



Share.

Share The Blessings, Inc.

Advent 2009

Very warm Advent Greetings from Share The Blessings! We are, once again, patiently waiting in joyful hope for the coming of our Lord and Savior! Indeed we await the coming of the one who brings us full life. For he said, "I have come so that they may have life, and have it to the full." (Jn. 10:10) When he comes, he will reveal to us what full life really looks like.

Yet, even as we still wait, in eager expectation, for his coming, we are already participating, here and now, in the celebration of the life that he promised; the full and abundant life of which he has already granted us a foretaste.

Since its inception in 2002, Share The Blessings has attempted to witness to the Gospel by helping people catch a glimpse of the full life that our Lord Jesus Christ came to bring. Our pilgrimages to

Uganda and Bolivia convinced us that for people to even begin envisioning the Lord's promised life, something had to be done. In addition to establishing and nurturing strong and warm relationships with the people we met, a concrete sharing of the Lord's blessings upon us, indeed life's blessings, with our brothers and sisters in these parts of the world emerged as a critical component to our witnessing to His word.

In Uganda and Bolivia, while their warm hospitality and genuine love for us perfectly reminded us of our being a single family of God, their sad experiences of violence, poverty, sickness from preventable diseases, and a general lack of the basic necessities of life opened our eyes to the bare fact that they were eclipsed from the glimpses of the gift of abundant life that our Lord came to bring.

Therefore Share The Blessings' commitment to providing clean water and education in Uganda and Bolivia is our humble attempt at witnessing to the Gospel. And at the root of our engagement is our strong belief that the Lord's word, when faithfully lived, is truly transformative. It changes human hearts, social patterns, priority scales, and the entire face of the earth. In the end, more and more people come closer and closer to experiencing the joy of the life that they hope for in Christ.

As we take the opportunity, in this issue, to express our sincere gratitude to you for your kind support toward Share The Blessings' mission, we, at the same time, continue to kindly ask you to journey with us in prayer and thanksgiving as we continue to share the Lord's gifts to us with our brothers and sisters by providing clean water and education.

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As STB grows, it keeps reorganizing itself.



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What I went through makes me do what I do. Fr. Joe's Story.



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Gratitude

Thanks for Setting us on the road to self-sufficiency.

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Water

Show me water, I will show you life; Show me life and I will show you water.

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Our Business Partners

Prayer, Work and Money: mutually inclusive.



SHARE THE BLESSINGS: A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION



Kevin S. Green: STB President

Until recently, Share The Blessings (STB) Board was both the "Board and the Organization" since we had no other members *on board!* Initially this was not a problem given our original goal of providing just 2 clean water wells and helping a few students with their education.

Later, however, as we became more aware of the immensity of the need, we redefined as well as broadened our goals and focused more on **Education** and **Clean Water**. Within a very short time, the education program had grown to an astounding 50-student program! In fact today we are sponsoring 57 of them.

Even with such an unforeseen rapid growth, our Board alone was still the legs and arms of the Organization, doing all the work. But soon the challenge grew so enormous that the Board could no longer continue to be the Board as well as the Organization.

So, in 2008, we decided to reorganize ourselves, creating, in the process, a Volunteer Organization that did not only include all the Board members, but incorporated new volunteers. Without such a move, we were risking "burn out" since all Board members were in fact volunteers holding regular jobs in addition to serving Share The Blessings. But such re-organization did not pass without other internal adjustments.



Volunteers At the 2009 Fundraising Dinner

After our first fundraising dinner in 2007, we filled our Education Chair position with a volunteer who wasn't on the Board. We also held a retreat in 2008 to focus on our Organizational structure. These two changes proved very fruitful and put us on the course to expanding our volunteer base. It is no wonder that

our 2009 fundraising dinner volunteers were not only led by a non-Board volunteer, but non-Board volunteers outnumbered Board volunteers and the dinner was a huge success. It was because of this spirit of volunteerism that "a major contributor" rewarded our efforts by more than matching our 2009 dinner proceeds!

And consequently, we have turned even yet another primary chair position - Clean Water - from a Board member volunteer to a non-Board member volunteer, in addition to opening up other key volunteer positions. To see these please visit our www.share-the-blessings.org/org a spin off of our www.share-the-blessings.org site specifically meant for volunteers!

Kevin S. Green



"Tuli Kimu Mu Kristu, Tuli Kimu Ffena" ... "We are One in Christ, We are All One"





FR. JOE'S STORY

Many people ask me why I am so actively engaged with children sponsorship. My answer is a simple.

