



# Capstone Ministries

## Child and Family Restoration Outreach

*"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone" Psalm 118:22*

A prayer letter from Dan and Patty Schmelzer, Kisumu, Kenya

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### The Rehabilitative Gospel

*"..whoever lives and believes in me will never die." John 11:26*

At times of high stress and danger, our body responds with a quick infusion of adrenaline into the bloodstream. It enables us the human body to "fight or flee" danger and is just one of the defense mechanisms of the body that demonstrates just how wonderfully we are made.

But when stress and trauma remains unresolved in the heart and mind, time can set the issue in cement and create fear, doubt, troublesome behavior and even physical ailments.

As Martha meets Jesus on the road, four days have passed since her brother Lazarus' death. The pain and heartache of Jesus' absence has already begun to show itself in Martha's anger and disappointment. There is bitterness in her words, **"Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."** In the arena of her mind, pain is attacking her faith and the resultant feelings she is left with are doubt and fear.

The response of Jesus to Martha is striking. While his sympathy is observed later in his weeping, he speaks directly to her doubt and pain with strong words of hope. He provides an anchor for her heart, buffeted by the winds of death and disappointment. **"I am the resurrection and the life,"** Jesus tells her!

When you stand in front of a grave and lay to rest the body of someone you have known and loved for years; the pain screams "NO! WHY?" Only the Son of God, who is life, can say, "Live and believe in me and you will never die!"

For weeks, Victor had been engaging in behavior that was troublesome. He had been threatening to run away. He would hide until someone would notice he was gone and start looking for him. He would bully the other boys at the center. Often he would repeat negative behavior knowing he would be punished. Something was behind this "acting out" desire for attention but we could not figure out what the issue was.

One evening after devotion time, Ezekiel asked him a simple question: "Victor what are you afraid of?" "Dying," replied Victor. "I don't want them to put me in the ground! What happens after they do that?"

Children deal with death and its pain far too frequently in Africa. Every weekend it seems communities are attending another funeral. HIV, malaria and a recent cholera epidemic continue to claim far too many lives. Those who die have children. And many of the children are left standing along the road like Martha asking, "Lord, why were you not here to save my Baba!"

Victor had internalized his impression of death and began to wonder what death felt like. What happens when you die? How do you feel? Without answers, he began to act out his insecurity as if he was crying out for someone to love him.



Victor (far left)

Ezekiel is an intuitive counselor. He knew that Victor needed certainty in the midst of the pain of his fears. He related this story of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. He reassured Victor that those who live and believe in Jesus don't really die. It is like opening a door and walking into another room. You leave your body behind, but you walk ahead.

Ezekiel described the conversation for the staff one Friday morning during devotion time and said it was as if a burden had been lifted from Victor's shoulders.

Victor certainly still has issues. Just like all of us, we never stop needing the reassurance that God loves us and will be there when life ends and we walk into the next room.

"Fight or flight" may be a mechanism our body uses to cope with fearful situations. But it is faith in a risen Jesus that drives away fear!

## Praises, Prayers and Recent News

1. **Pray** for the boys currently at the CTC: Thomas, Brian, James and Victor.
2. **Praise God** for Norman who had a chance to meet Mark Bean in June. Mark's late father donated the funds for Norman's heart surgery. Mark shared stories and pictures of his father with Norman in their visit before Mark flew back to the US.
3. **Pray** for Dan's mom who is doing well and even improving with a medication adjustment that was effecting her breathing.
4. Pray for Dan's brother-in-law Barry who has been diagnosed with disorder called Cerebellar ataxia. It is a untreatable condition that causes a part of the brain to shrink affecting balance and speech.
5. **Praise God** for Patty's safe return from the US on 2<sup>nd</sup> July. Paul Gimode, our manager returns on 7<sup>th</sup> of July.
6. **Pray** for our donors who continue to support us in Kenya unselfishly. These are the times that test faith and it is proving genuine among those who think first of the Lord's work even before their own personal financial security. God does promise that when we seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, all the things we need for life will be added as well.
7. **Praise God** that Brian and James had the opportunity to visit their homes over a weekend recently. Home visitation enables us to witness what obstacles might still remain or present themselves before a boy can be reunited permanently.
8. **Praise God** our registration is almost complete. Only the signing of the document by the Minister of Lands remains.
9. **NEWS! SaveMart** and Lucky Stores SHARES cards are still available for those who live in N. California. Why not encourage your friends at church or in your neighborhood to use them. 3% of your purchase is donated to Capstone just by remembering to have the teller swipe your card. Call the number in Patterson, send an email or indicate on the return receipt how many cards you would like.

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## Dan's Diary

George Bailey complained to his father in the movie "It's a Wonderful Life" that he could never be an accountant or a banker because of the constant worry over "a few cents and a length of pipe." I now know the feeling first hand, George! I have been the accountant in Patty's absence and even though I have not had to account for a length of pipe, I can appreciate the detail nature of the job and will happily hand it back to my better half in a few days.

During the last month the Transition Center in Mbale has been improving almost daily. All four boys have started attending afternoon tutoring classes to help improve their performance in school.

A rain water collection system is almost up and running. Only making the last few connections remains. Mbale gets frequent rains and since the road improvements have cut the water lines, we will be blessed to be self sufficient with our own "heavenly" water supply.

Two new "kids" have arrived at the center. "Kids" of the goat variety that is! With the addition of the goat house a few months ago, we have gone through all the training for keeping goats and have begun with two females called Ehlert and Massengill. Will share more about the names next time.

The staff had a wonderful gathering at the rural home of our staff member Newton Tela on Saturday June 27<sup>th</sup>. It was a pleasure to see how Newton has implemented so many improvements including zero grazing of cows, a chicken house, a high yield garden and is in the initial stages of upgrading his goats as well. The staff enjoyed some roast goat, chicken and Kenyan staples: ugali, skumawiki. Thanks Newton! We really ate like kings!

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Our sincere thanks to Steve and Lisa Nolan from New Hartford, CT for all their work on this new website and for sharing the work of Capstone Ministries at the upcoming LCMS Convention in June.

**Donations are tax deductible.**

**Make checks payable to: Key Ministries, Kenya Mission**

**As our partners we encourage you to spread the word about this ministry. Feel free to share this newsletter or write to Dan and Patty to add a friend to this mailing.**