

Living Matthew 25 MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR WORLD

A Social Justice E-Publication

'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING?

by Sean D. Krausert

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"The" season for giving, no. "A" season for giving, absolutely.

Far too many times around this time of year somebody does something nice for another, and the rationale is given – " 'Tis the season". Pardon me for being a little anal retentive about this, but that is absolutely wrong. I refute the proposition that Christmas time is when people are supposed to be nicer, kinder, and more generous to one another as opposed to other times in the year.

Don't get me wrong, I am completely in favour of being nicer, kinder, and more generous to one another. However, the notion that such is the domain of Christmas is repulsive to the true notion of Christmas.

Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Christ . . . the coming into the world in human form of God for the benefit of all people . . . the start of what is to become a ministry of teaching, healing, and sharing God's love – especially with those most in need. To take that message and bottle it up in a certain time of year is preposterous. The message of Christmas is for *all* the year, and serves as a pattern for the *entirety* of our lives.

The truth of the matter is that the needs in the world are no less before or after this time of year. Therefore, why should our kindness and generosity be any less during non-Christmas times of the year? There are just as many hungry and homeless on August 25th as December 25th, and so why should we think of Christmas as "the" season of giving.



Commercialism, that's why. We have been convinced, because we give gifts to one another at Christmas, that this is the special time of year for giving. And, it is that same commercialism that exacerbates the needs in the world at Christmas. The divide between the "have" and "have-nots" is amplified when the rich get richer. Add to this, that those who are alone feel even more alone at any time of year when family and friends traditionally gather.

So what is my point? I have several actually. First - yes, please give this Christmas but not only at Christmas. Second – be part of the solution, not the problem. Instead of re-circulating wealth in a manner that intensifies the needs in the world, give to charities so as to reduce the divide between the "haves" and "have-nots". And, third, let's live our lives in a manner so that the way we behave at Christmas is the norm for the rest of the year.

Blessings to one and all.

CHRISTMAS AT THE MUSTARD SEED

Written by Lindsay Schonfelder
The Mustard Seed

The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each others' burdens, easing other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of Christmas.

W. C. Jones

Christmas kindles a warm shining spark of hope just when we need it most. For those who have little, or are without their families, the season can seem even colder. That is why The Mustard Seed goes out of its way to make sure Calgary's less fortunate feel welcomed, loved and cared for.

One of our guests recently told me about the hopelessness he felt when he lived on the streets: "The first Christmas hit me the hardest," he said. "I sat down by the Bow [River] . . . I must have cried for an hour. I had no money, it was cold, and I had nowhere to go."

Christmas at The Mustard Seed is a truly special time of year. Throughout the entire month of December, we are blessed by the incredible generosity of our community. Supporters donate turkeys, toys, and food hampers, which we distribute to families experiencing need in the community.

Thanks to our supporters, we are also able to offer the comfort of a family-style shared meal for shelter guests who might otherwise spend the holidays hungry and alone. Guests who have moved into independent housing are provided with Christmas hampers so they can celebrate in their new communities. Each and every one of our guests also receives a special Christmas gift.

"Christmas can be difficult for guests who are missing their family and children," says Mustard Seed staff member Cristl Porter. "We see some residents break into every emotion possible because it's the first time in so many years they have received a gift."



"People in Calgary are really caring," says one guest of the generosity shown by donors. "It is kind of hard not having my kids with me, but it makes you feel wanted and appreciated."

As you prepare for the Christmas season with your family and loved ones, please remember the homeless men and women who are struggling to rebuild their lives. And this Christmas, consider what you can do in your own community to share the joy of the season with those less fortunate.



The Mustard Seed is a non-profit Christian humanitarian organization that has been caring for Calgary's homeless for over 25 years. Through its three ministry centres across Alberta, it cares for the essential needs of the less fortunate through food, clothing, and shelter provisions, along with education and employment programs, supported housing, health and wellness services, and personalized mentoring.

www.theseed.ca

Your donations provide hope and comfort to those who have none.

Please visit us online to make a donation and learn more about our ministry.

The Mustard Seed:

102-11 Ave. SE Calgary, AB T2G 0X5

Main Phone: 403-269-1319

Email: info@theseed.ca

LETTING YOUR LOVE FLOW

Written by Bob McInnis
Executive Director of
Brown Bagging for Calgary's Kids

The Bible gives a wonderful story about the gift God gave us—Jesus Christ—and we can use it as an opportunity to present the gospel and to show love.

