



Capstone Ministries



Restoring Children! Strengthening Families!

"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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In this Issue

- Page 1: "Christmas Gifts
- p. 2: "Christmas" cont."
- p. 2 School Sponsorship
- p. 2 Update on Patty
- p. 2 News and Notes



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The number of
street boys
reconciled with
family by
Capstone
Ministries since
2005

585

Rescued to date



Check out Capstone
on Facebook.



Capstone Ministries is an RSO of the LC-MS (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)

"Christmas Gifts"

"On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh." Matthew 2:11

Those Christmas cards that picture the Magi wearing crowns, bowing low at the manger with the shepherds has a few historical anachronisms. First the Magi were not kings. They most certainly were powerful and wealthy. In fact, they were most likely some of the most powerful people in the world. Alfred Edersheim indicates in his "Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah" that these men most likely came from nearby Parthia and had roots to the ancient sect of Magi of which Daniel (yes that Daniel from the lion's den) was one. He speculates that they may have been from a secret sect established by Daniel who awaited the birth of the King of Kings signaled by a special star. Parthia had occupied Judea just 40 years before the birth of Jesus. Herod the Great with Marc Antony defeated the Parthians and retook Jerusalem and environs in a bloody battle fought on Jewish soil. Rome had fought many a battle with the Parthian Empire before and after the birth of Jesus, losing more than 50% of their troops in just one bloody battle with them.

Their priestly caste called Magi arrive in Jerusalem and Matthew notes, ***"When King Herod heard this he was disturbed and all Jerusalem with him."*** (2:3) Recognized as those who appointed kings and rulers in Parthia, they ask Herod, ***"Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."*** (2:2) The announcement to the vicious, paranoid, and insecure Herod must have done more than just "disturb."

The Magi go their way after hearing from the chief priests regarding Micah's prophecy of Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph have not returned to Nazareth after the census and are found living in a house. Perhaps Joseph found work as a "teknon" in the town of his ancestry, so they remained. The Magi entering what was the tiny hamlet of Bethlehem must have caused quite a stir. It was even more amazing that Scripture records that these men bow down and worship the child Jesus. None of the ordained Jewish pastorate (chief priests and elders) are there. Only Gentiles

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bow before the long promised Jewish Messiah.

Numerous historians are of the opinion that they were more than three. Such powerful and wealthy men must have been accompanied by a contingent of Parthian soldiers for protection in treacherous Judea.

The gifts they bring have extreme value. Myrrh alone was worth its weight in gold. Both Frankincense and Myrrh were byproducts of a tree resin found only on the Arabian Peninsula. Myrrh is mentioned in Exodus as an anointing oil for priests. They were likely the most common form of barter used by traders. Their extreme value was a financial boon for the Holy Family who will shortly spend time running away from Herod's plot to kill the new King of the Jews.

Thirty or so years later, that infant would teach us about generosity and giving. ***“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”*** (Matthew 25:40)

You can kneel next to the Magi, worship and adore him, and present your gift to Him this December. A gift given to the marginalized in our world is a gift given to Jesus.



Michelle Akinyi receives her Christmas package in 2019

Every December we give you the opportunity to do just that, assisting needy families with a special Christmas package of food and basic supplies for the needy families of a reconciled former street boy or girl. Each package has a value of about \$20 and will sustain a rural family for several weeks, boosting their Christmas celebration.

God bless you for your support.

Prayers for Patty

Patty continues to recover and receive treatment for ITP in California. She has maintained a consistent “sweet spot” platelet count now for a several months. She continues to be treated with Promacta which stimulates her body to maintain a normal platelet count.

We ask for your prayers for the coming months as her hematologist plans to begin reducing her meds in Jan.

News and Notes

-School in Kenya is opening and we encourage those who sponsor individual students in High School to submit gift for those going back to school.

-COVID infections in Kenya are rising but nearly as fast as in the US.

-Dan continues to wait for a vaccine to be administered before returning to Kenya. As a diabetic, we felt it best to hold off for a few more months before returning to Kenya.

-Capstone staff are taking precautions, traveling only short distances and focusing on street work, as well as updating files during this past month.

-Plans are being made for both a post-Easter visit to churches on the West Coast and in the Midwest. A fall visit to the East Coast, Carolinas, and Florida is also in the planning stage. Watch for these announcements in the coming months.

-There were no boys or girls rescued in November.

-When you make a donation to Capstone, a letter noting the accumulated donation to date is listed for your taxes. In case you have misplaced your letter after your most recent donation, please send us an email and we will send you one for 2020. Thanks as always for your generosity.

-We thank you for your consideration with your end of year donations.

