



Share the Blessings, Inc.

Lent 2009

This Lent, we at Share the Blessings have been reflecting upon our journey with Christ and are mindful that we walk this road to the cross with our brothers and sisters all over the world. Some of us hold powerful memories of praying the Stations of the Cross with friends in Bolivia. Others share an experience of singing the Agnus Dei with parishioners

in Uganda, while others have different stories to tell still.

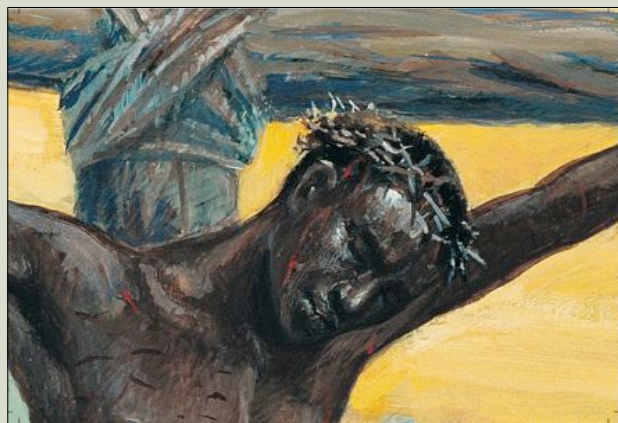
We also recognize that in these last days of his life, Jesus showed us the full extent of his love, wrapping a towel around his waist and stooping down to wash his disciples' feet. He gave them a new commandment, saying, "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (Jn 13:34). And, as these words echoed in their minds, they watched the same love lead him to the cross.

Jesus showed us how to live together as God's children; we hope that our work might reflect his love and our identity as one family.

In February Share the Blessings launched "Sponsor My A's & B's," a fundraiser that gives students here in the U.S. the opportunity to

help students in Uganda go to school while also teaching them about their connectedness. Students commit to study hard for an academic quarter and ask their friends and neighbors to sponsor each A or B they will earn on their report card. In everyday activities such as studying for a test or completing their homework, students are aware of the way that their actions can impact the life of someone living across the world.

We hope to find even more ways to live well together as God's family, and we invite you to join us. We wish you a blessed end to Lent and a joyous Easter.



"The Crucifixion" All rights reserved. Vie de Jésus MAFA, 24 rue du Maréchal Joffre, F-78000 VERSAILLES. www.jesusmafa.com. Banner art taken from "The Washing of the Feet," shown on page 8.

For more information or to find out how to participate in Sponsor My A's & B's, contact Jen Stallings, jen@share-the-blessings.org.

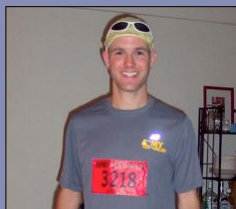


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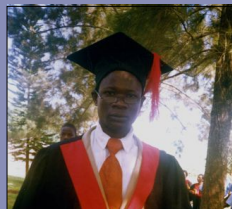


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El Camino de la Cruz

The Way of the Cross

Celebrating Maundy Thursday in Bolivia

Crucifix in the Cochabamba prison chapel

“And during supper, Jesus ... got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet.”

He said to them, “I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.”

- John 13:4-5, 15

When the last of five gates had closed behind us, we found ourselves standing within the walls of a prison in Cochabamba, Bolivia, one of the poorest countries in South America. Bolivia was not where I had ever envisioned myself being on Holy Thursday afternoon in 2004. I had arrived that morning with my friend, Lauren Green, after nearly 24 hours of travel. Only two weeks earlier, both of us had planned to attend the Triduum services with our families in Cary. But Fr. Philip Tighe extended to us an invitation to celebrate the Triduum in Bolivia where he was studying Spanish and doing ministry in the prison where we now found ourselves.

But “celebrate” the Triduum in a prison? How do you “celebrate” anything in a prison, where the men wear street clothes, much of them frayed and worn? How do you celebrate where there is no running water in the dormitories? (They carry their water to

their rooms in any container they can find—empty soda bottles, a tin can, and for the more fortunate, a pail.) This was a maximum security prison. Most of these men had committed serious crimes, and many had been there more than three years without a trial. What was there to celebrate?

As we walked up the hill, there was a well-kept building, so different from the others. Never did we dream of encountering such a place—a beautiful chapel with hand painted murals depicting the story of the nativity, the last supper, the story of the prodigal son, and the good Samaritan. We were shocked to see a crucifix with a bloodied Christ, not the wooden, hand polished corpuses seen so often at home. We watched as several prisoners created an altar of repose by stacking chairs and covering them with a cloth. A bucket of simple flowers sat in the corner, and a few men began to arrange them in a hodgepodge of glass jars. Another

group sat in the corner and began to practice music; and still, in another corner, the priest was offering the sacrament of reconciliation. Preparations for the celebration continued as two benches were carefully placed in the aisle.