Giving gifts and showing love by volunteering can be part of fulfilling what Paul says about giving in 2 Corinthians 8:7-8:

"But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others."

Paul was talking to the churches who

Some easy math . . .

\$100 = 100 Kids Fed

were giving him gifts so that he could keep on in the ministry.

We can apply this same lesson to our own lives by giving to others, not just at Christmas, but year round. How might you share your resources and time to help a hungry child in Calgary? You and your family or neighbours could commit to ensuring that all 10 hungry kids at a local school receive the gift of love and food by preparing and delivering nutritious lunches each school day.

About fifty community partners of BB4CK are doing just that. They come together to make lunches or take turns preparing and delivering a few lunches as needed and demonstrating to these hungry kids, that someone cares. Someone who cares enough to give them

the gift of food made by caring hands and loving hearts.

If your brother's child was hungry . . . what would you do?

Will you acknowledge the gift of love from God – in his son Jesus – by allowing that love to flow through you to someone else? Can you be His hands?

Editor's Note – BB4CK would love to walk alongside you as you undertake a mission of feeding your "brother's" children. Please contact Tanya Power at 403.264.7979 or tanya@brownbaggingit.org to find out how simple it can be.

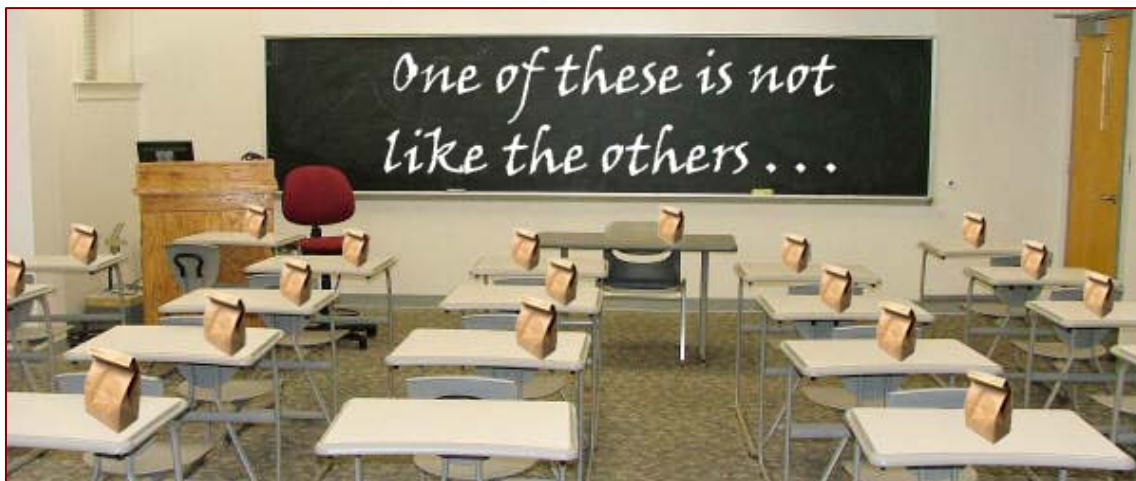


Brown Bagging
for Calgary's Kids
Society

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www.brownbaggingit.org

403.264.7979



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- The Gift of Maternal Survival

... and many more!

GIFTS FOR THE PLANET

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 - The Gift of Trees
 - The Gift of Rainwater Catchment Systems
- ... and many more!



Please visit www.cause.ca for more information and to purchase on-line, or call 403.678.3332 or 1.888.552.2873.

FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A TIME

Written by Melissa Smith
CAUSE Canada Intern

My friend Saio has an aunt and uncle who live in the mountains above Kabala in northern Sierra Leone, West Africa. Trekking to their home is such an integral part of our lives during my internship in Sierra Leone, I want to share with you some wisdom found on that mountain.

