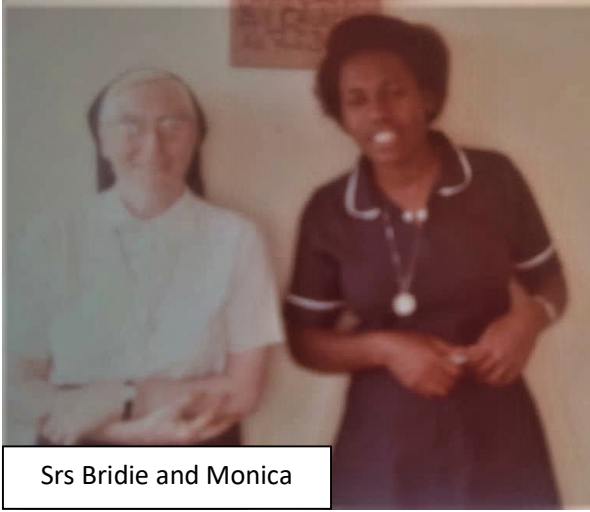


A Memoir of Bisheshe – Sr Mona Maher



Srs Bridie and Monica

About 1984 or 1985, Bridie Doherty, Monica Beebwa and myself were the community at Bisheshe. Politically things were not great in the country. One evening Monica and myself were travelling from Ibanda town in the pick-up from shopping when we were stopped by 3 soldiers asking for a lift to Bisheshe. Of course we accepted them and asked where they were going, only to be informed that they were going for an “operation” in the village. The word created a certain fear in me and when at about 10.00 pm we heard the first shot all my fears returned. Knowing that we lived among poor people, we wondered what their

mission might be. It seemed that the shooting got closer and closer and fearing that the men might be thieves and that the Sisters might be their target we decided to leave our beds and the house.

For those of you who know Bisheshe there is a fairly high hill, planted with Eucalyptus trees, to the right of the house and we decided to run there. We hastily dressed, but surprisingly forgot that we were heading out into the night. I, for one went off in my bedroom slippers! Bridie reminded us to take the Blessed Sacrament with us, which we prepared and Bridie carried.

We set off down the plantation of trees. The sounds of gun shots got louder and louder as we tried to hurry. Monica, the young one, moved easily and swiftly while Bridie and myself limped along together as fast as we could. Finally we caught up with Monica and as we breathed a sigh of relief to be together. Bridie said out loud “Jesus, Mary and Joseph I forgot me teeth”. What a moment of light relief. All 3 of us laughed and laughed until we cried. It broke the tension within us and we were able to sit down and wait.



It was indeed a bad night in the area for some people but as Sisters we were never the target. Reflecting on the story and Bridie’s prayer and humanity I can thank God for our Sisters who have a wonderful sense of humour and who can make others laugh even in the most serious of situations. Thank you Bridie.

Mona