



Looking Up...

The **MISSION TO CHILDREN**

Reaching Out

www.MissionToChildren.org

december 2006



The Father's Invitation

"Then the master of the house...said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind...Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.'" (Luke 14:21-23)

December's Christmas projects (see insert) and dinner outreaches extend our Heavenly Father's invitation to those who haven't heard and responded to God's loving call. With your partnership our worldwide ministry contacts are shining God's Light into dark corners around the globe. Your donations for the Christmas Wish List impact many children. (Please mark the attached insert with your donation and mail back in the enclosed envelope.)

As children in Iraq and China read their new Bibles—perhaps for the first time—they can hear the words of Jesus, "Let the children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19:14)

Most South African schools still start with prayer and Scripture once a week. However, as the teachers teach our ten character qualities to their students, they find positive changes in themselves as well as in their children.

As Filipino street kids see God's love in action and hear the Gospel they learn about the God Who loves them deeply. As they come to the Prince of Peace, they exemplify Jesus' words in Matthew 18:4: "Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

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"...The Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

(Luke 1:78-79)



"Even so it is not the will of your Father Who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." (Matthew 18:14)

From My Heart

Wisdom for All Seasons

Dr. John Garmo – President



Since the Christmas season is a time of gift giving, I have a question for you: What would you like to receive, or give another, as a special gift this year?

My vote is with Solomon. God's Word reports in 1 Kings 3 that young king Solomon loved the Lord. God loved Solomon, too. Early in his career as king, the Lord appeared in a nighttime dream and asked, "What shall I give you?"

Solomon answered by observing God's loving-kindness to his father David in granting him a son to succeed him as king. Then Solomon acknowledged his own limitations in leading a large nation and requested an understanding heart so he could discern between good and evil as he governed his people.

God was pleased that instead of requesting health, wealth, or vengeance on enemies Solomon asked for wisdom. In His delight, He gave Solomon unmatched wisdom and understanding, vast riches, high honor, and—if Solomon walked with God consistently—long life.

Wisdom is the character quality with which we develop true understanding and common sense. This insight guides a person in making good decisions. It enables that person to anticipate the reasonable outcomes of various choices and then choose the best option. However, it sometimes seems that common sense is not very common!

Wisdom is more than knowledge. Knowledge is information, such as facts about people, places, and issues. Wisdom puts knowledge into a broader perspective. English poet William Cowper observed this difference more than 200 years ago: "Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much; wisdom is humble that he knows no more."

Nor is wisdom the same as intellectual capacity. Highly intelligent people can in some circumstances be naïve and rather unwise. Conversely, people of average intelligence can in some circumstances be experienced and quite wise.

A wise person uses intelligence to apply accumulated knowledge, experience, and common sense to understand and respond appropriately to a current situation. As wisdom grows, a person develops perspective, discernment, and discretion.

If you could give a special gift to family, friends, and colleagues, wouldn't you give them more wisdom? Likewise, if it could be packages sent to you, wouldn't you cherish the gift of more wisdom? Although many Christmas gifts are consumed during Christmastime, wisdom is for all seasons. I like long-lasting gifts.

The Scriptures tell us much about gaining and applying wisdom. Psalm 111:10 says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." Wise men still seek Him. In the Proverbs, authored principally through Solomon, God teaches us the wisdom of living life skillfully. Throughout the Bible are examples of those who did, and did not, live wisely. Knowing our need, in James 1:5 God welcomes our requests for more wisdom.

We are not alone. God so loves us and wants us to live wisely that He even provides a Friend for this journey. In Isaiah 9:6 God foretold His Christmas gift to us: Jesus Christ, our Wonderful Counselor. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

**"The fear of the LORD
is the beginning of
wisdom."**



The Father's Invitation (*cont'd*)

(continued from page 1)

In Indian leper communities children, as well as parents and grandparents, hear the Good News of Salvation as their physical and spiritual needs are met through *Bundles of Love*. The demonstration of God's love to little Haitian children and their mothers at the feeding center shines brightly into dark corners of Port-au-Prince ghettos.

