



# Capstone Ministries



## *Restoring Children! Strengthening Families!*



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

A missionary update letter from Dan and Patty Schmelzer, Kisumu, Kenya

December, 2013 Volume 8 Issue 12

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The number of  
street boys  
reconciled with  
family by Capstone  
Ministries to date:

# 276

5 went home in Nov.



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Part of your premium can be donated to Capstone. Learn more about steps you need to take to ensure you can take full advantage of this program and continue your support of Capstone Ministries through this program. Go to

[www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice)

## Christmas and Humble Service

*"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness." Philippians 2:6,7*

We call the period from Jesus' conception to his death and burial his "humiliation." Not because He was a victim of humiliation but rather because He chose to humble himself and become human, and a servant rather than fully display his divinity. During this time, Jesus became the suffering servant described in Isaiah. He lived and died as our substitute.

The beauty of the scene in Bethlehem is contained not in the ornate Christmas card images but in the words of the angel to the shepherds *"Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you, he is Christ the Lord"* Luke 2:11

In the book of Philippians, Paul encourages all to imitate this divine humility by *"considering others better than yourselves."* He reminds us that attitude and mind set is key in humility. Being united with Christ, however does not stop with the inner qualities of humility. They find expression in how we treat others. That is why Paul does not hesitate to say *"you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."* Vs. 4

**Needy family  
joyfully receives  
their Christmas  
gift in 2012.**



During this Christmas time, we also want to give you an opportunity to demonstrate the humility of being like-minded with Jesus. In a tangible way you can make a difference for a poor family here in Kenya,

Every year we make a list of the most poverty stricken families among those where we have reconciled a former street boy. The week before Christmas, our staff visit these families and provide them with a "Christmas basket." It contains some essential items to brighten Christmas for these families.

## **.....Patty's Post-It.....**

### **Holiday Cheer and Our Kenya Traditions**

Dan and I returned to Kenya on Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> just one week before that gastronomical delight called Thanksgiving. One of the most difficult aspects of being a missionary so many miles away is missing out on the family activities of the holiday season. Yes, after eleven years in Kenya we still feel it every year when we are here and our families are there. We must often remind ourselves that Thanksgiving is about giving thanks and Christmas is about celebrating the birth of our Savior.

This year we spent Thanksgiving Day enjoying a feast of turkey and the trimmings as well as the fellowship of other missionaries, mostly Americans. An American at CDC hosted all of us in his spacious backyard. The day concluded with songs of praise and thanks. *"Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy one, give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son...."*

Isn't it true that something done more than once is a tradition? This Christmas will be the third successive year we have celebrated at Rondo Retreat Center in the Kakamega Rain Forest. Rondo has become our favorite place of rest and spiritual refreshment. What better way to spend the holiday so far away from family? Christmas Eve is celebrated with a candle light service in the small chapel at the edge of the forest. The Christmas story is remembered through traditional Christmas songs. It's a beautiful evening with only the flickering of candles to light the church. Christmas morning we are served a wonderful breakfast in the dining room. Last year I went to breakfast with reindeer antlers jingling on my head. The Rondo staff really laughed, even the cook came out of the kitchen to see the silly head adornment. If I wear my antlers again this year, we'll have a new tradition!

Dan has been honored to deliver the Christmas message in the chapel on Christmas Day for the past two years.

Over the years we have come to know the employees of Rondo on a personal level and have also become friends with Godfrey and Elizabeth who are the directors of Rondo. Although we still miss our own families we feel a sense of family in this beautiful place where the focus of Christmas is only about the birth of our Savior.

Dan and I wish you all the joys of tradition, the love of family and a focus on the birth of Jesus Christ. A very Merry Christmas to all!

This year we have chosen 32 families to receive a Christmas gift. It is a gift that includes rice, sugar, cooking oil, soap, tea, milk, a bag of candy for the kids and flour for the traditional bread called chapati. The cost to provide one Christmas package is \$15.



It is important to mention that this is a one-time gift as an expression of and response to the love of Jesus in Christmas. Capstone does not provide food stuffs on a regular basis to families. We encourage families to be self-reliant and to depend only on God and the gifts and abilities he gives to earn their daily bread.

You can indicate your intention under "special designation" on the form on p. 4 by simply noting "Christmas gift for needy families." We do not limit the number of gifts you can provide.

## **Staff Spiritual Retreat**

In 2014, we are planning for a 3 day staff retreat. We visited the proposed site in Mbita at the end of November for one day and were very impressed with the location and accommodations. The retreat host would be "SEEK"-- Suba Environmental & Education of Kenya located on the shores of Lake Victoria in Southwestern Kenya. If you would like to donate toward this retreat, the cost is \$400. This includes accommodations, food and transport for all 8 staff to Mbita for 3 days and 2 nights.





*"Today in the town of David  
a Savior has been born to you;  
he is Christ the Lord."*

*Luke 2:11*

*Merry Christmas from Capstone Ministries  
As you plan your Christmas giving,  
please remember Capstone*



## **Serving in the ELCK**

Every year the ELCK has a tradition of hosting at various parishes a "synod" or gathering of its various congregations for a teaching opportunity. This year I was invited to present on the topic of Justification by Faith. Held on Friday through Sunday evening, the gathering also provided an opportunity for all parishes to rejoice in the baptism of 29 children and adults and the confirmation of more than 30.