The peak nearest to Uncle's farm is called Wara Wara Mountain or Pele Hill, depending on who you ask. We decided to make another trip up to the summit recently with Saio's younger sister Namisa. Not far into our journey we met Saio's aunt, who had come down from the mountain to wash clothes in the river. We greeted her warmly and continued, little by little, up the hill. As usual, we stopped at the "resting stone" to catch our breath and share stories. No sooner had we sat down than Saio's aunt bounded by us and continued up the mountain, bearing her clean laundry on her head. Apparently, Aunty has no need of a resting stone. By the time we reached her home, she was already busy preparing dinner. Just before continuing the last 200 yards to the summit, Namisa asked Aunty for some cucumbers from the garden.



We stayed up on the peak as long as the sunlight would allow, enjoying the wind and the view and all the guava we could eat. Only as the sun set did we reluctantly tear ourselves away from the mountain and head back to town. Aunty was waiting by the path to see us off. She had a bag of oranges for Namisa.

"The cucumbers aren't ripe yet," she explained, "you'll have to wait." Namisa protested, "But Aunty, I'm not coming back!" as though that would make the cucumbers grow faster. Aunty stifled a laugh, "My dear," she said, "Everything has its season."

It was a simple statement but Aunty's wisdom struck me like a lightning bolt. Sometimes (like Namisa) I can forget. Even in a place like Saskatchewan, where the seasons are terribly obvious, the supermarket and my heated house conspire to make me (almost) unaware of the seasons. Unlike Aunty, I have lost touch with the careful art of cultivation and I have forgotten how to wait. To remember that everything has its season (and that I do not control those seasons) was sweet. It helped me to realize that there's no point in trying to manipulate time . . . we might as well enjoy oranges in their season.

As our time in Sierra Leone draws to a close and we face uncertainty ahead . . . it is immensely comforting to remember that "for everything there is a time and a season for every purpose under heaven." A time to eat cucumbers and a time to eat oranges.



A Social Justice E-Publication

Since you asked . . .

- (i) **YES, Sean Krausert, Executive Director of Global WE Initiatives Corp. is available for Keynote Presentations and other speaking engagements with respect to social justice issues.**

Programs include *Awakening to a World Without Walls* and *On the Edge of the Promised Land*, as well as special customized programs for clients.



To enquire about booking Sean to speak at your church, next conference, or gathering . . . call (403) 609-1762 or e-mail seankrausert@globalwe.ca.

- (ii) **YES, individuals can make charitable donations to support the work of LM 25 – Meeting the Needs of OUR World.**

To make a donation to support *Living Matthew 25*, simply send a cheque made payable to “St. Michael’s Anglican Church” with the memo section clearly stating “re Living Matthew 25”. Cheques can be mailed to *Living Matthew 25* at:

176 Moraine Road
Canmore AB
T1W 1J7

A charitable tax receipt will be issued in due course for donations of more than \$20.

THANKS!

10 EASY THINGS YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE OUR WORLD

Each month a list of 10 relatively easy-to-do things is provided for your consideration. This month we focus on some New Year’s resolutions that will result in us improving OUR world.

Let’s resolve to . . .

- **Prepare for peace, not war.** If you prepare for war (individually or collectively), you will go to war. It’s a self-fulfilling prophecy.
- **Follow compassion, not fear.** Too often our actions are dictated by that which we are afraid. Ask yourself . . . am I doing _____ out of love or fear?
- **Look first for the good.** Finding fault and negativity are easy, but also destructive. We build relationships and a better future when we look for the positive in everything.
- **Acknowledge the power that each of us have individually to bring about change.** Then, know that, just as the hand is stronger than the sum of its fingers, we are stronger when we combine our power and work together.
- **Open our eyes to see what is there to be seen.** When we trap ourselves in our own world, we often ignore the beauty that is all around us as well as the needs with which we can help.
- **Make EVERY season the Season for Giving.** The spirit of Christmas is intended for the entire year, not just a few weeks in December.
- **Give 34¢ more per day.** If everyone in each “donor” country did so, we would effectively double the official aid provided to those in need.
- **Take responsibility for our actions.** Everything we do has a consequence . . . on ourselves, on others, and on the Earth. Let’s minimize OUR negative consequences.
- **Be creative.** We have the ability to creatively find ways to immensely improve the lives of those in need while not adversely affecting our own.
- **Awaken to a world without walls.** Time, distance, and borders are artificial barriers that can get in the way of helping others. By recognizing that we are all living together, we disregard these walls and help one another.

LET’S MAKE 2011 A SPECTACULAR YEAR FOR EVERYONE!



