**2020 People Who Care Compilation**

**People Who Care -- The Recycling Business**

By Koos Stenger

I was amazed when I saw the colorful, intricate constructions on a YouTube video. Tiny houses, barely bigger than a doghouse, with doors, round little windows, and slanted roofs, so the rainwater would flow off. And all of them on wheels, so they could be moved. They actually looked cozy. The truth is that they were not doghouses, but shelters for the homeless in Oakland, entirely made of trash. Garbage, after all, can be recycled.

These homes are part of a project set up by an artist, Gregory Kloehn, who wants to supply the homeless with places of their own. Mr. Kloehn searches the streets for illegally dumped garbage, furniture, and other materials and uses them to make homes for the homeless. Some of his contraptions are real works of art. It may not be much, but it means the world for a homeless person, and it brings hope and light. And in this case, garbage is being used to bring that hope.

That night, I pondered the project. This man is willing to put his talents to use in a creative way and to make a difference. God has given all of us special talents, and when we yield them to God, no matter how small they may seem, He uses them. To Him, everybody has value and everybody is important.

I was also reminded of how one man’s garbage is another man’s treasure. One time, when I was living in Brazil, I put my old leather boots outside the gate. There was a big hole in one of the soles—but those boots were gone in less than a minute.

Recycling garbage can be an interesting subject, especially considering what Jesus told me next in my ponderings: People once thought you were garbage, but I recycled you too. That’s the truth. I thought back to when I was lost myself—confused, groping in darkness, with nowhere to go. That time when I had no faith and no light. People had no hope for me. I could almost hear them think, Poor boy. He’s only good for the trash. But Jesus said, I can recycle you. I can make something beautiful out of you. And He did.

What’s my point? Everything we do should be for the recycling business. We need to recycle this old world and bring about God’s kingdom on earth. Jesus said: “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

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**People Who Care -- Remember He Will Be With You**

By Andrea and Crystal, Lebanon

I don’t know about you but if I listen to too much bad news on a daily basis, it affects my mood! I need some good news to perk up my life and to move ahead!

These past weeks, as Family Care Lebanon appealed for help to man our humanitarian activities, we have been greatly encouraged by the donations in kinds and in funds that we have received. These gifts have allowed us to weekly prepare hundreds of copious food boxes. We then went ahead and, in teamwork with social workers, visited families and institutions who are the most affected by the current crisis.

This solidarity that we are witnessing is turning this crisis as an opportunity to stretch ourselves out of our comfort zones and to show genuine compassion for others. Everyone needs help at some time or another. Everyone needs to be assured that no matter how bleak the future may appear, there is hope for a better tomorrow. There is peace to be found, if we hold on and believe that there is Someone who cares.

Crystal reminded me of this touching story which illustrates well this point: “Storm clouds and strong gusts of wind had come up suddenly over the Elementary School. The radio blared tornado warnings. It was too dangerous to send the children home. Instead, they were taken to the basement, where they huddled together in fear. We teachers were worried too. To help ease tensions, the principal suggested a sing-along. But the voices were weak and unenthusiastic. Child after child began to cry. We could not calm them.

Then a teacher, whose faith seemed equal to any emergency, whispered to the child closest to her, “Aren’t you forgetting something, Lara? There is a power greater than the storm that will protect us. Just say to yourself, `God is with me now.’ Then pass the words on to the child next to you.”

As the thought was whispered from child to child, a sense of peace settled over the group. I could hear the wind outside still blowing with the same ferocity as the moment before, but it didn’t seem to matter now. Inside, fear subsided and tears faded away. When the all-clear signal came over the radio sometime later, students and staff returned to their classrooms without their usual jostling and talking.

Through the years I have remembered those calming words. In times of stress and trouble, I have again been able to find release from fear and tension by repeating, “He’s with me now.”

Thank you for your support! If you would like to help or want to read more inspiring things about what people are doing to help others go to <https://radgiving.weebly.com>.

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**People Who Care – What’s Happening With the Refugee Aid Team**

From John Turkey/Syria

Thank you for your continuously generous aid to the refugees in Turkey and the displaced and vulnerable Syrians of northwest Idlib. In the last two months we provided these refugees with 15,000 Ramadan Iftar meals, 206 water tanks, 1580 food boxes, 3000 toys, And clothing for 67 children.

Less than one year ago U.N. humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock told the Security Council that shelling by Syrian and Russian forces in Idlib province risks creating the worst humanitarian disaster of the 21st century. He asked the Security Council, "Are you again going to shrug your shoulders... or are you going to listen to the children of Idlib, and do something about it?"

While the Security Council has failed time and time again, it is the kindness of people like you who are making a difference. Gandolf said it best in "Lord of the Rings." “Saruman believes that it is only great power that can hold evil in check. But that is not what I have found. I have found that it is the small things, everyday deeds of ordinary folk, that keeps the darkness at bay.” – J.R.R. Tolkien

Thank you for helping to push back the darkness of despair in the lives of these refugees with your kind and compassionate charity! There is so much need and we have made a start, and your giving is inspiring others to do the same!

**Inside Syria Water Tank Distribution**

206 water tanks have been distributed to 32 tent cities, providing clean water to thousands! Water tanks are now being sponsored by generous givers all over the world. It is a joy to see the children of Idlib having some of their very basic minimal needs met, such as clean water. The water tanks are filled twice a week. Each water tank serves a minimum of four tents.

**Food Box Campaign**

860 food boxes were distributed to displaced refugees inside Syria during Ramadan. An author donated the proceeds of her book sales, which was enough to purchase 480 food boxes to distribute to refugees in northwest Idlib. With her gift, and the donations of others, we were able to distribute 15,000 Ramadan Iftar meals as well. One family, who had not eaten meat in months, had meat three times over Ramadan!

1580 food boxes have been distributed to both sides of the border, and to needy Turkish families. Like many places in the world, many Turks are facing hardships due to the financial difficulties brought on by the effects of the coronavirus on the economy and greatly appreciate the food boxes. Thank you for your generous gifts for those in such desperate need!

**Tent Cities: Food, Toys and Clothing Distribution**

70 food boxes, 67 bags of new clothes, 1 baby bed, and thousands of toys were delivered to three nearby tent cities. Those living in tent cities suffer many privations and can rarely afford new clothes for their children. They are so thankful for your aid!

**Immediate AID**

5 fans, 3 stoves, 2 strollers, 1 baby bed, and 25 blankets were distributed in Turkey, plus 3 wheelchairs were given to patients on the Syrian side of the border. There are not sufficient words to describe the happiness of the refugees when they receive your gifts. It is a happiness no tongue can tell!

**Forever Friends**

When you work with refugees, friendships can develop at warp speed. So it was with little 6-year-old Mahmoud, a boy with cancer, and his father. Mahmoud always seemed to have a smile. During our two years together, there were bright moments when it seemed he was going to get better. Sadly, things took a turn for the worst and he passed away in May 2019.

We are happy to announce that we are back in touch with Mahmoud’s father and family in Syria. We were able to send a shipment of Ramadan aid consisting of 60 food boxes and 8 water tanks for the tent city where they have been living since 2016. It is a small and old tent city; the tents are worn out. It is a terrible situation, and they struggle desperately to make ends meet. Mahmoud’s father along with his brothers and cousins send their sincerest thanks for making this their best Ramadan since they moved into tents five years ago. And we were so happy to be back in touch with our friends in Syria after one year!

**Thanks to all of you!**

Your help is making a vital difference during this critical and uncertain time. These refugees, who seemed to be forgotten by the world for months on end, are so thankful for the many gifts of water storage tanks, Iftar meals, and food packages over the past month! After the long, cold winter outdoors they are extremely thankful for the warm weather … and the warmth of your generosity! Hope is returning to these refugees—they are not used to seeing such kindness! Your generosity is giving them a new outlook on life!

If you would like to donate a 1000 liter water tank for these tent city refugees we are purchasing the tanks for US$65 each. A food box is only US$23.

Your gifts can be sent to us via PayPal at: johnscott.afas@gmail.com.

Note: Please do not use the word Syria in your PayPal transactions. Tax deductible gifts can be worked out for those living in the United States.

Please contact us for further information.

John, for the Refugee Aid Team

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**People Who Care --** [**Reflections on Obtaining Peace**](https://tfionline.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8548880017562dc56a0e55ca8&id=169b8452d2&e=c472f1e780)

By Sally García, Chile

I happened to meet two American professional basketball players in the supermarket one day. Upon hearing from one of them that he had been here for two years, I asked him how he felt about the social upheaval in Chile and its ongoing violence and destruction. He was convinced that all this was necessary and he expressed that “violence is the only way to provoke change to realistically come about.”

His answer prompted me to prepare a written rebuttal, which I prayed over and committed to the Holy Spirit for divine wisdom. The opportunity to give it to them came when I was invited to their next game. The Lord worked it out for me and a friend to sit down along the edge of the court in the seats reserved for family and friends of the players. After the game, they greeted me and I was able to pass on to them the letter that I had prepared.

The following is basically the note I wrote accompanied by a translation of parts of the tract, “Reflections on Obtaining Peace,” which the brethren in Chile printed and are passing out by the thousands in areas most affected by the violence and the ensuing rise in crime which has followed:

Dear guys,

It was great to talk to you the other day. I don’t believe in coincidences. I go shopping in Jumbo all the time and I never run into Americans, much less big, tall, basketball players! The only other time I “ran into” one of your kind of basketball players was at UC Berkeley, when I went through a door and literally ran into the knees of a Harlem Globetrotter, back in 1969. He ended up being a super neat guy (when I got over the fright)!