When I was a small boy in Primary 3, the Pastor of our home Parish visited my home. Instead of talking to our parents, he spent most of his time playing with us [children], and teaching us some games. He was very nice and kind! When he left, I said to my dad, 'I want to be like that man'. 'He is a priest,' my dad informed me. Then he told me what

year, because there was no body to take me to the seminary, the headmaster of our school asked me to repeat Primary Seven class, even though I had passed my Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) very well.

I repeated, and again I passed very well. Still

the seminary, I gave up and started gardening. The head teacher too gave up!

Just then, something happened. One day, when I was in the garden picking coffee, my mother called me and told me that there was somebody who wanted to see me. When I got home, I met a gentleman called Silas Kasule who asked me, 'Are you the boy who want to be a priest?' 'Yes, I am,' I replied. 'Go and pack up, I am taking you to the Seminary,' he said. Overwhelmed, I ran into the house and started to dance.



2 Are Tailors

priests do. 'I would like to be like that priest,' I confirmed.

Unfortunately before I could join the seminary to train for the priesthood, my dad died - on February 19, 1972. I was in Primary Six. We were left six children with our mother who did not have a job. On completing the Primary School the following

STB STUDENTS IN UGANDA (St. Francis Group: Total 57)

- 13 are in Primary School
- 21 are in Secondary School
- 16 are in Tertiary Schools
- 26 are boys (still in sch)
- 24 are girls (still in Sch)
- 17 are orphans who lost their fathers
- 15 are orphans without both parents
- 9 are needy children with both parents
- 9 are orphans who lost their mothers
- 2 are secretaries (have completed sch)
- 2 are tailors (have completed sch)
- 1 is a builder (has completed sch)
- 1 is a teacher (has completed sch)
- 1 is a shop-keeper (has completed

there was no one to take me to the seminary.

The same head teacher asked me to repeat P.7! Because I was really doing nothing, I repeated, and once more, I passed very well. But again no one could take me to the seminary! It was only with greatest difficulty that the head teacher managed to convince me to repeat P.7 a third time. After sitting PLE four consecutive times, each time passing very well but finding no one to take me to



But I had nothing to pack up: so I only changed clothes and came out.

Fr. Joe Kakooza: St. Francis Co-ordinator

Mr. Silas Kasule took me to his home in Kampala., the capital of Uganda, and bought for me all that I needed to join the Seminary. The following Monday he took me to the Seminary, and now I am a priest.

That is why I am actively engaged in the sponsorship program." *Fr. Joe*

EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT

YARD SALE

From October 2008 through March 2009, Fr. Achilles Kiwanuka from the Mityana Catholic Diocese in Mityana, Uganda served at St. Michael's Parish in Cary, NC. During that time, a group from the 2008 Share the Blessings pilgrimage, along with friends and family, formed a prayer group with Fr. Achilles. In

September, 2009 the prayer group worked together to give back to Uganda by holding a 2 day yard sale. Donated items from 20 local families were sold throughout the weekend. The sale was a big success, raising over \$2200. Half of the money was donated to the Share the Blessings Education Fund.

Carol

Letter of Appreciation

Dear members of Share the Blessings,

Greetings from Uganda. I am called Tumusiime Silas, one of the students you are sponsoring through Fr Joe at St. Joseph's Catholic Church Katikamu.

I am so pleased to greet you in the name of our savior Christ Jesus. In a special way I wish to thank you for your financial support that you render to me through our beloved parish priest Fr. Joe. I would also like to inform you that I passed successfully my "Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education" Exams last year (2008). As per now, I am at the National Teacher's College, Kaliro, pursuing a Diploma Course in Secondary Education, with History/Geography as my teaching subjects.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year!

Yours faithfully,
Tumusiime Silas

PARTNER WITH US

☐ I would like to share the gift of education.

I'll Help	One Student	One Term	One Year
	Primary Day	\$60	\$180
	Primary Boarder	\$100	\$300
	Secondary Day	\$80	\$240
	Secondary Boarder	\$150	\$450
	Seminarian	\$160	\$480

☐ I would like to share the gift of clean water.

☐ I would like to help with other projects (classrooms, computers, Center for Adult Education in Bolivia)

Amount _____

Name:

Address:

Email: Phone:

Please make checks payable to Share The Blessings, or donate online using PayPal at www.share-the-blessings.org



Let Clean Waters Flow

"At the time when Yahweh God made earth and heaven,... Yahweh God had not sent rain upon the earth ... Instead water flowed out of the ground and watered all the surface of the earth." (Gen,2:4-6)

During Share The Blessings' first years of operation, many people in the early village sites did not believe that the wells would really be completed. They thought they would be started and left incomplete. This skepticism might partly have been due to their experience with other Non-Governmental Organization Projects that had operated in these villages before. Or, perhaps, the very work of digging a well seemed too expensive that they didn't believe Share The Blessings would be able to fund the whole work from start to finish.

