



# Looking Up...

The **MISSION TO CHILDREN**

*Reaching Out*

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

February 2008



“I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge...”

(Ephesians 3:17-19)

## Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

Leading children from different religious backgrounds in songs about Jesus’ love... delivering food baskets to families in destitute situations...gathering hungry street children to honor them with an exceptional meal—these are a few of the ways MTC’s partners demonstrate God’s love during Christmas and Easter seasons.

Collecting funds for the *Global Resurrection dinner outreaches* in February allows us to send the donations overseas so our international partners can adequately prepare for these semi-annual evangelistic outreaches. The purpose? To provide bread for life and the Bread of Life.

In Bethlehem, the home of Christ’s birth, the present situation is grave. Civil workers often go unpaid and the poorer families find themselves in destitute conditions. Approximately 50% of the population is under fifteen years of age.

Our partners in Bethlehem provide emergency relief to the neediest families with school-age children through food baskets. Each gift basket includes: Christian literature; rice, flour, sugar, spices, and oil; dairy products; canned meat, fish, and vegetables; pasta and tomato paste; tea and sweets. Last year MTC funds provided food baskets for 300 needy families.

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Food baskets help dispel the hopelessness and desperation families in Bethlehem face

## Behold What Manner of Love!

Dr. John Garmo – President

This is a month during which millions of people give beautiful cards to their loved ones expressing their affection and devotion. It's a good time for me to tell you a bit about Jan.

In June of this year Jan and I look forward to celebrating 40 years of marriage. I am genuinely blessed by God to travel through my adult life with a loving companion who embraces the same core values, principles, and priorities that I learned from my parents.

Don't think for a moment that this makes our relationship—or either of us—perfect. Our family and friends would quickly dispel that notion with a chuckle and one or two stories displaying our “clay feet” (probably mine). Despite our very human natures, we are great friends. This is due in part to the fact that we've tried to remember the ancient secret to an enduring marriage: Keep your eyes wide open before the wedding and half closed thereafter!

It is because of my imperfection as a person and a husband that I particularly marvel at Jan's love. If I were perfect, I could perhaps expect or demand her devoted admiration. Instead she knows me better than anyone on earth. She has stood with me in my highest and in my lowest moments, at my best and my ugliest, when I've done things well and when I've messed things up. Behold what manner of love, giving me favor I do not deserve. She is amazing.

On an infinitely higher level, 1 John 3:1a says, *“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!”* God is perfect. In His glory, power, and majesty He richly deserves and can rightly demand our devoted admiration and absolute obedience. But He is not satisfied with respect based upon fear; He wants a relationship based upon love.

He set the example for us Himself. What is that “manner of love” our Father has shown us? The classical Greek phrase translated “what manner” refers to something foreign, outside recognized boundaries, unlike anything ever seen among human beings. Paraphrased, John is exclaiming, “Look at God's love for us—it's absolutely out of this world!”

He shows His incomparable love through cascading grace—favor that we do not deserve. When sin separated us from God, we needed a miraculous transformation to become spiritual children of God. He performed that miracle when He bought us with the blood of His Son. Amazingly, He made this shocking sacrifice while we were still His enemies (Romans 5:8-

10), saturated in ugly sin. This amazing grace far exceeded the expectations of any angel or person. What paradigm-blasting love!

Once purchased, the Father could have decided to own us as slaves. As such we would still enjoy

## “What paradigm-blasting love!”

a much better position than before redemption. But He wants a relationship based upon love, so He took an additional step. We did not become His mere servants, neighbors, or friends. Instead, He actually adopted us; He made us permanent, genuine members of His family. Behold what manner of love!

*“In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will—to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves” (Ephesians 1:5-6).*

Have you been adopted yet?



# Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

(Continued from page 1)

In a poor village in India 88 children gathered to hear about Jesus, sing songs about His love, receive the Gospel through a Wordless book presentation, play games, eat, and receive a small gift. Many of these children were handicapped. Most were from Hindu or Muslim families.

Why is it important to target the needs of the “least of these?” The great theologian Jonathan Edwards believed that God designated the poor as His “receivers.” Since we cannot give to God directly, He wants us to help the poor, who are God’s “designated receivers” of Christian love. Will you give so that the poor can receive physical “bread” as well as spiritual “bread” this Easter season?

“I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for Me” (Matthew 25:40).



*Anticipating a special meal*

## Bread for Today and Forever

### **Jesus is the Bread of Life:**

Jesus said to them, “I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (John 6:35).