I consider this an opportunity to share with you some important things I have learned through many years of experience. (I’m 72 years old, and I’ve had a lot of experience!) While living in Chicago, way back when, I went to Rev. Jesse Jackson’s “Breadbasket Church,” which was quite involved in making a positive difference on a number of social fronts of the time. Along with some other white members of the church, I was sent as an observer to different communities in Southern Illinois that were being terrorized by the KKK.

I remember reporting to Jesse Jackson in a frustrated tirade, assuring him that the black people of those communities needed to arm themselves to the teeth, fight back, and avenge themselves against such injustice. Jesse took me by the hand, looked me straight in the eyes, and asked me if I wanted to throw away the whole war for one battle. He said that revenge is cheap and only temporary. Violence always engenders more violence and morphs into a self-perpetuating vicious circle that begins to trap and destroy, especially the innocent and the more vulnerable. He told me that we were not just content to win a skirmish here or there; we were focused on winning a war that would change history.

I caught his idea. Stop and think for a minute. What were the most effective revolutions which were carried off passionately, but nonviolently? Jesus Christ’s early Christian movement overcame the Roman Empire, which tried so violently to annihilate them; Mahatma Gandhi’s Indian nationals threw off the English colonial empire and moved the subcontinent into the modern world; Mandela reversed apartheid in South Africa, exerting an influence on the rest of the world; Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Christians broke through the hold of segregation and prompted a cultural paradigm shift across a nation.

The point is certainly not that those leaders were “wet noodles, string for a backbone.” Each was a pillar of strength, but a different kind of strength—moral, spiritual, psychological strength—which allowed them to continue to be creative transformers.

Violence is only effective until it is spent. Moral strength contains the power to persevere through one creative maneuver to another, without losing force. Something that Jesus modeled, and which is taking off in business today, is called “creative disruption.” Basically, it’s purposely changing a conduct or practice by introducing something radically different, causing a paradigm shift. The key to Jesus’ approach is that He did it in love. For example, sitting on the edge of a well in enemy territory—Samaria—waiting to encounter a Samaritan woman, in a society where men just did not approach women to have a chat!

In my experience as a teacher, I learned an important principle. When I tried to effect change, using fear of punishment and reprisal, the change was only maintained as long as there was a threatening force to hold it in place. Without that exterior force, things reverted again. However, even after the original founders of the nonviolent revolutions were gone, the changes that they had worked for became established and remained.

Yet, Jesus Christ goes a step further. He continues to form a part of the spiritual DNA in those who open themselves up to Him, creating a constant process of change and growth, leading to the perfection of love. That’s the ultimate war to be won!

His Spirit becomes an intimate part of us, opening the door to a whole new reality. He called it the kingdom of heaven—a state where one can be at peace and feel secure even when nothing else around is. It’s discovering a purpose in life which goes beyond the political, social, economic, or cultural—something existential. It’s entering into an incredible love relationship. The only love that will never let us down, never disappoint us. In fact, Jesus is the manifestation of love itself—upfront and intimately personal.

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**People Who Care -- Dominican Republic**

By Michael and Maria, USA

In December we spent a week in the Dominican Republic, visiting five orphanages. One orphanage was new to us, although we did know some of the staff, as they had been part of another nearby orphanage for boys and they had opened a facility for girls. This was one of our best trips ever for several reasons.

Here is how it happened: In September we shipped five crates of nonperishable food to three of the orphanages. While at the shipping company here in Miami, we met Ed, the owner, who is from the Dominican Republic. After explaining that the things we ship are to help orphanages and that we would be going there in person in December to visit them, he asked us how we get around to visit all the orphanages while we are on the island. Upon finding out that we always rent a car and drive ourselves, Ed offered the services of one of his drivers there to take us to each place we needed to go. The headquarters of the shipping company is in Santiago, the city where we would be staying. What a difference it made to us having someone to drive us; we arrived at each place relaxed and not all stressed out from having to deal with the intense traffic of the island.

Once we were on the island, Ed called us daily from Miami to check on us and also talked with his driver to make sure we were doing all right and didn’t need anything. When Ed talked to us on our third day there, he informed us that from now on anything we want to ship to the Dominican Republic to help the orphanages would be free of charge. “You are helping my country, and we need to take care of you,” he stated. God bless him for his kindness and generosity. But it gets even better!

Once we arrived back home in Miami, we went to visit the manager of the supermarket that donated about 50 lbs. of laundry detergent that we shipped with the food back in September. This manager is also from the Dominican Republic. While we were on the island, the directors of three of the orphanages we had sent the crates to thanked us profusely for the food. But they were really raving about the gift of laundry detergent! They each told us basically the same thing, that although they receive donations of food, toys, etc., nobody gives them laundry detergent and they use lots of it, because they wash clothes, bed linens, and towels daily.

This particular supermarket had donated all the detergent, so we wanted them to know how much it was appreciated. We explained to the manager that, now that we have free shipping, we can provide more regular help to the children. He got quiet for a minute, thinking, and then said, “Here is what we can do. Every three months we can donate 64 boxes of laundry detergent. And on top of that, I will talk to the owners and I will get them to commit to donating canned food along with it. That way every three months you can ship these items to the orphanages.”

There were new children in each orphanage, but the ones who had known us from previous visits remembered us and were so happy to see us and to see that we had brought them new books! One director informed us that the teachers of a nearby elementary school had seen the books we brought last time and really liked them. They had borrowed them and used them to teach class in their school. We hope to visit that school on an upcoming trip to see if we can begin helping them as well.

What we have seen consistently in every orphanage we have visited so far is how hungry the children are for personal attention. After we pass out each individual gift package, we simply sit and talk with them. They gather around us and seem to absorb whatever we have to share. As soon as Maria sits down, within minutes she has a crowd of girls around her. Some want her to fix their hair, the younger ones want to sit on her lap, and they all want to hear stories and see the photos she has on her phone. This is our time to encourage the children and share our faith with them.

Sometimes it happens that the children immediately get deeply engrossed in opening their packages and reading the new books or coloring the activity pages with the crayons we bring. That is our cue that the Lord wants us to spend extra time with the staff. Since I had the recent experience of working with teens in the Shelter for Unaccompanied Alien Children in the Miami area, I found I could relate to the directors and staff on a different level, having “been there and done that.” My experience in Miami gave me a deeper understanding of some of the challenges they go through as they care for the children. In each orphanage we visited, we went out of our way to show the staff and directors appreciation and to encourage them in their tasks. This year we brought gifts not only for the children but for the staff as well. We brought them inspirational agendas and books, which they really liked.

As a final note we would like to share a quote that has helped us to try to be a blessing to all these children: “If you have love, you always have something to give.” And thankfully, our dear Jesus specializes in pouring out love, so that anyone will always have something to give.

Thank you for your support! If you would like to help or want to read more inspiring things about what people are doing to help others go to <https://radgiving.weebly.com>.

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**People Doing What They Can**

By Alf, Japan

Over Christmas, Emmanuel, John, Mary and I went to visit the temporary housing units in Nagano, Japan, where Typhoon Hagibis hit last October, resulting in hundreds of houses being flooded with two meters of water. Approximately 100 families were forced to move to temporary housing units, which were put together quickly by the government. Japan’s cabinet designated Typhoon Hagibis as “severe” and an “extraordinary” disaster.

In order to encourage those who suffered injuries and the loss of their houses, we visited and spoke to each resident. We tried our best to listen to what was on their hearts. We also passed out some donated food as well as calendars with inspiring and uplifting quotes.

These people were very thankful for our visit since many of them were in their old age and lonely, with no one to talk to.

We also worked together with other volunteers and helped with house cleaning. The houses were covered with muddy water. These efforts may seem to be small things, but we hope our project will lead to making the world a better place. We are planning to go back again.

Pic: Hundreds of homes and businesses were flooded with up to two meters of water.

Pic 2: Alf, John, and Yuri are distributing food and spiritually feeding reading material to the residents of the temporary housing units.

Thank you for your support! If you would like to help or want to read more inspiring things about what people are doing to help others go to <https://radgiving.weebly.com>.

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**Daring to Hope – living by faith for 300, Uganda**

By Robin

A few folk have asked about how the Family Care Uganda school project started and how I got involved. I’ve been in Uganda 17 years now. In about 2010 the Lord showed me to step out and follow and trust Him in a whole new project. My heart’s desire was to really work with the extremely needy here in Africa to help them learn that if they follow the Lord, He can bring the solutions to this dark and difficult Continent.

I hadn’t even realised that buying land and building a school would be such a key for people in extremely impoverished communities to begin to understand the Lord’s love. But in situations where they’ve had plenty of religion and even evangelists, they’ve been surrounded by such destruction, fear, mistrust, hate and pain, Jesus showed me they need, as Moody suggested, “The Bible wrapped in shoe leather”.

I would never have had the faith to bring kids in, to care for their entire living, but we soon learned that our very rough area in Northern Uganda, (where so many around us were returned child soldiers from the Kony LRA war of 20 years) that boys would follow horrible samples of violent drunkards, and none of the young girls would be able to stay safe, non-pregnant and focused, unless we did.