MAKE POVERTY HISTORY



www.makepovertyhistory.ca



To learn about this \$1BILLION bill go to the website above.



GET TO **.7** THE POINT

Canada needs to increase the amount of aid we give to poorer nations.

We are giving only 0.32% of our national income in development aid. That's less than half of the point seven per cent (0.7%) we keep promising to give and failing to deliver. Point seven per cent (0.7%) of our national income is the level agreed upon by donor nations and the UN as necessary to make serious progress towards alleviating extreme poverty in the world.

watch 'click: 2010'

Make Poverty History's updated campaign video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCeJNNipg9o>



RETURN TO INNOCENCE

Written by Jason Krausert
Co-Principal of InnerSync Systems Inc.



I was brushing my teeth a few minutes ago getting ready for bed, and I thought about a card Donna got me last Valentine's Day. The card is one of two that I've had sitting on my desk for almost a year. The front of the card (see image at left) is a simple black and white photo of a young boy, maybe 5 or 6 years old, with his arm around a little, frizzy-haired girl as they walk through a park.

Donna and I love that card. It's a reminder of the innocence, purity and willingness to connect that kids seem to live effortlessly. That innocence is still in each of us. It seems, however, to become buried under the fears, frustrations, responsibilities, misunderstandings and disappointments we assume as we grow older. As a result, we erect walls between ourselves and others. We tend to become suspicious and cynical. We lose faith in the wonder of life and in the people on this journey with us (who, by the way, are just as afraid as we are).

Of course, this loss of innocence and trust happens in our personal intimate relationships, perhaps more than anywhere else. We put up walls when we get hurt, when we are lied to, when promises aren't kept or when plans don't materialize. When you get past these walls, however, not only will you and those around you feel better and more connected, you'll find there is a very real power you and your partner have together.

There is a simple way to start rebuilding the natural innocence and trust we crave in all of our relationships, especially those with spouses and significant others. In fact, it's a quick and easy exercise Donna and I do in our graduate workshop, The "Gender Gym". You can do it right now, and all you need is a pen and paper.

Here's what you do . . . just become aware of what you are focusing on about your partner. Write down 10 things you love about your partner today. Write down 10 more things you loved about your partner when you first hooked up. Are any the same?

Realize that the traits you loved about your partner years ago are still there. You can still trust him or her like you once did if you choose to. The difference is that now there are more reasons to do so because you know them better and have had more experiences together. It's just a choice to focus more on what you love about your partner than what you don't. Focus there for a few weeks and notice the difference in how you feel.

Having your "heart-nership" evolve in the direction you want it to go is often as simple as understanding the invisible conversation that is always going on between men and women.

Editor's Note – Meeting the needs of the world is more than feeding the hungry and housing the homeless (although these are vital). It is also about meeting the spiritual and emotional needs of each other, and removing those barriers that may build up in relationships.

"Between Men and Women"[©] Couples Wellness Weekend ... Where *Understanding* Begins

"I left (the workshop) feeling released
. . . released from all the unclear
confusing stuff, the tension, the anger
and the hurt.

Now we have a way to take the right
path in our relationship."

-Aoi Kawai (Email excerpt)

In the Couples Weekends participants discover:

- * How to have "ease-in-love" using this dynamic
- * The power of the Desire - Production Cycle
- * How to inject fresh purpose into your relationship

Specifically, Women will get:

- ♀ Freedom, knowing you're perfect just as you are
- ♀ Essential awareness of your impact on men
- ♀ Comfort with your desire and having it fulfilled

Men will understand:

- ♂ How to "be" with a woman's "motion"
- ♂ What makes women happy
- ♂ Your critical role in the Desire – Production Cycle

Contact us to register for one of the following weekends:

