family so close to Christmas.
- For little Flora who once again has to watch her Mummy leave for Australia while she stays in Rwanda.
- For my friends Helen and Tim who arrive in Rwanda tomorrow and had planned months ago to stay in my house. Helen and Tim have graciously agreed to take care of Flora while I am away - her Nanny will continue to come during the day and Helen and Tim will be here to spend the nights and weekends with Flora.
- For safe travel as family travel Interstate and Internationally to be together to honour Glenn.

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted Matthew 5:4*