Faith is a very odd thing. We absolutely believe the promises, but I feel, sadly, at times that I’m not too different from the children of Israel. The Lord had brought them through so many miracles of protection, culminating in the Red sea being opened, it seems that their faith memory should be so clear. Wondering if they were going to get the next meal should have never happened—but it did, and it does!

From the first days when the Lord miraculously provided a cash donation we were able to build the classrooms with, then the local-style teachers’ houses, it’s all been miracle by miracle. There has not been one single day our kids have not had all the medical care, clothing, bedding or food on the table…and that’s impossible! —but that’s our Jesus! But it’s odd because even though we pace ourselves in trusting Him to not fail, still there are times when a challenge comes, the battle to fully trust the Lord and then follow Him with no obvious signs, is as big a test as ever. It is one thing to trust Him for my own needs or direction, but when you’re responsible for 300 beautiful lives, it’s a bit scary at times!

Since the beginning of this adventure, George Mueller has become quite a mentor of mine. He wrote something very interesting about faith. He was so adamant that his faith was not the gift of faith in 1 Corinthians 12:9 that only some people have, but it was the grace of faith that all believers should have. I really relate to this because it’s simply a matter of taking God at His Word and believing it, then stepping out and trusting Him…and that’s something we each do many times a week, wherever the Lord has put us.

I’m tested in practical matters so many times. The Lord will supply and I’d be tempted to want to (again!) build a buffer. After all and I’m supposed to be acting very responsibly for these extremely important, vulnerable young lives. But then the Lord will bring up a needy situation and I’ll hear something like: “Withhold not good from whom it is due, when it’s in the power of your hand to do it”. Prov 3:27 and I’ll use the funds the way He’s showing, trusting Him for the supply each day for my kids. I’m positive I make wrong judgements at times but that’s the whole thing. It’s really nothing to do with me. I really don’t believe in praying certain ways or trying to be ‘so righteous’ so He’ll bless. It’s all about the Lord—He knows our weak vessels, and He loves these beautiful kids so whole heartedly, so He brings it all to work together for good, despite me! And as Mueller famously said; “All this comes from taking God at His Word!”

We now have 2 in university, one boy finishing high school, praying for a scholarship so he can go into medicine. Our kids from the remote Ik tribe the elders begged us to take, are now doing so well in secondary school and just about to launch into training in midwifery, agriculture, business and teaching (with 2 headed to be doctors)—all things that are going to be very instrumental in lifting their entire tribe from having one meagre meal a day, into living more fully and healthfully! The Lord has shown us to take in South Sudanese kids from a refugee camp here in Uganda and we now have all together 3 tribes with over 230 living with us with a large staff on our property, and over 40 of our students we’re providing all the living and academics for in high school. It’s all Jesus each step of the way!

I used to think, before reading John Piper’s “George Mueller’s Strategy for Showing God” that he was probably a fairly staid, perhaps stern Austrian chap. But the more I have read, the more real, down-to-earth and fun-loving I’ve learned he must have been. One of the last things he taught was something he’d repeated several times, and I totally concur: “According to my judgement, the most important point to be attended to is this: above all things, see to it that your souls are happy in the Lord. Other things may press upon you, the Lord’s work may even have urgent claims upon your attention, but I deliberately repeat, it is of supreme and parament importance that you should seek above all things to have your souls truly happy in God Himself. Day by day seek to make this the most important business of your life. The secret of all true effectual service is joy in God”. The joy of the Lord is our strength.

To learn more about Robin’s project go to the Radical Giving site <http://radgiving.weebly.com/> and look in the archive for Family Care Uganda. Or go to <http://www.familycareuganda.com/blog/> or <http://www.facebook.com/familycareuganda/>

To give a donation use Paypal: donate@actmin.org

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**People Who Care – Food Distribution**

Lily Marlene, Africa

When the government announced that all markets in our state were going to close, people began rushing to the markets to buy needed items. Prices soared. Confusion was at its height. The demand was so great that some local food items tripled in price. Long queues of people and cars filled the main roads and almost completely blocked several streets.

A friend of ours put us in contact with a man who wanted to give a donation to help underprivileged families and individuals. Through his support, we purchased large amounts of rice, beans, milk powder, oil, fish, and instant noodles from a wholesaler.

As our city was not under lockdown yet, we were able to drive around delivering the food packages to the unemployed, orphans, widows, and other poor families in our area. We also made food packages to give to roadside beggars, who receive even less help during this period of financial crisis.

It seems that the Lord had arranged the perfect timing, as shortly after this, the government announced that parts of the city had to be under total lockdown. Now, we have the peace of mind of knowing that not only has the Lord provided all of our immediate needs, but has also provided for our friends and Bible students, so that they can have supplies on hand as well. As many receive low-paying salaries, and some have even lost their jobs because of this crisis, it would have been very difficult for them to survive with no food in the house, little money, markets closed, and very expensive prices in the open supermarkets. One man was at the point of tears upon receiving a bag of rice and beans, and exclaimed, “This is a miracle!”

God knows what He is doing, and in spite of all the difficulties, He has always helped and carried His children through every crisis. Looking back through history, we can see countless stories and examples of this, which gives us the faith to believe that if He has provided for all those Christians in years past, He will continue to do so for us today.

“I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread” (Psalm 37:25).

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**People Who Care – Miracle in the Desert**

Malcolm Muggeridge, in his illustrated book, Jesus, the Man Who Lives, remembers living in India and interacting with Mother Teresa, watching her Missionaries of Charity in action. He wrote: “‘I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me’—the words came alive, as no study or meditation could possibly make them, in the fulfillment in the most literal sense of Jesus’ behest to see in the suffering face of humanity His suffering face, and in their broken hearts, His. The religion Jesus gave the world is an experience, not a body of ideas or principles. It is in being lived that it lives, as it is in loving that the love which it discloses at the heart of all creation becomes manifest.”

Malcolm Muggeridge saw God’s love and goodness in the actions of the Sisters of Charity. “The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance,” the Bible says (Romans 2:4). By simply watching others giving God’s goodness to the needy, Malcolm was permanently changed. Many others, including myself, have seen God’s goodness being given, and sometimes we have been at the receiving end of those who were doing the giving.

Years ago, in the 1980s, I left for Mexico to help with the missionary works there. I went down with others and spent several years there, using my pickup truck and an old travel trailer to sleep in. I would make long drives out of central Mexico to the Texas or California border every six months in order to renew tourist permits. My truck was an old Ford Ranger with an automatic transmission and it pulled an old 26-foot travel trailer. It was a long trip to make every six months in order to renew the vehicle permits.

During one of these trips, leaving the cool elevations of central Mexico, we descended from the mountains of Tepic, Nayarit, down to the hot, tropical coastal highway, heading from Mazatlán toward Culiacan. It was a long, hot stretch of old highway with very hot pavement. Suddenly, I noticed in my rearview mirrors that smoke was trailing behind us! My thoughts started racing, wondering what was going wrong. I pulled over as soon as I could onto the next safe clearing. I knew to stop as soon as possible in order to minimize any damage that might have started. It was in the heat of the day, during the hottest time of the year.

I was with my young family, really in a predicament. But before long, to our surprise, a nice young couple with a late model pickup stopped to check if we needed any help. We explained the dilemma, and they said they had a strong tow line and could tow us safely to the next city, Culiacan, which was at least 50 miles away. They asked nothing in return, and towed us for quite some time, at about 40 mph, trailer and all. Then arriving in Culiacan, they took us to their friend’s house where they told us we could unhitch our travel trailer to sleep in later. Then, they took us with the pickup to a transmission specialist in the city whom they happened to know. With a few days of rest and a fully repaired transmission, we were off again to finish our trip. To this day, I remember how good God was to us, using this nice couple.

I felt very blessed that day, but I believe that the couple who stopped to help us were the ones who were more blessed. Their work that day, though largely unnoticed by others, was one of those works that live on forever. I sometimes forget the benefits of stepping in to help others, especially if it costs me. And I can often forget all that others have done for me. I recount more easily what I have done for others. But in the Bible, we see Jesus had an unreserved love for others, overlooking their faults. I know that partnering with God to give of His goodness in unexpected, special ways, as this couple did by towing us so far, can soften hearts and help to lead others to repentance (Romans 2:4). The giver, Jesus tells us, receives the greater blessing (Acts 20:35).

Actions, such as those of the Sisters of Charity or those of the couple that stopped to rescue us, are powerful sermons without words—sermons of the kind that may seem in short supply today, but they are sermons that leave a lasting impression.

I know how profitable faithful study of the written Word is, how it strengthens, inspires, and guides us (2 Timothy 3:16). Yet I also know that I long for and can’t afford to live without stepping into those good works that God has prepared for me to do. He arranges certain “setups” that require action on my part, special opportunities for service tailored to the individual (Ephesians 2:10). My duty is to be attentive and to step in when those opportunities come. I may have plenty of waiting periods, but before long, the right job comes, the one I was meant for.

With the passage of time, with so many generations of God’s Children having gone on before us, the playing field changes, the conditions, circumstances, and trends change. But His setups continue to come, presenting themselves to each one of us. I am sometimes tempted to think that my setups, my acts of service are insignificant, when I compare them to what others have done or are doing. But seemingly “small setups” and “small services” can carry great results. And I need to only focus on the opportunities that God gives me and not so much on those that He gives others. I’m not to compare my service with theirs (2 Corinthians 10:12). I know He will not judge me by comparing the works He prepared for me to do with the works that He prepared for someone else to do. He will judge me according to how I wholeheartedly, diligently step into my own opportunities of service, those particular works that He planned and fashioned for me alone. “But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another” (Galatians 6:4).