January 29-30, 2011 (Calgary, Alberta)
March 12-13, 2011 (Cochrane, Alberta)
April 29-May 1, 2011 (Rocky Mountain Retreat
in Banff, Alberta)

www.BetweenMenAndWomen.com

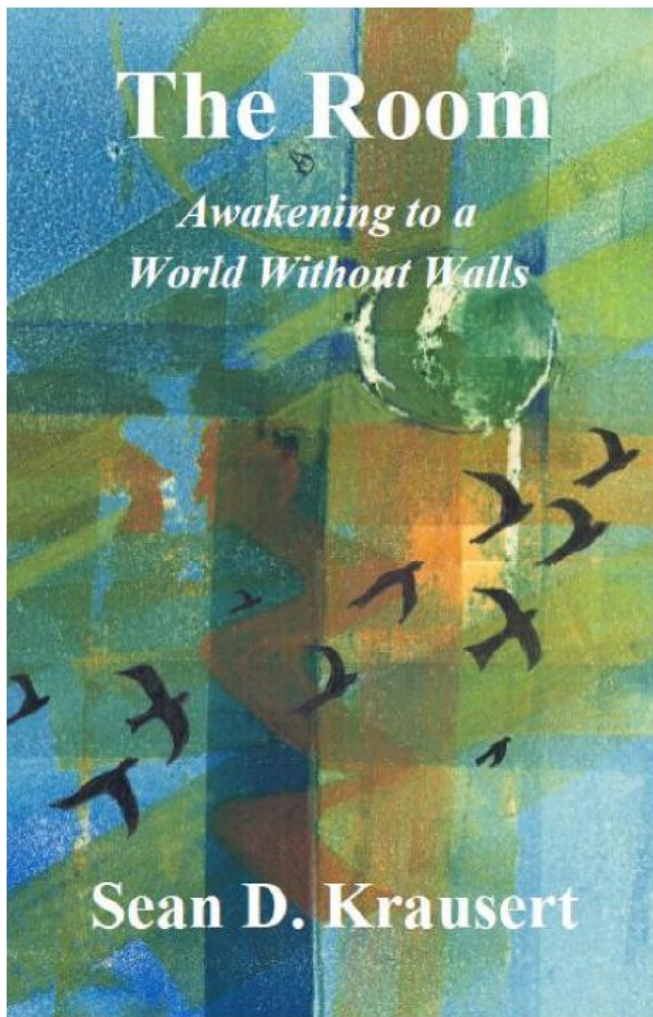
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QUOTABLE QUOTES

“A great deal of talent is lost in the world for want of a little courage . . . The fact is that to do anything in the world worth doing, we must not stand back shivering and thinking of the cold and danger, but jump in and scramble through as well as we can.”

Sydney Smith (1771 – 1845)
English Writer / Cleric



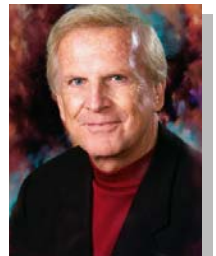
“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”

T. S. Eliot (1888 - 1965)
American-born British Poet



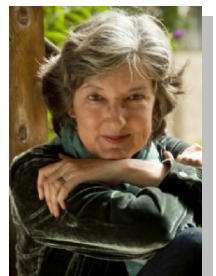
“No man or woman is an island. To exist just for yourself is meaningless. You can achieve the most satisfaction when you feel related to some greater purpose in life, something greater than yourself.”

Denis Waitley (1933 - Present)
American Author & Motivational Speaker



“Hope is a renewable option: If you run out of it at the end of the day, you get to start over in the morning.”

Barbara Kingsolver (1955 - Present)
American Novelist



“Peace takes the will, the courage, and the hope of the whole village, but starts with the individual.”

Yo-Yo Ma (1955 - Present)
American Cellist



“Empower women and you will see a decrease in poverty, illiteracy, disease and violence.”

Michaëlle Jean (1957 - Present)
Former Governor General of Canada



IS THIS THE THING?

Written by Sean D. Krausert

Just a few days ago, a friend's Dad died suddenly. The day before they were at a hockey game together and he was apparently fine, and then the next day he was gone. *Sigh*. It got me thinking.

Our life or the lives of our loved ones can end without notice . . . here today, gone tomorrow. What you or I do today may be the last we ever do. The impression we leave today may be the last impression we ever leave. It is very possible that what is done in any particular moment may define us in some way for all time. Bottom line – we have to make every moment count.

To go through a day unappreciative or taking the next day for granted is short-sighted. Every day there is beauty to be seen, gratitude to be expressed. Opportunities that present themselves today may not be available tomorrow. The only thing that is certain is this moment. We must seize the day. *Carpe diem*.

There are certainly times when we are thrown for a loop and have difficulty making the best of this day. A sudden death in the family will do that to you. Illness, whether it be physical or mental, can also grab the entirety of our attention and bring us down. However, even in down times, we can start to pull ourselves up by remembering how precious life is and asking ourselves how we wish to spend this valuable time.