**Pastor Joseph  
Abuor performs  
one of 29 baptisms  
on the opening day  
of the Kisumu  
Synod.**



In addition to teaching at the Synod, I had the opportunity on Thanksgiving evening to teach 150 youth on the Crucifixion and Death of Jesus Christ. We looked at the coordination and succession of events in the four Gospels, highlighting specifically the significance of all that took place the moment Jesus died. Can you name all seven?

## **SaveMart S.H.A.R.E.S. benefits Capstone**

SaveMart Supermarket in Northern California has a program that benefits various non-profits organizations. When you shop at SaveMart, you only need to present your card before purchase and 3% of the value of your purchase is kept in the account you have designated, in this case Capstone Ministries. Capstone receives a check quarterly from all those who have participated by taking the extra 5 seconds to hand the cashier your S.H.A.R.E.S. card.

To date Capstone has received \$4,198.76 from this program.


Do you live in Northern California? Do you shop at SaveMart? Why not help Capstone while you shop! Ask for your card on the form on p. 4 of this newsletter!



## Prayers, Praises

1. Praise God for the safe travel from the USA to Kenya at the end of November. We returned just before Thanksgiving
2. Pray for an effective sharing of Christmas gifts with needy families the week before Christmas
3. Thanksgiving for the many supportive congregations and individuals during this three month fund raising effort in the Midwest, California and Canada.
4. Pray that our application for renewal of a work permit goes smoothly. We applied back in August and have not yet heard news of approval.
5. Pray for peace in Kenya. Security is both a reality and a perception in Kenya. Much can be done to minimize potential problems. But in the end, we entrust ourselves into the hands of a gracious and powerful God.
6. Praise for our mothers, Josey and Chrysta, who are both strong and active in their 80's.
7. Recent communication from St. Louis indicates that our RSO application will come before committee soon. Pray that all is approved and we can move forward with plans upon approval of this significant step.
8. Pray for the new program that gives supporters the opportunity to sponsor a boy who has been reconciled with his family. This new program, called School Sponsorship & Spiritual Support (SSSS) provides a school uniform, a Bible and Luther's Catechism and to pray regularly for the specific needs of boy in Capstone's Program.
9. Pray for donors for the Christmas gifts for needy families, a sponsor for the Staff Retreat, sponsors for our high school applicants and our ongoing operational needs.
10. We offer the following names for intercession, trusting the Lord knows their circumstance: Jennifer, Pat, Barry, Eunice, Chrysta, Gabriel, Christian, Troy, Phil, Liz, Mary Anne, Mike, Jim, Joel, Jen, Jan, Susan, Landon, Ernie, Lori, Rod, Andy, Alexa, Bob, Curt, Delanna, Joel, Jennifer, Marv Anne, Steve.

Donation: For Capstone & Dan and Patty Support

Name \_\_\_\_\_ 

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Designation? \_\_\_\_\_

Need a S.H.A.R.E.S Card ? \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you do not need a hard copy of the newsletter and prefer to read it online \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Capstone Ministries.

All donations are tax deductible.

[CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com](mailto:CapstoneMinistries@gmail.com)

Send to:

Capstone Ministries, P.O. Box 2080,  
Oakdale, CA 95361

## Steps to Reconciliation – Pt. 3

### Nurturing and Stabilizing

*-This article is a continuation of the process of Capstone's work in reconciling street children with their families.*

The goal of reconciliation is only half completed when we take a boy from the street and take him home. We have taken the boy out of the street but the street remains in the boy. In other words, the bonding with family is not something that happens instantaneously upon the boys' return; there is much yet to be done. The root issue may not yet have been addressed that sent the boy to the street. There also is much in the way of spiritual development of the family that needs to take place.

Many assume that the root cause of street children is poverty and that money and food needs to be provided. While poverty may be a contributing factor to social problems in Kenya, it is also true that many children live in stable poor homes. Parental love and spiritual development are more important than any other single factor in family stability. Capstone does not provide ongoing monetary assistance to families. Our experience has shown that this only leads to dependency, laziness and little in the way of parental responsibility.

Instead Capstone takes a counseling and spiritual approach to the development of families. This is done in a number of ways:

1. Ongoing follow up visits. A family who has a child reconciled will receive a follow up visit within two weeks, sooner if necessary. This is an assessment visit to determine if the child has been enrolled in school and is comfortable at home. Follow visits are then scheduled on a need basis.

2. Families are encouraged to join one of the 10 Bible study groups formed by Capstone. These groups have been formed with the intention of providing spiritual enrichment of the care givers and to give an opportunity for parents to share with each other. It is in these groups that we have seen dramatic improvement in the love and care of parents for their children. Members can also buy a Bible at a reduced cost sharing basis from Capstone.

.....Continued next month

Donation: "4S Primary School Sponsorship"

Name \_\_\_\_\_ 

Address \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you do not need a hard copy of the newsletter and prefer to read it online \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Student name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Capstone Ministries.

All donations are tax deductible.

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