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**People Who Care --- Jordan**

By Jacki

We witnessed a faith-building month. Even though the lockdown in Jordan was extremely severe--total closedown beginning in March and we are **still**in lockdown--that has been no barrier for the Lord. In fact, it has opened up sooooo many more doors and opportunities that would be impossible in "normal" times.  This Ramadan had more donations, more food packages, more supply, more families reached than ever before.--Not to mention individual people here gave $5,600 towards cash donations specifically for the poor (cash gifts which is a Ramadan a custom). It was like the miracle of the Lord feeding the 5,000. Supply everywhere! The Lord inspired us to contact stores in the poor areas where we work, wire them the money to make the packages, and the families could go pick up their food box, chickens and bread. So easy!--All from my desk basically. The Lord's Spirit can make things that appear difficult or impossible into something He basically takes over and manages. A bit like how the Lord came down and fought battles for the children of Israel. "Stand back and see Me feed the people!"

Thanks for your prayers that gave the ideas, inspiration, courage to follow through, the peace & safety to make it happen. Special Mention: And a huge thanks to all who donated extra by Paypal to help feed these thousands of people in the Camps, who did not have any food. GBY all! Thank you soooo much!

Sending much love in His service, Jacki in Jordan

Paypal: jkiscott@gmail.com
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**People Who Care – Giving Encouaragement**

By Geoffrey, New Zealand

I have a plot of land, five metres by five metres, at our local community garden. Most of the plot holders are from Fiji, but a few are from India. Two days ago I was walking down the street (I go everywhere on foot, since I don’t have a car), and one of the men from our community garden gave a short honk on the horn and waved to me! It was so encouraging for me! I really don’t know him so well, but at the garden I always smile and acknowledge him!

 “One of the purposes of an ambassador is to work for peace, to promote peace. I represent the Prince of Peace.” There is such an extraordinary lack of peace today, especially inner peace in the hearts of the people. I am seeing that among the Indians at my garden; people are so thankful, so appreciative, to be noticed, to be greeted just with a smile and a simple “Hi.”

In a splendid book which I have been reading, *The Choice*, by Edith Eva Eger, the author, a psychologist in America writes, “I would say the most common diagnosis in the people I treat is hunger. We are hungry. We are hungry for approval, attention, affection.” This is absolutely the situation in New Zealand. As I go about my shopping and other business locally, I look at people I pass on the footpath, and if they are looking at me, I smile and say, “Hi!” People are very happy to just be acknowledged.

It is amazing what can be accomplished in just a few words. At the checkout at my local supermarket, I occasionally say to the checkout person, “I have a question for you: Are you having a good day?” One older Indian lady told me, “I am always having a good day!” I said, “You have a very fortunate husband!” to which she replied, “You would need to ask *him* about *that*!” Such a nice little exchange!

Some time ago a Chinese woman at my laundromat said, “I just wish I could die.” Desperate words. I will go to visit her later this morning, since Mondays are her day at my laundromat. I have discovered that I am pretty much her only friend, and she is so happy to just have a friend.

Her English is not good, and I have started reading the newspaper with her, teaching her a little English. At one point she told me that she doesn’t believe in God. (I discovered that some years back she was going to a church, and later left, disappointed.) Recently I said to her, “Believing in God makes you strong.” Noticeably this time she didn’t argue with me. Small talk is very valuable.

The Lord opens doors in the most unexpected places. I am always looking for people to give my vegetables to. I believe an extremely important principle for disciples of Christ is giving. You cannot love without giving.

One of my neighbors, William, who lives just a few houses up the street, is happy to receive a few vegetables. He invited me to a cup of tea a couple of days ago. William and his wife are from the Cook Islands. At one point I was telling him about a most interesting Bible verse, Matthew 13:12: “For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away” (ESV). I was saying to William that the Bible has a lot that is not “religious,” but rather deep wisdom. He was very intrigued by that verse. In the course of our conversation he told me that in the Cook Islands their god is Tangaroa, and that his idea is that all gods are the same, but he was happy for me to give him a Bible!

I’m out the door to give more encouragement.

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**People Who Care – Finding a Way to Help**

By Jacki, Jordan

“He that hath no money; come, buy, and eat” (Isaiah 55:1).

There’s an Arabic expression that says, “When God closes a door, He opens a window.” Well, when the lockdown slammed shut the doors of transportation, distribution, and everything we normally do, God opened the windows of heaven! He rained down finances, new ideas, creativity, never-before ways of doing things, and a lot more food and supply than we’ve ever had before! When we were limited and wondered what we could do, He flexed His muscles of supply. As a result, this is what happened in 29 days:

* 9,696 people were fed (1,616 families)
* 3,222 chickens were distributed
* Bread was given to 700 families
* $5,750 USD in cash donations were received for needy families. (Cash gifts for the poor is a Ramadan custom.)
* Not only that, but we still have food boxes and funds left over for June!

When the COVID-19 pandemic started, I thought, “Looks like I might be sitting here for a while, maybe I’ll catch up on some reading….” The Lord had other things in mind. Since we were on total lockdown, we came up with the idea to transfer funds by Western Union to stores in poor neighborhoods where we usually do distributions, and have the stores make food boxes for the poor. Then the families could go and pick up their food box. Basically, it was the same idea as food credit or food coupons for their Ramadan food box. The food box included bread and two fat chickens (these families rarely eat meat). There was enough to feed a family of six for about two weeks.

The main “big picture” lesson I learned from this situation is that, in a time of crisis, the Lord can make 100 ways for us to shine for Him per one problem. There are so many opportunities and open doors for us to do exploits, rather than to “hunker in our bunker.” Now that I look back, it’s similar to many of the Bible stories—the spies going into the Promised Land to check it out, crossing the Red Sea, or marching around Jericho.

Getting started distributing food was pretty tough; actually it looked impossible, but we just took one step after another, and then things just started happening. Maybe that’s what it was like with the miracle of the loaves and fishes feeding the 5,000. As the disciples took the baskets and started passing out the food, it just kept multiplying.

If we do the walking, the sample will do the talking. In ancient times when there were plagues or crises, Christians would often run towards the problem and start helping, feeding, comforting, and assisting in whatever way they could. This is one of the ways that Christianity spread.

This may be our new tool for witnessing, not just surviving but thriving in crisis situations as a witness. I learned how a crisis made the opportunity to do so much more for the Lord than ever before. Some creative ideas I learned from other Christian groups: They went door-to-door checking on their neighbors to see if they were okay. Kids wrote verses and passed them out to their friends. Some started a “calling” ministry, phoning their neighbors or elderly people to let them know they were available to help deliver groceries or to talk if they felt isolated. There are hundreds of ideas available! I passed out dates to all the families in my apartment building and let them know that if they needed anything just to let me know.

I want to say a HUGE thank you to all of you who responded to the want ad requesting finances to support the food boxes, which mainly went to camps and refugees. The Lord multiplied those gifts incredibly, and people received the message that He cares, He loves and He’s present.

Thank you, dear Family, for your love, faith, and giving spirit. God bless you all!

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**People Who Care – Passing Out Food Packages**

By Kalyani, Chennai, India

Since we wanted to help people in need during the COVID-19 crisis, we visited a few stores in our area and talked to the owners and managers, and then we selected one store, which was newly opened, to work with. We found the owner was really enthusiastic about helping and supporting our mission. He gave a generous discount on many of the food items. He also provided a special team to prepare the bags for 100 families and around 30 individuals.

We went to the store and checked each sack for the quality of the packaging to make sure there were no leaks or damaged goods. Once this was done, we tagged all the sacks. (The store owner also donated all the sturdy sacks and bags and tags.) During the counting we found they had made a few extra bags, and our boys mentioned this to the manager; he generously donated those extra bags too. They also provided free delivery of these packs to the school where the Reverend Father agreed to store them for us.

Then we worked on deciding which villages we would be driving to each day and the families who would be receiving the bags. God bless the Father, as he already had a list of people who needed help. So, we loaded the goods in two vehicles and drove to two villages each day and met 30 families per day. Since the lockdown was in place at the time, 10 to 20 people met us each day and collected the groceries. As expected, there were always more people who gathered and asked for help. We were able to help those people, too, with the extra bags we got from the store owner.

Many of these people needed to come by foot, several kilometers, as there was no mode of transport. They came in groups and we were able to talk to them heart-to-heart. We found they were so precious. We prayed for them to be able to improve their way of living, as most of them collect money by going shop-to-shop and vehicle-to-vehicle at stoplights. A few of them work as housemaids, but in general they are not educated and live in constant fear. We gave them snacks too as they came from far away in the hot climate. Each one of them came individually to us and thanked us. They prayed for our family, too, which was very touching.

The last day, we went to another interior village where we met around 40 families and their children. Their living conditions were worse. They do not have any toilets, which the government was supposed to build for them. In spite of no jobs and no conveniences, there was calm and peace in the spirit in the midst of these people. The children were very sweet and polite, and they all mentioned that they like studies and activities. They belong to a tribe called “Irular,” and their main means of support is capturing snakes. But these people are slowly learning to do other jobs and labor work. Many families have educated children and teens, and they asked us to come regularly and teach them. So, once we are free to travel again, we are planning to follow up on these tribal families to teach and train them. In the same way, once a month we will meet with a group of transgender people and have feeding classes with them.