A habitual trap of mine is to worry about stuff, 99.9% of which is in the future (i.e. not in this moment). What a waste! Not only is that good energy being used over things that may never come to pass, but I also lose this moment. Further, in my worrying I may be leaving a terrible impression with my family and friends – a brow furled, hunched over, pre-occupied, and humourless fellow. If something were to happen to me tomorrow, is this the last memory I wish them to have of me? Similarly, if something happened to them tomorrow, do I want to spend my last day with them worrying? To both of these questions, my answer is a defiant “No way!”

It's about priorities . . . at any given moment am I doing the most important thing I can be doing, or being the best that I can be? Put another way . . . is *this* the thing that I want to be doing if today were my last? If the answer is “no”, then the question becomes “why am I doing it?”.

Many people have come to this point in thinking about life and then decide that if today is their last then they're going to enjoy themselves. However, there is folly in this line of thinking. Most, if not all, things we do for enjoyment are shallow and ultimately unfulfilling. When you are lying on your death bed, just as you may wish you spent less time worrying, I suspect that your heart will not be filled with joy because you pampered yourself.

I believe that when it comes down to it, i.e. after the novelty of toys or self-indulgence has worn off, people get a sense of fulfillment from having positively impacted others and



the world around them. To have made a difference in a person's life and to have lived each day to the best of your ability – *that* is the thing.

We could save ourselves so much grief and hardship if we simply lived more consciously, keeping the big picture in mind . . . asking ourselves if *this* is the thing we want to be feeling right now? How much conflict and hostility could be avoided if we asked ourselves *is this* the thing I want to fight about it? How much more fulfilled would we be if we regularly checked in within ourselves, asking if *this* is the thing I want to be doing?

Now you may be the type of person who has it altogether and don't need any help staying on track. If so, good for you (. . . and why in the world are you still reading this article?). But, if you are anything like me, I can use all the help I can get. Therefore, for those like me, I encourage you to give yourself a Christmas gift, and commit to doing at least some of the following every day:

- Don't miss opportunities to tell people that you appreciate them.
- Seize every opportunity to help someone else as you will find that you make two people happy.
- Let go of things that trigger anger or negativity unless those are things for which you wish to be remembered.
- In times of doubt as to whether what you are doing or feeling is best use of your time and energy, ask yourself – “*Is this* the thing that is the best use of this moment?”

You won't regret it!

SECURING A PEACEFUL DIVORCE IN SUDAN

JUBA, 25 November 2010 (IRIN) - A January referendum in Southern Sudan is likely to lead to the creation of a new country - the first in Africa since Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993 - but much work needs to be done to ensure the separation is more peaceful than that of its Horn of Africa neighbours.

"It is like a divorce," Chaplain Kara Yokoju, a professor at Juba University and a specialist in international relations, told IRIN in the Southern capital.

"Once concluded, you may have to sell the house so that each party takes away something. You cannot divide the house and the bricks into two and give each party some to carry away," he added

"The foundations for a constructive post-referendum relationship are yet to be laid," warned the International Crisis Group in a new report, adding that the pace of negotiations to date was "cause for concern".

Read more . . . www.irinnews.org

ON 60TH ANNIVERSARY, UN REFUGEE AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS NEW CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT

14 December 2010 – The head of the United Nations refugee agency today urged the international community to come up with ways of responding to the displacement of people as a result of evolving circumstances that did not exist when the organization was founded or when treaties on refugees were created.

"UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees] traditionally was supporting refugees, people that would cross a border because of a conflict or persecution," said António Guterres, the High Commissioner for Refugees, in a speech in Geneva to mark the agency's 60th anniversary. "But now we see that more and more people are crossing borders because of extreme poverty, because of the impact of climate change, [and] because of their interrelation with conflict. So there are new patterns of forced displacement and the international community needs to be able to tackle those challenges," Mr. Guterres said.

Read more . . . www.un.org

More "Around the World" on page 11 . . .



FIND OUT MORE . . .

www.adaretoremember.com

IMAGES FROM SPACE ENHANCE UN EFFORTS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ON EARTH

14 December 2010 – From shrinking glaciers and forests to the ravages of mining and urban sprawl, the United Nations is using satellites in space to help chart a course for sustainable development on Earth with an ecological map of the world's most biologically diverse region, Latin America and the Caribbean.

