



# Looking Up

## *...Reaching Out* **The** *Mission To Children*

[www.missiontochildren.org](http://www.missiontochildren.org)

June 2006



"He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry." (Psalm 146:7)



### Changed Lives for Filipino Street Kids

How can North Americans influence Filipino street kids? Through partnering with Camp Jabez, near Manila, God's love—through us—can effectively touch the lives of destitute children. This summer let's pray that God will work a life-change for many needy street kids attending Camp Jabez. Those in charge of the camp tell us that several key ingredients make this camp successful: Lots of good food, plenty of fun, and ample exposure to God's Word—all administered with large doses of compassionate care.

Statistics gathered by UNICEF state that cities in the Philippines accommodate as many as 1.5 million street children, with more than 75,000 living in Manila. Some street children work or beg during the day but sleep with their families at night. (Families live on the street or in the slums.) Other street kids are homeless, abandoned, runaway kids who use cardboard boxes for sleeping mats. They are vulnerable to becoming pickpockets, prostitutes, or addicts—unless they are reached by the Gospel.

God blessed a recent Jabez camp with all 50 youth who attended professing their faith in Jesus Christ. Christian workers are organizing a follow-up program for these new believers. Jesus died for these children. Charles Spurgeon reminds us to "Never lose heart in the power of the Gospel. Do not believe that there exists any man [child]...for whom the Gospel is not fitted." Our gifts and prayers will make a difference!



All 50 campers profess their faith in Jesus

## He Restores My Soul

Dr. John Garmo – President



Last month I was in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, to work with our national colleagues regarding ministry review and planning. During the same week I team-taught two seminars coordinated by one of our international partners, the Pointman Leadership Institute. These seminars for adult professionals are door-openers for our ministry to children.

I have fond boyhood memories of Santa Cruz, which still feels like a Spanish cowboy town to me. Parts of it look today much as they did 50 years ago, with a few notable exceptions: The sand-filled streets are now mostly paved, and traffic signals now dot the enlarged city. (However, except in the most congested of conditions, these stoplights are regarded more as “suggestions” than obligations!)

Three blocks from the hotel where our hosts housed me is the historic main plaza. For generations people have frequented the plaza to stroll, chat with friends and family, or simply sit quietly and watch the others walk by. Fatigued by work and travel, I headed toward the plaza on a balmy Sunday evening to savor its ambiance and restore my soul.

Several groups of teens casually made their way along the street in front of the hotel, sometimes filling the sidewalks, all moving in the same direction. To help me feel the culture a bit, I decided to walk at their speed. Within a few moments I realized I was walking too fast and passing them up. Slowing down, I tried again to walk at their pace. It was interesting: I saw and thought differently when walking at their pace than when walking at my usual speed. It was quite nice, actually.

The plaza was comfortably lit by soft sidewalk lights. A huge brick and adobe church, built centuries ago, faced the plaza. Yellow sodium lights emphasized its beautiful angles, towers, and bells. It stood regally in the twilight of early evening under the canopy of a dark blue sky.

Approximately 300 people of all generations were evenly distributed throughout the plaza. Senior couples sat and talked softly or simply basked quietly in the pleasant evening atmosphere. Young couples slowly pushed baby carriages. Teens strolled with their friends. One or two smitten couples embraced on park benches. Others played checkers or chess on the stone play boards specifically built in the plaza for community fun. I sat on one of the checker/chess stools for about 30 minutes just watching all the people wander by. It was actually difficult to make myself slow down and sit still. But the evening was memorable and, thousands of miles from home, God soothed, calmed, and “restored my soul.”

Do you need those times too? Our Shepherd will lead us. Let’s be wise and follow him habitually to green pastures and still waters where He restores our souls.

The Lord is my shepherd... He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul. (Psalm 23:1-3)



## Too Young to Pray?

For most of her 2 ½ years Gracie Pearl lived with a serious urinary tract reflux. She was hospitalized twice, and doctors didn't know if she would survive. They said she would eventually need surgery, but in the meantime medication could sustain her.

One day Gracie said to her mother, "Mommy, I don't want to take my pills anymore." Her mother explained to her that she had to take the pills. Gracie replied, "But Mommy, I'm better. God told me." Her mother asked her, "Honey, when did God tell you that? Was it while you were sleeping?" Gracie answered, "No mommy. It was while I was praying."

Her mother—in trepidation—took her off her medication. She didn't want to dishonor her daughter's faith. A short time later Gracie had a series of tests. The results came in—Gracie had a clean bill of health!

"...You have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children." (Matthew 11:25)



## More Prayer Ideas

We encourage you to include your children as you pray for at-risk kids worldwide. For other ideas for children's prayer activities, please see [www.missiontochildren.org](http://www.missiontochildren.org) and click on the WWDP graphic.



Abandoned children find hope in His love. "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms..." (Deuteronomy 33:27)

## Plead for The Children

"Rise during the night and cry out. Pour out your hearts like water to the Lord. Lift up your hands to Him in prayer. Plead for your children as they faint with hunger in the street." (Lam. 2:19)

The first weekend of June we invite you to join the mighty prayer force lifting up children at-risk to the Lord. Last June 1.2 million people took part in the Worldwide Day of Prayer. In more than 90 countries they focused prayers on the estimated one billion children suffering from extreme deprivation.



"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1)

### Thank God for these 2005 responses to WWDP:

- Hundreds of youth became Christians at prayer gatherings in Ghana, Uganda, and Madagascar. They continue to attend church and discipleship meetings.
- Several children were healed and many received much-needed practical help.
- Seeing children pray with faith for other children was the greatest encouragement from these events.

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## Plead for the Children

The following are a few categories of at-risk children to pray for:

- 400 million children in **India** (under 18)
  - 70 million child laborers
  - 13 million homeless
  - 2 million street children without families
  - 575,000 child prostitutes
  - 5.1 million people with HIV
- Nine out of ten children living with AIDS are **African**
  - By 2010 it is estimated that there will be 25 million AIDS orphans in the world.
  - Uganda has 1.1 million AIDS orphans—the highest in the world.
  - Nearly 6,000 young people between the ages of 15 and 25 are infected every day.

(Stats taken from *The Skeptic's Guide to the Global AIDS Crisis* by Hale Hanson Bourke and *Restoring Children of the Streets* by Jeff Anderson)

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:14). We would not hinder or forbid children to come to Jesus, but what are we doing to encourage them to come to Him? We can pray that God will prepare their hearts for His love.

Lift up your hands to Him in prayer:

- Pray that God will bring caring Christians to rescue children from their desperate plights.
- Pray that they will accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior.
- Pray that they will learn to love the God Who loves them and grow in their faith.
- Pray that government leaders will catch and punish those who harm children.
- Pray that governments will put legislation in place that protects children.

*These Indian street boys' shirts are grey with dust from the streets—a dip in the river is a rare occurrence*



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