We thank you all once again for your timely support so we could reach these poor people and help them with food items. God bless you all.

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**People Who Care -- Willie and the Five-Minute Favor**

By Iris Richard

We were just finishing up the distribution of fifty ten-kilo care packages to poor people—most of them widowed or disabled—in a hall at the edge of one of the largest slums in East Africa.

Happy to have completed the project, I turned to leave when my colleague Sally held up the last package, saying, “Before we close, let us quickly deliver this one to Willie up the hill. He isn’t able to walk down here.”

I was tired, sweaty, and my back ached. “Up the hill” sounded easy, but after the rain, the path into the slum was muddy and we had to climb over rocks and garbage to reach his hut.

I was about to postpone this task for another time when I remembered my new resolution of “five-minute favors,” which was inspired by something I read online:

Want to make the world a better place? … Enter the five-minute favor concept that is no more complicated than its name alludes: Take five minutes out of your day to do something that’ll benefit another person. … It doesn’t cost you much, but it can make a big difference in somebody’s life.

Giving it some thought, I figured that besides spreading happiness, being generous also comes with the benefit of improving happy feelings. Some even say that it has ties to longevity. After all, in giving lies the well-known truth: “Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38 )

Back to Willie. Well, we did climb that hill, and upon entering his tiny hut, I knew that the effort had been worthwhile. There he was, sitting on a rickety bed, the only piece of furniture he had left after his belongings had been washed away by a recent flash flood, when the dirty river that leads through the slum burst its banks. He was rescued and brought up the hill to a tiny room.

We learned that Willie had been a caddy at a local golf club, and while walking to work he had been hit by a car. The accident cost him his leg. Evidently, the vehicle wasn’t roadworthy and had faulty brakes. The driver had fled, but when caught later, it turned out that he wasn’t insured, nor could he compensate Willie for the accident.

Due to his disability, Willie lost his job and hasn’t been able to pay the rent and fears eviction. In order to survive, he wishes to start a small roadside business in front of his hut, selling cleaning supplies to folks from his community or passersby, but he lacks the means.

Willie received our care package with a big smile. “God has sent you!” he said, and a tear ran down his cheek.

This favor took us a bit more than five minutes, but it made a huge difference in this man’s life, as it not only met an immediate need, it also opened up an opportunity for Willie. As a result of this visit, we were able to contact other people who were interested in helping him, and three months of rent has been raised and monthly food packages are being delivered to his doorstep.

“I found new hope and purpose because of you,” Willie said, when donated items for his little roadside business were delivered by well-wishers!

Adam Grant, of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, practices a refreshingly nice approach to life and success, one that you might not typically associate with a business-school professor. His work focuses on how being a “giver”—that is, offering help to your colleagues—will ultimately bring you more success and respect than being a “taker.” He even wrote an entire book on the subject. In his research on high-performing salespeople, for example, he’s found that they tend to score “unusually high … on the desire to benefit others.”

Generosity in the workplace is a very nice idea, but one hang-up many people have about this philosophy is—just who has the time for that? Enter the “five-minute favor,” a term Grant coined to make his point that not every act of giving must be especially time-consuming.

One can never tell what great things a five-minute favor can set into motion in the course of a normal day, the workplace, or just as we go along our way.

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**People Who Care – Volunteering**

By Luz Alemana, Germany

Around Christmas 2019 I received an email from a dear sister in Japan who wrote about John’s work with the Syrian refugees, which said: “Whenever I receive John’s newsletters *I wonder what more could I do than send a little donation*. At least I can make others aware of these dear people’s situation, and of course, if you can help, please do. I am living in Fukuoka with still 10 degrees in December, in a warm apartment and with a warm shower and plenty of food and clothes. I can’t imagine to live in a tent in winter with not even sufficient clothes. But that is only the physical side. There is the loss of loved ones and terrible memories, traumas, and injuries, and the list goes on and on.”

The above phrase in italics turned a key in my heart, and I asked John if he needed my help in Turkey at the border with Syria. He said that the month of May would be a good month to come, but somehow I felt I couldn’t wait that long, and John said, “Okay, come in March.”

In this article I want to share about the amazing time I had these last nearly three and a half months here in southern Turkey. I arrived on March 4th. I came from Berlin, Germany. The plan was for me to stay for a month, helping as a volunteer with the Syrian refugees.

Coronavirus was just starting in Turkey when I arrived. Since we were still free to travel, we went to visit a family of Syrian refugees in a city on the Mediterranean Sea. John’s charity helped them get a flat where they could live a decent life with their four small daughters, away from the tent cities with thousands of refugees. There, the father could receive the medical help he needed so desperately. He had been tortured both by ISIS and the regime, and was in very serious physical condition, paralyzed. The medical help he needed was supplied by various sponsors. He is doing much better now! The mother and oldest daughter prepared an amazing meal for us. The children and the parents were very friendly and outgoing. Their faces have a special light and their smiles are so pure! After all this family has been through, it is a miracle of God that they don’t show any bitterness or hardness of heart.

After this trip we went to Reyhanlı, a city right at the Syrian border. There three rehabilitation centers are partially sponsored by donors. Formerly strong young men, who have lost their legs or arms (or sometimes all their limbs) during the war, live together in these homes. Through the donations of generous sponsors, many receive medical help.

We brought some wheelchairs for the most needy. They were so thankful! Imagine a big man having to be carried around by a helper all the time like a little child, unable to walk on his own. Having a wheelchair gives them back a small amount of dignity. One young man who has no legs told us how hard it was for him to be continually on the receiving side; he longs to be someone who can contribute to help *others* instead. There are about 90,000 amputees from the Syrian civil war living in different tent cities and towns; some never get any help to improve their lives.

Shortly after the lockdown happened and all flights were cancelled, I couldn’t travel back to Germany on April 4th as I had planned. That was a pleasant surprise! Then the month of Ramadan started and donations came flooding in like never before! John nearly collapsed under the enormous amount of work he had to do to take care of all the legal paperwork to register every penny that was given to the charity, and to organize and document every single food box that was given out to refugees in their slum homes or in their tent cities and also across the border in Syria, where millions of internally displaced persons are living in squalor.

The situation with COVID-19 was getting worse. “STAY HOME” was a sad, cruel joke for many refugees who are homeless and who would have loved to be able to go back to their homes, if they existed. On top of that, they were told to wash their hands regularly, but most of the children in the new informal tent settlements couldn’t have a wash for a week because of lack of water! Through many sponsors, nearly 300 water tanks (each one holding 1000 liters) were donated for over 30 tent cities in northwest Syria. This helped the families have access to water—what a blessing! Even small plastic swimming pools were sponsored, and many children had fun playing together in the hot weather.

There is so much to tell. I can’t find the words to tell you about the wonderful work being done here by John and his amazing volunteers, who seem to work nonstop to make the lives of these families better! Tomorrow I have to fly back to Germany, but my heart is overflowing with all the love I have received here through all these wonderful people. I would be so happy to come back!

If you would like to read more about John’s work go to <https://radgiving.weebly.com> and look under the Update page for Syrian Refugee Team Updates.

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**People Who Care – Cycle of Giving Kenya**

By Iris and Franz, Kenya

As in most parts of the world, Kenya has been heavily affected by Covid-19 in various ways. Especially for countless poor people who live in informal settlements and are dependent on daily income to feed their families, the current situation has turned into a nightmare. Fear and worry of how to make ends meet the next day, as well as hunger and in some cases even starvation has reached into homes.

Even though most of us haven’t experienced such dire circumstances, sharing with others might be the last on a list of to-dos during a crisis that puts one in a financial squeeze.

That is the situation for our small missionary outpost here in Kenya, where my partner, Franz, some faithful volunteers, and I have been laboring the last 25 years. There were times when we had a sizable team of full-time dedicated fellow missionaries, but in recent years, it’s been just us and a small fleet of Kenyan part-time helpers. Nevertheless, our aid work that reaches out to marginalized communities has grown and thousands of lives have been touched through material and spiritual assistance.

Since our work is supported solely through well-wishers and friends, we repeatedly experience that it is often through an act of unselfish giving or sharing that we find ourselves blessed in some way.

When the pandemic first hit our country, we had no idea how we would continue our full-time community outreach, nor be of help with the increasing requests for food aid. Each call for assistance seemed more dire and desperate than the one before, making us feel quite inadequate.

We got on our knees in prayer and went on an all-out search for supplies, getting in touch with anyone we had met throughout the course of our work, no matter how brief the contact had been. To our surprise, the initial response was good despite the financial pinch most are experiencing. With the first few donations we received, we secured nutritional food items and packed 12 kg bags with necessary survival needs and an encouraging message in the form of a tract for 25 vulnerable families!

Throughout the months that followed, our team kept securing and distributing these care packages for 25 households each week. Thus, tons of food aid has gone out to widows, the disabled, and those who are affected by HIV/AIDS, TB, and cancer. Many of the packs are delivered to homes, carried through muddy garbage-strewn slum lanes to the doorsteps of those who are too weak to come to our weekly meeting point.

The following is a short insight into the life of one of the recipients of our Family Care food aid: Auma is a young woman who lives in a small hut in one of Nairobi’s slums. A victim of rape, Auma suffers from HIV/AIDS. To make matters worse, a poisonous snake bite led to the amputation of her leg, and because of inadequate medical care, cancerous wounds have now formed.