The map, "Latin America and the Caribbean – Atlas of our changing environment," released today by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), combines over 200 precise and striking satellite images with analysis based on rigorous data in the first effort to examine changes taking place in the region's environment.

"The Atlas is an indispensable tool in formulating the future actions and public policies needed to achieve more sustainable development in the region," UNEP said in a news release.

Read more . . . www.un.org

WHEN ELEPHANTS AND HUMANS CLASH

KOH KONG, 15 December 2010 (IRIN) - Sokha Seang, a 33-year-old rice farmer, recalls the night last spring when a herd of elephants trampled over his property. "They were hungry. I was angry, but I understand why they did it," he said. The pachyderms ate most of his food stock.

In Cambodia, poor farmers like Seang cannot afford to lose crops; a third of the population lives below the national poverty line of US\$0.75 a day, according to government statistics. . . . Conflicts between elephants and farmers are common across Asia, one factor that has caused the animal population to dwindle and farmers to lose their livelihoods.

Experts such as Sereivathana Tuy, 40, are encouraging farmers to find ways to live peacefully with the elephants. Tuy is a Cambodia-based elephant specialist at Flora and Fauna International, a wildlife non-profit organization based in Cambridge, UK.

He teaches farmers to alternate crops such as cucumbers and white radishes, which can be harvested several times a year. This gives elephants fewer chances to eat them. Villagers have also learned to ward off elephants by planting chilli peppers around their land, rather than maiming them with weapons, as elephants dislike the smell, Tuy said.

Read more . . . www.irinnews.org

GLOBAL ENRICHMENT FOUNDATION



www.globalenrichmentfoundation.com

The Global Enrichment Foundation believes in developing strengths already within women to assist them in changing their lives. We believe that building stronger communities, cultivating leadership and promoting peace through education are goals which can be achieved through proper support. With the right tools, women in even the most poverty-stricken and violent of countries can forge their own key roles in society, using gifts they naturally possess.

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Partners with The Mary A. Tidlund Charitable Foundation, Canadian Somali Congress, The Canadian International Peace Project, The Academy for Peace Development (Somalia), and Galkayo Education Center for Peace and Development (Somalia)

DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

“FUN FACTS FOR THE HOLIDAYS”

Source:

The Economist's Pocket World in Figures

EAT, DRINK, and BE MERRY

Turks spend the most time enjoying their meals, with an average of 162 minutes per day spent eating and drinking.

BARTENDER!!

Venezuelans are the beeriest nation on Earth consuming 83 litres (146 pints) of beer per head annually.

Guadeloupe has the biggest taste for the bubbly, 4.25 bottles of champagne consumed per head per year.

SMOKE 'EM IF YOU GOT 'EM

The Greeks are the biggest smokers, averaging 8.1 cigarettes per person per day.

GOOGLING CANUCKS

Canadians are the most likely to own a computer with 94.3 machines per 100 people.

JE SUIS FATIGUÉ!

France is the sleepest nation on Earth, with its populace sleeping for 530 minutes (8 hours 50 minutes) per day.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTS, FIGURES, and FASCINATING STUFF

IS THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT LISTENING?

85%

of Canadians agree that the root cause of climate change is too much focus on economic growth and consumerism. We need to have an economy that is in harmony with nature, which recognizes and respects the planet.

87%

of Canadians agree that industrialized countries, which have historically produced the most greenhouse gas emissions, should be the most responsible for reducing current emissions.

71%

of Canadians agree that money spent on wars and the military would be better spent on efforts that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the impacts of climate change.

Source:

An Environics Research poll commissioned by Council for Canadians, KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, and five other organizations. The telephone poll of 1,000 Canadians conducted October 27 to November 1, 2010 has a margin of error of +/- 3.10%, 19 times out of 20.

READY . . . SET . . .
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

DECEMBER 2010

1 – World AIDS Day. For more information go to www.worldaidscampaign.org.

3 – International Day of Persons with Disabilities. For more info - <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1540>.

10 – Human Rights Days. The theme this year is “Speak Up End Discrimination.” For more information please go to <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/HRDay2010.aspx>.