However, these people have constantly been surprised not only by Share The Blessings' resolve to complete started wells but also by the ability to continue digging ever new wells!! The skepticism has completely been erased; indeed replaced by surprise, confidence and trust as Share The Blessings has determinedly dug, completed and commissioned a total of 13 wells, in addition to having already sent in funds for a 14th well. In fact we are soon sending funds for the 15th well as well -

only waiting for logistical information from Uganda before we do so!



Fr. Emmanuel Katongole at a New Well

The wells cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$10,000 (US dollars). It depends on how deep it needs to be dug to tap into the water-table. If the Ugandan company that we use to dig these wells needs to bring in heavy equipment to

drill the well, it obviously costs considerably more. Fortunately, though, most of the wells we have commissioned have not required the use of heavy equipment. This has helped us enormously to save for more wells. Moreover, in this water program, we have been blessed with the help of seminarians. They have been our folks on the ground (meeting with villagers, teaching them how to maintain the wells, checking on the status of the wells, and helping us to find the next well site). Their assistance and support helps us also save more.

Recently we have also been blessed with a new chair of the Water Committee: Mr. Agata Bonaventure. Bonaventure, originally from Kenya, is well experienced with water projects and has worked with a number of Non-Governmental Organizations before. His leadership will not only help Share The Blessings grow, but his experience will make the Water program thrive.

Lauren Green



To find out how your congregation can share the gift of clean water, please contact info@share-the-blessings.org

SHARE THE BLESSINGS AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY



Ed Collupy: Treasurer

You have probably heard the quotation and the Book Title, "It takes a Village" (Hillary Rodham Clinton). Well, in Share the Blessings case, the village is seen from two view points: first, the villages, particularly in Uganda, and the people in them that all of us serve. Second, the villages in which we all live and work, indeed villages that are well served by business—big and small, chains and locally owned. All of our work, especially the education and water projects we have helped to fund would not be possible without the

support of many businesses.

Despite the economic challenges that many businesses have gone and are still going through, just like many of us, we have been fortunate to receive enormous support from so many businesses this past year.

On the Fortune 500 front, we are thankful for the help from The Pantry, operators of well over 1600 Kangaroo Express convenience stores in the Southeast, and from IBM. Laptop computers that have reached an end of life at The Pantry have been refurbished and are now in use in a number of schools and churches. IBM in the Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, invited us recently to participate in their annual family day where non-profit organizations are showcased and had an opportunity to tell our story to their employees. This, in turn, has resulted in volunteers and donors to Share The

Blessings!

Small business in the greater Cary area, North Carolina, were an integral part of our recent fundraiser dinner. We are forever grateful for the in-kind and gift card donations from Danny's Bar-B-Que, Pepsi Bottling, Monkey Joes, Pristine Auto Spa, Frame Warehouse, Sweet Traditions Bakery, and Empire Eats. Each of these merchants responded to the needs that are thousands of miles away, but close to each of our hearts.

Thanks to all our business supporters! We value their friendship and commitment to helping those in need. When possible and in turn, stop by and thank these important partners of Share The Blessings.

Ed

HOW TO SHARE...

Pray With Us



Volunteer With Us



THANK YOU

Prayer Requests

- Please, pray for Fr. Joe Kakooza as he begins his new appointment as Pastor of Kasana Luweero Cathedral Parish. Fr. Joe, co-ordinator of STB St. Francis Students in Uganda, has been recently transferred from Katikamu Parish to the Diocesan Headquarters at Kasana Luweero. He is now the New Parish Priest (Pastor) of the Cathedral Parish: if you want you may call him the "Arch-Priest".
- Pray for St. Francis Students who have sat their P.7, S. 4 and S.6 National Exams in Uganda that they may pass well. Pray also for the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) Staff who are now in the process of reviewing and marking those exams that while they be sober and alert, they may as well be understanding and lenient.
- Pray for all Ugandan students and teachers who are in their end-of-year holidays now: that this might be a truly restful time that will help them refresh. At the same time also pray for Ugandan parents who are now in the process of looking for next year's school fees for their children that they may find the money needed.
- Pray for all STB volunteers and STB programs in Uganda and Bolivia: that despite the hard economic times we are going through, God may continue to shower upon us His blessings, and enable us to share with our brothers and sisters who are in need.

"Providing basic human needs and dignity for all through prayer and acts of love."

Share The Blessings, Inc. is a recognized non-profit organization under section 501 (c) 3 of the International Revenue Code, FEIN 14-1882445.

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What good is it,
my brothers, if
someone says he
has faith but does
not have good
works? ... Faith
without good
works is dead!
(James 2:14 & 17)