Since a friend of Auma, who is a widow with two small children, was evicted from her small home as she was unable to pay her rent, Auma now shares her humble hut with this friend. Both women, jobless and penniless, find help and consolation through our Family Care aid project.

This is only one sad life story, but we have witnessed countless more during our work when the help we give never seems sufficient. However, we trust that when we do what we can, God will do what we can’t.

We pray that the cycle of giving and receiving will continue, as times are hard for those who have nowhere to go and no one to turn to. Perhaps someone reading this article will feel a tug on his or her heart to help us keep helping where the need is great!

Should you be able to send any donation, please send it via PayPal to richardiris23@yahoo.com or write us at iris@familycare.or.ke.

For more information about Family Care Missions work, kindly check out our website [www.familycare.or.ke](https://tfionline.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=8548880017562dc56a0e55ca8&id=b6a12c18a2&e=c472f1e780).

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**People Who Care – Lebanon**

By André Freulon

We are living through some extraordinary times. It is quite a strain on all of us, both physically and emotionally. My wife and I can’t really complain. We still have electricity, internet, and all our basic needs are met. But I’m well aware that for many others, their lives are affected in far more difficult and tragic ways than we are — We might be facing the same storm but we are not in the same boat!

I was listening to a talk from Tim Keller that caught my attention. He was reflecting on a comment that he heard: “Why do I have to live through such an awful time?” It reminded him of what Frodo said to Gandalf in “The Lord of the Rings”.  “I wish I need not to live this in my time”. And Gandalf to respond wisely “So do all who live such time but it is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us”.

Like Frodo, I must admit that I have my share of concerns about our future, as well as of all the world for that matter! But dwelling and worrying about them doesn’t do me much good whatsoever! But to decide on what I can do with the time and the means I have on hand, this is within my league!

We personally have been greatly encouraged by what a commentator called the ‘informal solidarities’ that have been springing up in many places and that we are glad to be part of. Many communities, group of friends, are organizing Food Drives for families deeply affected by the crisis, some others have taken the initiative to cook for elderly persons, and the list goes on and on. Pandemic is contagious but so are enthusiasm and empathy!

Obviously these solidarities are not the lasting solutions for the problems and challenges that we are facing. We need to pray, expect and work together on the changes that the country needs. But in the meantime, let’s not belittle and let’s stimulate the good that we can do together now. We all need one another!

I’d like to add that as ‘foreigners’ who have lived in the land of the cedars for many years now, we are very fond of your country. Maybe you don’t realize it fully but the Lebanese have a wonderful culture, engrained in them, based on faith, family values, hospitality. We love your diversity and pluralism. As you hang on to these values and bond together for the good of the country, we believe that there is no stopping you. All changes built on the soil of compassion and love for our fellow men will succeed!

 “I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.” --Steven Grellet

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**People Who Care – Paying it forward**

I began my journey back to the DC Metro area. I was equipped with my debit cards, easy pass, and the ten dollar bill my Mom gave to me the night before to help with my gas expenses. Before getting on the highway, I knew I had to get gas because of course; I did the “girl thing” and ran my tank very low. I wasn’t sure as to which gas station was the best, so I followed my instinct. For some reason I felt myself being pulled towards the Marathon station, so without hesitation, I pulled up to the pump.

While at the pump I had a thought that told me to “pay attention.” Just as the thought entered my head, a worn-out pick-up truck with a silver cap pulled up behind me. The gentleman got out and began counting change as he walked towards the gas station attendant. He was thin, very dirty, and his teeth were rotten. I remember thinking that he had to be on his way to get coffee because he was counting change.

At first I was a little afraid but then calm came over me. Our eyes met and he said hello and I returned the smile and the greeting. I asked him if he was headed to work and he smiled big and said proudly, “No, I am headed to diesel mechanic school and it is my last day. I have been going all year long. Soon I will be working on those big trucks out there on the road. Then he went on to say still with a cheerful voice, “Well hopefully I will get there”. I only have $2.50 for my gas tank.

Right then I knew exactly what I needed to do. I quickly opened my truck door, reached into my purse and grabbed the ten dollars my Mom had given me. I motioned to him to wait so that he wouldn’t leave. I ran into the station and asked the attendant to add the additional ten dollars to his total.

After pumping the gas he said, “thank you so much, now I know I will get there. Have a nice day”. As he drove off, my eyes began to water with joy because it was very clear to me what had just happened.

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**People Who Care -- Giving**

If you sow good things you will reap good things as the business man below finds out.

A businessman was on his way home after a long train journey. He was hurrying along, anxious to get home to his wife and children. As he walked he saw a group of men on the banks of the Genesee River that ran through his hometown of Rochester, New York State. The men seemed very excited about something. “What’s going on?” the businessman shouted.

“There’s a boy in the river!” they yelled back.

“Why don’t you save him?” the businessman asked, but then took action himself. Immediately he put down his briefcase and threw off his coat. Jumping into the stream, he grabbed the boy and with much difficulty swam back to the shore. As he wiped the boy’s dripping, wet face the man cried, “It is my son!”

In jumping into the river to help a stranger, he had in fact rescued his own child. What if this man hadn’t unselfish helped the boy? What loss it would have been and terrible quilt. But he did help a stranger, or so he thought and was greatly rewarded.

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**People Who Care – A Lesson on Giving**

By Iris Richard

The other morning I read a passage from Acts, where Paul, in his farewell speech to the church of Ephesus, talked about living life generously and working hard to make sure to always have something to give to the poor, because it is more blessed to give than to receive.( Acts 20:32–35) Little did I know that I was going to be tested on those very principles a few hours later.

My friend and I enjoyed a warm spring afternoon on the balcony, sipping a cold fruit juice. We had been chatting about the week’s accomplishments and were discussing plans for the month ahead. Before taking her leave, my friend, who is a social worker in a poor neighborhood, brought up an urgent situation she had recently encountered.

“Mercy has been an orphan most of her life, and now sadly at the young age of 25 has been diagnosed with cancer. She has been making ends meet by washing laundry for people, and most months she doesn’t even reach a minimum wage. With lack of funding for health insurance, she is now left stranded and has to finance the urgently needed treatment herself. She has been appealing to well-wishers, but she is still short of money for medication.”

With an expectant look in her eyes, my friend paused and there was a moment of silence between us. I felt convicted about helping out, but it was the end of the month and there were bills to pay. I was glad when her phone rang and she got busy with the caller. This gave me a moment to sort out the conflict that was rapidly unfolding inside me. Why now? I thought to myself. As I contemplated, the thought came to mind: Haven’t we already reached our maximum of giving this month? And after meeting the bills, the plan is to finally start saving for some of our large family’s needs.

My conscience then came in: Hasn’t God supplied each time you went beyond your limits to give to someone in need? My mind: That’s true, but … savings plan. My conscience popped up again: Why not think of the principles Jesus taught, to “give to those who ask” and “treat others just as you want to be treated.” (Matthew 5:42) My mind: That’s right, but I urgently need to find a balance between giving and saving. My conscience was not giving up: “Freely you have received, freely give.” (Matthew 10:8) My mind retorted: It’s not a cup of water! We’re talking about cash, which I’m running short of at the moment. My conscience: Think of another principle Jesus taught: “Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me.” (Matthew 25:40)

Sighing deeply, I looked up and again met my friend’s expectant eyes. “I can help.”

My conscience had won, and with an unexpected feeling of peace I dug into my financial reserve and gave what was needed, trusting that God would indeed fill the vacuum which I had just created. I had almost forgotten this incident when I bumped into an old acquaintance while out shopping a couple of days later. Before parting, he reached into his bag and gave me a sealed envelope and said, “God put it on my heart to give this to you after all you’ve done for me. I am sure that a generous person like you will find good use for it.”

When I arrived home, I found a generous amount of money in the envelope, which made this month’s cycle of giving and receiving complete. When we create a vacuum through sharing and giving, it draws not only financial blessing into it but also happiness and a feeling of accomplishment. It fosters friendships and camaraderie. It protects us from the sickness of hoarding and teaches us the cycle of giving and receiving. “Freely you have received, freely give.”( Matthew 10:8)

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**People Who Care – Visiting Rural Schools**By Philip and Joy, Thailand (written December 2019)

The objective of our project is to deliver spiritually feeding materials to the forgotten or otherwise neglected youth in small schools, orphanages, and refugee camps. They all carry a message of hope, encouragement, and outlines for the betterment of our moral makeup. Our goal is to put materials in the hands of those children and youth that can infuse spiritual principles, which unfortunately can become more foreign as time passes.

We visited a few rural schools, which were incredibly receptive. It is rare that someone comes to the schools and offers spiritual reading material and gives of their time to do activities with the students. The Activity Booklets were a great asset, and the kids loved them.

**Visiting orphanages and a children’s rescue center**

We were able to follow up on, deliver new materials, and have activities with these ever-growing kids and teen orphans. They seem to be the most receptive, probably because of what they have gone through. We were especially happy to meet some of the senior teens, with whom we could share the “Truth Beyond,” which was received with great eagerness. They asked right away for more copies to give to other teens in remote areas that they have contact with.

We also visited a children’s rescue center which is located about 50 km into the hills near Chiangmai in Northern Thailand. Their vision is to create a safe and happy environment where orphaned, destitute, abused, and impoverished children can be blessed with opportunities that are otherwise unavailable to them. We were able to leave a variety of motivational publications with them, which they appreciated a lot. All the orphanages seem to be connected, as they also asked for more copies to give to the more rural places where they were going to go that same day.