20 – International Human Solidarity Day. Check out <http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/un/international-human-solidarity-day>.



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The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

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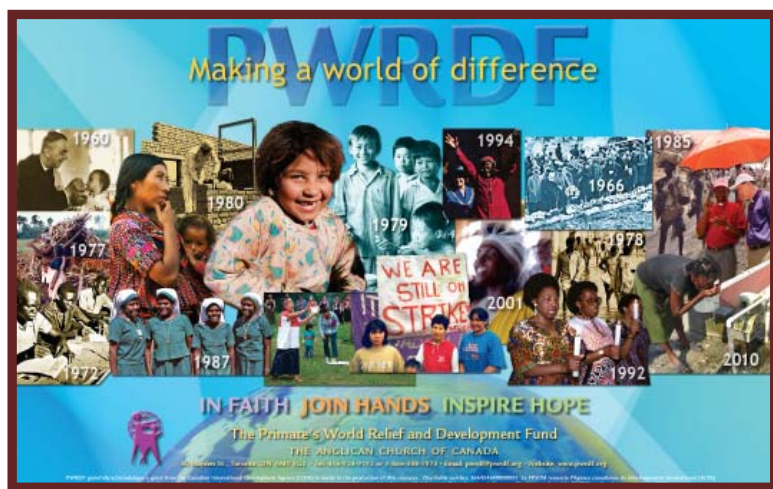
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MIRACLES

by Sean D. Krausert

Not only is Christmas “a” time for giving (see article on Page one) . . . but it is also a time for miracles.

To start with, the birth of a baby is a miracle. Having seen my two children born and take their first breath makes me wonder if there can be a greater miracle than life. And, having watched in awe as my wife gave birth, it is a miracle that women even survive the birthing process (regrettably, a number do not). If men gave birth, I’d guess that the fatality rate would be near 100%. Come to think of it, the fact that I survived watching the birth of my children is a miracle in itself as, historically, I haven’t done very well around blood.

Of course, the baby whose birth we celebrate at Christmas was even more of a miracle (. . . *being the direct descendant of God and all*). Add to that the extraordinary matter of this baby being destined to grow up and change the world forever . . . it’s transcends miraculous and becomes mind blowing.

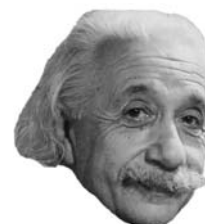
Miracles still happen . . . daily. I know because I see them . . . and so can you. I’ll share a couple of the miracles I’ve seen that not everyone has the opportunity to see everyday.

You know how people will quip about needing more hours in a day? Well, I’ve seen a woman in Guatemala actually receive six more hours in a day, and not only for one day but *every* day. She used to walk six hours a day to get water – for cooking, for drinking, for bathing. Then, one day CAUSE Canada, working with a local partner, installed a gravity fed water catchment system to bring water directly to her hut. Not having to walk to get water freed up six hours in which she could care for her children as well as earn extra income. Further, her family was healthier and happier because of the water coming to their home. Miracle on top of miracle!

I’ve also seen a Sierra Leone man receive self-esteem with the stroke of a pen. He was a businessman who had his hands amputated by rebels (yes, both hands . . . plus an ear). As you might expect, this was devastating to the man in many ways but the thing he most wanted was to be able to sign his name again. An occupational therapist hired by CAUSE Canada created a device that could hold a pen while strapped to the man’s right forearm stump. In the split second that it took for the man to jot his name, you could see him fill with a strength and confidence that was not there the moment before.

Even in the last few minutes,

Albert Einstein



There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.

you will have read about organizations that are in the business of miracles. Brown Bagging for Calgary’s Kids provides lunch to hungry kids which results in happier, healthier children whose marks have increased by a whole grade point on average. The Mustard Seed Street Ministry provides comfort to homeless, and then supports them in a transition from the streets to permanent housing. The Stephen Lewis Foundation is striving to turn the tide on AIDS, particularly in Africa where the disease has ravaged families and entire economies. And, in addition to the two examples I provided earlier, organizations like CAUSE Canada, the Global Enrichment Foundation, and PWRDF are working tirelessly to, amongst other things, feed and school children so that they may have a better future. Each of these are miracles through and through.

Look for the miracles around you this Christmas and always. They’re there . . . just waiting to be seen.



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