Maybe *you* haven't responded yet to God's persistent, but gentle, invitation. "The Son of Man [continues] to seek and save those [who are] lost" (Luke 19:10). He invites you to His banquet table. Will you respond? "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." (Revelation 3:20)



*"What Can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part,—
Yet what I can I give Him,
Give [Him] my Heart."*

(By Christina Rossetti)

A Simple Prayer of Dedication

by Jan Garmo

A friend of MTC recently shared the following story with me:

A page on the plight of AIDS orphans in the MTC Personal Prayer Diary kept tugging at her heart. The article ended with this prayer: "Pray that God will show you what you can do to be Christ's body to these children." Mary (not her real name) personalized those words, recommitted her talent to God, and asked Him how He could use her artistic ability for His glory. Was there a way she could make a difference with the talent God had given her? Soon an idea began germinating in her mind.



She went to her art teacher with this newly-formed idea. During class she asked if any fellow artists would be willing to donate their art to a craft fair in October, with the understanding that all the proceeds from the booth would go to an MTC AIDS project in Kenya. The response was overwhelming. About 25 ladies contributed their artistic and baking skills to this MTC booth.

By the end of the craft fair the participants were ecstatic to discover that well over \$1000 had been donated to this MTC project. God truly blessed the "work of their hands." Recently in a Kenyan village 721 people were tested for AIDS and those who were HIV positive were referred for treatment at a nearby clinic. These generous gifts from the craft fair will help support (medically and spiritually) people recently diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

Year-End Giving Receipts

For income tax purposes, donations postmarked on (or before) December 30th are regarded by the government as given in 2006. Checks dated December 30th, but postmarked in January, must be treated as January 2007 contributions. The *postmark* is the determining factor.

If you would like a receipt showing your donations for the entire year of 2006, please request this either by correspondence, telephone, or email.

U.S. Donors

Congress has passed a pension bill which the President signed on August 17. This bill relates to organizations such as Mission To Children. A maximum of \$100,000 a year can be donated from regular IRAs or Roth IRAs tax-free, if paid directly to charities. The IRA owner must be at least 70 1/2 when the distribution is made. Currently, the change applies to 2006 and 2007. Please check with your tax advisor for details.

Forgive Us as We Forgive Others

One of the greatest tragedies of our time is the breakdown of the traditional family unit. The growing divorce rate and percentage of unwed mothers has so permeated our own society that we often forget to pray about the damage it is causing children around the world and the societies in which they live.

In Costa Rica the percentage of children born to unmarried mothers rose from 38% in 1985 to 51% in 1999. Many of these single mothers do not want the fathers involved because of the man's drug addiction or domestic violence. In sub-Saharan Africa the dehumanizing effects of apartheid have contributed to the breakdown of the family unit in the form of domestic violence, emotional and physical abuse of children, rape, murder, and poverty. Due to Norway's oil wealth, the state can provide much support for single mothers. Therefore, it has become a sign of economic success and emancipation of women for couples *not* to get married. Fifty percent of Norwegian children are born outside of marriage, and of the marriages that do occur, 48% end in divorce.

The breakdown of the family is occurring at an alarming rate all over the world. This is *not* the way God intended it. Children need positive female *and* male role models so that they can grow up to become good parents and spouses and productive members of society.

This month please pray for children in broken families to know God as their loving Father. Pray that fathers will live up to their roles to protect and provide for their families, single mothers will have the strength to raise their children alone, and societies will recognize the value of committed, Christ-centered marriages. Also pray for repentance, forgiveness, and commitment to reign in families and marriages with God's grace.

Pray, Journal, and Plan in 2007

Last year many of the MTC family used a desk calendar to organize their daily, weekly, and monthly schedules, systematically pray for the nations, journal their prayer times, and follow a Bible reading plan. We are still offering the 2007 edition as a tool to inspire and inform your devotional life with illustrated country and people group profiles, world maps, and articles on prayer. Each month targets a specific prayer focus with information, a picture, and prayer points. The 2007 Personal Prayer Diary/Daily Planner comes in black with an MTC logo on the front cover. Mark your request on the new perforated insert and mail in the enclosed envelope. (See the attached insert for suggested donation.)

Gifts for Sponsored Children

Sending a gift to your child is completely optional. However, if you do choose to send a gift we ask that you limit the size and dollar amount because many sponsored children do not receive any gifts. We will only forward small, flat items that fit into a 5"x7" envelope. A monetary gift should be no larger than \$25 USD. Any amount over \$25 will be used as a group gift for the home. Bulky, heavy, or expensive gifts *will not* be forwarded due to the possibility of duty charged to the recipient.

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!
(2 Corinthians 9:15)

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