**Materials for orphans at refugee camps**

One of the greatest achievements was that we were able to get these materials out to multiple refugee camps, which can only be reached via a road that is only accessible by 4WD vehicle. These camps are many hours away from Mae Siriang, the largest nearby town. From where we are, it would be a drive of approximately five or six hours. Unfortunately, it is rarely possible for visitors to go into the refugee camp. So, we were thrilled that all the materials we passed on made their way into those camps. We trust that they are surely making a difference for those children and youth who do not know where their relatives are. These young people have horrific stories about fleeing from the soldiers. They are happy to be in a safe environment. God bless those who give their lives caring for them on a daily basis.

**Visiting Debsirin High School**

We were also able to visit a high school which is famous for its school sports team. It’s a prestigious school, which is not too far from where we are. We will engage with them more to have some activities and do some extracurricular studies to teach values that will help them understand that there is a God who is alive and real, if we open our eyes and want to see Him.

We had some English worksheets prepared for the older students as well as a specialized booklet, which gives insight into the marvelous world God created, by using simple but profound parables, metaphors, and short stories. This helps students see that God’s presence is all around us; we are often just too busy to see it and recognize it.

We want to use this opportunity to THANK ALL THOSE who made it possible for us to deliver these spiritually feeding materials to the forgotten or otherwise neglected youth in small schools, orphanages, refugee camps, and those less fortunate. We are grateful that we were able to lighten their hearts and give nourishment to their souls.

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**People Who Care – Giving Someone a Chance**

Robert Simpson of Louisville, KY, made ends meet for his family as a handyman, doing odd jobs around the area. But when the coronavirus pandemic hit, those odd jobs quickly dried up.

Then, as a result of the pandemic, he lost his apartment. This forced him, his girlfriend, and their 6-year-old son into renting a motel room, just to have a roof over their heads. But clearly this couldn’t work as a long-term solution.

“We have to pay rent every day,” Robert [said](https://www.wdrb.com/news/louisville-handyman-begging-for-job-lands-position-at-home-remodeling-company/article_435e60ae-cb8d-11ea-98fe-f378f3ec8722.html?fbclid=IwAR2zpWt7G2ce06lju3nLa-lNQX9Y6s6RVe9vEJ7d2JllL6HSuP5jGWzTXck), getting emotional as he explained the situation. “And it costs $55 to $60 to stay there, and I’m running short on money.”

With nothing but a small disability check coming in each month, there simply weren’t enough funds to make ends meet. So, the unemployed handyman looking for work took to the streets with a sign that read: “Handyman, 25 years exp., Need work.”

Rob the handyman wasn’t asking for money. He wasn’t looking for a handout. He just needed someone to give him a chance to earn his keep.

“I just thought I’d go out there and see if I could find a job,” he explained.

Rob stood on the side of the highway holding his sign for a week. The temperatures were scorching but he braved the hot sun each day in the hopes of finding work.

And his prayers were answered after someone took a photo of him and shared it on social media! Kyle Kark, the owner of Greenstar Home Remodeling, saw Rob’s photo online. And he decided to offer the unemployed handyman looking for work the chance he was seeking. “We just made the decision to have him come on,” he said. “I don’t know if we’ll have something for him all the time, but we’ll do what we can to help him get back on his feet.”

Kyle brought Rob on to help with some demolition work. Rob didn’t even ask how much the job paid, he just showed up. And his varied background gives him just the range of skills needed for the remodeling field.

“I started out as a painter, and then I became a landscaper - mechanical work, roofing - whatever I could make money at,” the handyman explained.

Since Rob doesn’t have his own transportation, Kyle picks him up for work. And on the first day, he not only paid Rob for his work but bought groceries for his family, too.

Rob proved he was willing to put in the time and effort to earn his keep. And that inspired Kyle to try and help him out even more. So, he also started a fundraising campaign so others from the community could help this family get back on their feet.

“Rob is a humble man and has not once asked for a dime he has not earned,” Kyle [wrote](https://www.gofundme.com/f/rob-the-handyman-louisville-ky?utm_medium=copy_link&utm_source=customer&utm_campaign=p_lico%20share-sheet%20expWdV&fbclid=IwAR2MjvRMTVkD7KYEHX26NMgU128xpvtCA41cMZlFR0JjE8FTTKaGLsddbTQ) about the previously unemployed handyman looking for work. “But he and his family are without essential needs, such as a vehicle and a permanent place to stay, so it is Green Star's hope that you will join us in supporting our neighbor.”

The acts of kindness have gone such a long way for Rob.

“That’s God’s work,” he said when told about the money being raised for him and his family.

Rob fully intends to put his all into working for Kyle for as long as Kyle has jobs for him. And after seeing Rob’s dedication and drive, Kyle Kark is willing to do all he can to give the man a helping hand toward building a brighter future.

 “If he’s coming to work and showing up and doing good work, and I got work for him, I’ll definitely keep him on and help him any way that I can,” he said.

Sometimes all someone needs is to be given a chance. God is clearly working in both of these men and we wish them all the best!

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**People Who Care – Helping the Venezuelan Refugees**

By Pablo and Rose, Ecuador

We are able to get out and about to minister to others in spite of COVID-19. We felt that we could venture out prayerfully now that buses and taxis are running (with restrictions), we use these means of transport to go out, shop, and most of all to give hope to others. Of course, we pray for God’s protection and we use hand sanitizer and masks, sometimes latex gloves. Social distancing is observed in shopping places.

Due to the fact that this country has such an abundance of vegetables and fruit. We are often given produce that is a little old or damaged and therefore will not sell. We receive so much that we are able to share with the poor, many of whom are Venezuelan refugees who sit with their kids on the pavements or at traffic lights begging. We often see them only a couple of streets away from us on the main highway near a shopping mall.

It is heartbreaking to see the thousands of Venezuelan young people who have fled to Ecuador, which in their minds was equivalent to the American Dream, only to find that Ecuador is suffering great economic hardship at this time with high unemployment and no government subsidies to help. There is rising crime as well.

In many cases, these young Venezuelans were university students, but their universities closed. Others have managed to graduate, for example, in law, only to find themselves begging on the buses and streets here in Ecuador. Our hearts go out to these youth.

We try to get out as much as we can. In one the area that we visit, there was a sad, desperate crowd of construction workers waiting to be employed. Many had not had breakfast, so we were able to buy a few apples with the money in our pockets and hand them out to some, as well as some mandarins we had for our snack. Their looks of despair linger in our hearts.

We pray for God’s plan in the lives of these poor people and the world’s youth to be fulfilled and not to be thwarted by the enemy, who seeks to destroy them mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and even physically. We lift up their needs to the throne in heaven in prayer. The poor we shall always have with us. Help us, Jesus, to be Your hands and feet and ministers of Your love for them.

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**People Who Care – Providing Water Tanks**

By John, Turkey

“Wash Our Hands? Some People Can’t Wash Their Kids for a Week.” So said the headlines of the *New York Times* last March 19th.

We were very aware of the fragile situation right on our doorstep, as we had visited this border region dozens of times in the past few years. Only a year ago, U.N. humanitarian affairs chief Mark Lowcock told the Security Council that shelling by Syrian and Russian forces in Idlib province risks creating the worst humanitarian disaster of the 21st century. He asked the Security Council, “Are you again going to shrug your shoulders... or are you going to listen to the children of Idlib, and do something about it?

We knew we had to do something about it, and late last year we started sending food packages, wood for cooking, and other items to the internally displaced people in Syria. But with 900,000 new internally displaced refugees arriving in less than three months, the already difficult situation became unbearable. People were sleeping outside under trees and in informal tent settlements in freezing weather. As many as seven children—including one baby only seven months old—died from the freezing temperatures in February alone. Tents were collapsing because of the weight of the snow on them. And now with the Coronavirus, relief agencies were predicting yet more disasters.

Finding access to clean water in these situations is difficult and time-consuming. The refugees in one of the tent cities asked if we could build them a well to provide easily accessible water. We suggested that providing water tanks would be more feasible at this time—and thus the Water Tank Project began.

We sent out an urgent appeal and many donors responded, and as a result, we’ve supplied over three hundred 1000-liter water tanks for 37 informal tent settlements in devastated northwest Syria. Our goal is to have one water tank for every four tents!

Aid has come in from California to Australia and from many countries in-between, including the UK, France, Spain, Turkey, China, Thailand, Iraq, Holland, and now we just received gifts from Japan and Canada! It has been truly a worldwide outpouring of love!

While the Security Council has failed time and time again, it is the kindness of people like you that is making a difference. In *The Lord of the Rings* movies, Gandalf said it best: “Saruman believes that it is only great power that can hold evil in check, but that is not what I have found. I have found that it is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay.”

Thank you for your continuous generous aid to the refugees. Thank you for helping to push back the darkness of despair in the lives of these refugees with your kind and compassionate charity! There is such a great need and we have made a start, and your giving is inspiring others to do the same!

Besides the water tanks, an author heard of our efforts and wanted to join with us in aiding these vulnerable refugees. She decided to give all the profits of a new children’s book she had just released to help us help the refugees. She hoped to make $15,000 during Ramadan with this book. She reached her goal within two weeks, and by the end of the month she had more than doubled her goal. She provided 15,000 meals, hundreds of food bags, and many water tanks for the refugees.

Quite a few refugees told us it was the first time they had eaten meat in months. Some internally displaced persons are literally living on bread and water. Other families have one meal a day of chickpeas, as chickpeas are high in protein and fiber, which helps lower appetite.