### **He knows our needs:**

“Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11).

### **He satisfies our needs:**

“Let them give thanks to the LORD for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for men, for He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things” (Psalm 107:8-9; see also Isaiah 55:2-3).

### **He nourishes us with His Word:**

He answered and said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4; Deut. 8:3).

### **We are God’s instruments:**

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15).

### **We bring the Bread of Life to others:**

This month as you consider sharing the Bread of Life with others, picture yourself as the tray upon which the Bread of Life is presented.

***“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise” (Proverbs 11:30).***

## Do You Love to Pray?

For those who desire to deepen their prayer life we would like to offer a 40-day devotional entitled *Love to Pray* by Alvin VanderGriend. This devotional gives clear Scriptural basis for his beliefs on prayer. One of the chapters is on Elijah, a man who prayed earnestly and persistently, had tremendous results, yet was “a man just like us” (James 5:17). If an ordinary person like Elijah can pray powerfully so can we. “This is because the power of prayer is not in the person or in the words of the prayer. All the power in prayer is God’s power released through prayer. Prayer is powerful because God is powerful.” What a surprising arrangement—God partnering with us to accomplish His purposes! If you are interested in receiving this devotional please include a donation for \$10 and mark on the tear-out insert.

# The **MISSION TO CHILDREN**

Caring for, and cultivating Christlike character in, children—especially those at risk

## Kenya—a Land of Poverty and Promise

Kenya is an Eastern African country bordered by Ethiopia, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan, and the Indian Ocean. It is comparable in size to France and has a population of almost 37 million.

Since its independence in 1963 Kenya has maintained remarkable stability despite changes in the political system, a variety of cultures living together, and crises in neighboring countries. Nairobi is the hub for communication and finance in East Africa. However, corruption, and disease plague this nation. Fifty percent of the people live below the poverty line.

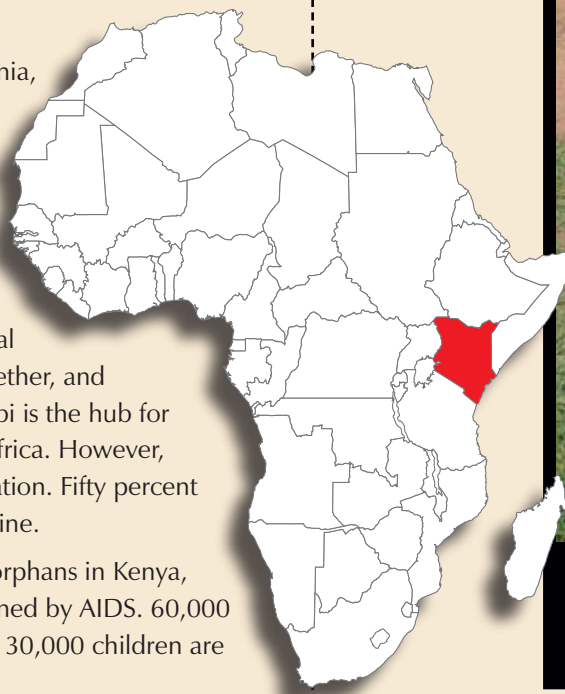
There are approximately 2.3 million orphans in Kenya, about half of whom have been orphaned by AIDS. 60,000 children live on the streets. 10,000 to 30,000 children are caught in the commercial sex trade.

Many different cultures represent Kenya, and one of the most well-known, the Maasai culture, has been connected with Mission To Children for 29 years.

In 1979 MTC helped establish a childcare center for the Maasai children to rehabilitate those with mobility problems. Many who suffered from polio hauled themselves along the ground—dragging their useless lower limbs behind them.

A team of women worked with the children, stretching their affected tendons through hundreds of hours of painful physiotherapy until their limbs were straight enough to be strapped into basic splints. Many children learned to do the *impossible*—they learned to walk.

Soon the childcare center began producing its own artificial



*"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress..."*  
(James 1:27)

limbs. Children born without feet, or who had lost their feet, were fitted with new limbs and walked for the first time. Mobility was not an end in itself. Today Maasai children attend school, learn a trade, and become independent. After seeing Christ's love in action, many become believers in Jesus.

Pray for the protection of these vulnerable children. The Kenyan elections in December 2007 continue to cause much turmoil in that area. Pray for protection and healing for all the Kenyan children affected by HIV/AIDS and the commercial sex trade. Pray that God will appoint a government that will lead this country with integrity and commit to defending the children (Romans 13:1).

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