PS: For more information, see these articles:
<https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/syria-children-dying-freezing-conditions-camps-more-quarter-idlib>
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/02/point-babies-dying-freezing-cold-idlib-push-200217094010212.html>

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**People Who Care -- Vital Program, Colombia**

By Sergio Munoz

Conect Vision Foundation opened in February 2019 in Puerto Asís, Putumayo, an area that belongs to the Colombian Amazon, which is very rich in biodiversity and natural resources. Sadly, this region has suffered a lot due to the violence generated by drug trafficking, guerrillas, and conflicts. Due to these 60 years of conflict, the people have become suspicious, fearful, and without hope. They also feel used by the government because they take local resources and give the people almost nothing in return, leaving behind poverty and a trail of harm to the environment, and sadly, violence.

This is a summary of activities carried out during three months earlier this year. Despite the coronavirus quarantine, we continue to develop the VITAL program weekly through:

* Classes on values presented online and using WhatsApp.
* School support in mathematics, reading comprehension, and English for 30 boys, presented online and using WhatsApp.
* We distributed food to the families of the children and young people within the program who were left without a source of income.
* Computers were donated by sponsors, which we distributed, thus allowing the boys on the football team to continue their scholarship studies.
* Continuous work with the Corpocampo company in the distribution of seedlings for crops of Amazonian products to replace the coca plant.
* We have started the construction of the “Eco Aldea VITAL,” starting with the greenhouse to plant vegetables and fruits. The cultivation of food will have a dual purpose: to feed and help the families of the youth in the program, as they and their families would pay a minimum price for the food or work for it. At the same time, they would be taught how to grow these foods. The second purpose is to create self-sustainability for the foundation.
* We collaborated with the army in the distribution of food.

Are goals for the rest of the year and next year are:

* School reinforcement in mathematics, reading comprehension, and English, and values classes during extracurricular hours for 30 boys.
* VITAL program on the “El Danubio” sidewalk and in the ETCR (territorial training and reintegration space) for the children of former guerrilla members, who we support in their reintegration process, impacting 50 boys.
* A soccer school on the other side of the Putumayo River for children, teenagers, men, and women, led by a former fighter who is in the process of reincorporation, reaching 100 people.
* A soccer and basketball school in Puerto Asís, reaching 50 children and teenagers.
* We also work with foreign investors and with the owners of the Corpocampo company to help locals to change illicit crops for healthy food crops such as acai, palm hearts, cocoa, camu-camu, sacha-inchi, honey, etc., which are typical products of the Amazon.
* Taking advantage of the fact that this area has 17 rivers, an exceptional biodiversity, the Amazon jungle, etc., we plan to start an eco-tourism program that will benefit this region, thus helping them to leave behind both violence and drug trafficking. This will help generate peace in the region and in the long term it can also give self-sustainability to the foundation.
* We are committed to leaving a mark in this region and achieving generational change by educating the children of locals and the farmers and ex-fighters. This will provide an example for the adjacent communities to follow.

Once again, we are eternally grateful for all your help, which is allowing us to reach many lives in need of love, understanding, education, and training in a region of Colombia which has such great potential for the country, as well as internationally. We know that everything we want to achieve will take time. We look forward to keeping you updated with the progress the VITAL program makes.

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**People Who Care – Giving to Orphans**

By Dina Ellens

One day I noticed that my dentist friend, Dr. Rina, was looking a bit sad. We often meet for coffee, but today Rina wasn’t her usual bubbly self. I asked her what was wrong and she answered: “Well, Christmas is coming up, and I’m just feeling kind of sad. As you know, both of my children are married and live far away. And I don’t have any grandchildren yet.”

Thinking back on my own situation, I could easily identify with Rina. My children are also grown up, married, and live overseas. Although I do have grandchildren, they’re far away and I don’t often have time with them.

“I can relate to that, Rina,” I said. “I’m in a similar situation. Can I tell you about what helps me?” I went on to tell Rina about how I volunteer weekly at a local orphanage, and how spending time with the orphans not only does them good but also helps me. I always come away feeling happy and inspired that I was able to do some good and help others. I’m actually not really sure who benefits the most—the orphans or me!

Realizing that Rina needed something to get her mind off her own situation, I told her about an upcoming project at the orphanage. “We want to make Christmas special for the orphans. We need help choosing the right gift for each one. Would you be available?”

Rina’s face brightened. “Yes,” she replied. “I’d love to do that.” Over the next few weeks, armed with a shopping list detailing each of the orphans’ wishes, along with size and color, Rina was busy shopping for the orphans. She was so preoccupied with bargain hunting and making the budgeted funds stretch that she hardly had time to think of herself.

The day of the orphans’ Christmas celebration, Rina was at my door, bright-faced and eager to get started on wrapping the gifts. Throughout the day, I noticed how Rina had undergone a total transformation. She was the one handing out the gifts to the orphans, and every time I looked at her, she was bubbling over with happiness and ready laughter.

Rina found the secret to true happiness: Give yourself away by helping others, and happiness will find you!-

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**Pick a Project for Christmas**

By Misty

We have a large family! Christmas can easily get out of hand so it was decided that the adults would bring money instead of gifts and we would bless someone else.

We had to get organized! Each year one family would pick the project and present it to the group so the grandkids could understand. We heard about an organization that made wheelchairs for people in third world countries out of the white plastic lawn chairs. Our goal was to buy one wheelchair representing each person at our house on Christmas morning—22 were there that year. We made it!

Now we had a bigger goal for the next year—clean water. We learned about 5-gallon bucket water filtration systems. We each set out our Christmas collection jars. Our friends started to ask questions; they wanted in on it, too. We got one of the bucket filters, learned how they worked, and drank the mud! That year when our friends and family collected the jars and counted the money on Christmas morning, we had enough to dig a well! We were able to bless an entire village!

We have a lot of babies so we found out about giving birthing kits to new mothers. There wasn’t a dry eye Christmas morning when we discovered what they were given: to create a clean environment was a sheet of plastic with a bottle of water to wash your hands. The other items in the kit were everyday objects for us but were hard to come by for the 100 new moms and babies we were able to bless!

Have we missed out? No! On Christmas morning when it is time to pass the basket around, there is never a dry eye; and waiting for the final count has us all wide-eyed and filled with anticipation.

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**People Who Care -- Five Toy Trucks**

By Victoria Olivetta

Christmas was God’s big splash, the greatest miracle ever—His love in the form of His only Son, Jesus, sent down to earth to lead us back to Him. And Christmas is still a time for miracles. Like ripples traveling out from that splash, little Christmas miracles remind us of God’s unfailing love.

One Christmas my husband, Daniel, and I planned to take presents to some of the poorest families in Goiânia, Brazil, where we were living at the time. The previous year, a friend who owns a toy shop had given us hundreds of toys to distribute, but this year he was only able to contribute five large plastic trucks.

What good could five toy trucks accomplish? We mulled this over for days, until one night the answer came to Daniel in a dream. “I know what we can do with those trucks,” he told me the next morning. “Pedro By Victoria Olivetta recently had heart surgery.” (Pedro was a vendor at the central market, who donated fruits and vegetables to our volunteer work whenever he could.) “He and his wife, Maria, used their entire savings to pay his hospital bills, so they probably weren’t able to buy Christmas presents for their children this year. They have five boys.”

The trucks were so big that they filled a large plastic sack. Daniel slung it over his shoulder and set out for the bus stop to go to the other side of the city, where Pedro and his family lived. Pedro and Maria’s children were playing in the street as Daniel, who was graying and happened to have a beard, approached, the bag still over his shoulder. One of the boys saw him coming and ran inside yelling, “Mommy! Daddy! Santa is here!”

So Santa spent the afternoon with Pedro and Maria and their boys. When he got home that night, Daniel’s face shone with joy as he described the children’s happiness. “Pedro and Maria felt sad that they didn’t have money for presents for their children, but God took care of that! Five boys, five colorful trucks!”

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**People Who Care**

By Irena Žabičková

About six years ago we moved to a new neighborhood. Since arriving, we’ve tried to be friendly with our neighbors and show kindness. We greet them with a smile, ask how they are, and several times we prepared pizza and delivered it to them as a sign of friendship. We thought we were doing well in showing our neighbors we care. But then we met Nilda. Nilda’s two adult grandchildren are both disabled with a genetic degenerative disease. In order to help with their care, she decided to move in with her daughter’s family. Caring for physically disabled people creates a lot of work and stress, and no one would blame this family for focusing on their own problems and challenges. But not so with Nilda. She is the most hospitable person I have ever known, and there always seem to be at least one, if not two, sets of visitors at their home. As previous visitors get up and start leaving, new visitors enter the house—there is a constant flow of people.

Drinks and cakes are always handy, or snacks and simple dishes are prepared in minutes. In spite of the challenges and difficulties this family is facing, there’s a joyful and optimistic atmosphere. Even our dog, who occasionally visits her with us, doesn’t leave without a bowl of water and a special dog treat or two. In fact, our dog recognizes Nilda at a distance and can’t wait to see what yumminess she has on hand this time. Nilda pays attention to the smallest details about her visitors.

I don’t know if a few paragraphs can do justice to the joy, kindness, loving concern, help, and hospitality that she bestows on others, but the above quote reminded me of Nilda when I read it.

Why don’t we make Nilda our example for the coming year?