The Celebration of Our Lord’s supper began, but since I spoke no Spanish, this normally very familiar experience was suddenly so different. At the singing of the Gloria a prisoner ever so politely pointed us to the right page. We watched as the prisoners eagerly took their places on the bench, and the priest humbly “poured water into a basin and began to wash their feet, drying them with the towel around his waist” (Jn 13:5). At the Sign of Peace, the men graciously extended their hands to us, two strangers in their midst. Then we approached the table to receive Our Lord—on this night when we remember him so humbly giving us the gift of himself in his body and blood—together,



in communion with each other, but from totally different worlds. YES! This was indeed a celebration.

As you immerse yourself in the first night of the Triduum, as you watch the priest humbly wash the feet of the faithful, and as you approach the Table of Our Lord, remember the least of our brothers and sisters. Picture their faces. And be one with them this night.

- Martina Young

Above: Prisoners participate in the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday.

Right: Mural of the Last Supper painted on the chapel wall in Cochabamba's prison.



Jay Carney ran the Army Ten-Miler on behalf of Share the Blessings in 2007. He is a campus minister at the University of Arkansas' Newman Center and a former STB board member.

While Some Run for Exercise, Jay Carney Runs for School Fees

For the third time in four years Jay Carney is running for students in Uganda. On April 5, he will take part in the Hogeye Half-Marathon in Fayetteville, Arkansas to raise school fees for students sponsored by Share the Blessings. Together these students are known as the St. Francis group; all have lost one or both of their parents and therefore find it difficult to pay for school.

Jay says the impetus for running came from the summer he spent in Uganda in 2004. At the time, he was training for the Marine Corps Marathon and was running long distances on Nakasongola's rural trails. "One day a group of children started running after me," he recalls, "and they were soon joined by their older brother who was in primary school. He yelled out to me, 'Muzungu, you run for exercise. I run to go home!'"

Jay ran the marathon on behalf of Catholic Charities that year, but he could not get the images of the children out of his head. After that he decided that he would try to use his runs to help support some of the students he had worked with in Uganda. Jay ran the Baltimore Half-Marathon in October 2006 and the Army Ten-Miler on behalf of Share the Blessings in October 2007. His goal this year is to raise \$3,000 for education in Uganda.

If you would like to support Jay's efforts, you may send a donation to Share the Blessings with "Jay Carney" written in the memo line. You can also donate online using PayPal at www.share-the-blessings.org.

Jay, we are grateful for your dedication and wish you the best on April 5!

from our friends...



Tarija, agosto del 2008

Hna. Anita Morrison

Hna. Martina

REF: AGRADECIMIENTO POR DONACION "SHARE THE BLESSINGS" AL CETHA "EL CONDOR"

Apreciadas hermanas:

A través de la presente, tenemos el gusto de hacerles llegar nuestros más sinceros y afectuosos saludos, pidiendo al divino creador les de vida y buena salud por muchos años más.

El motivo de la presente es para hacerles llegar nuestro profundo agradecimiento, por la donación SHARE THE BLESSINGS, que nos sirvió de gran manera para incentivar un mejor trabajo con los jóvenes y adultos de nuestro centro.

Hacerle conocer también, que lo distribuimos a varios aspectos como ser: **Incentivos a los facilitadores** que ganan menos y que realizan actividades de apoyo en oficina. **Becas de transporte a los participantes que vienen de lejos**, es decir pago de pasajes de venida hasta el centro. Otra parte se pagó el 50% del costo de los módulos para todos los participantes.

Finalmente nos despedimos reiterándoles nuestros saludos y agradecimientos por la ayuda brindada y que Dios les bendiga.

Atentamente

Facilitadores del CETHA "El Cóndor" Adultos



Prof. Luis O. Lopez R.
DIRECTOR

Prof. Salme...
Facilitadora

Prof. Priscila Rojas
PROF. PRISCILA ROJAS

Facilitadora...
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Facilitadora

Tarija, August 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

By means of this letter, it is our great pleasure to greet you most sincerely and affectionately, asking our Divine Creator that he give you all many years of life and good health.

The main reason for this letter is to express our most profound gratitude for the donation from SHARE THE BLESSINGS, which has been an enormous help in motivating our work for the benefit of the youth and adults of our centre. We would like to inform you also that we have distributed the donations in the following manner: incentives for the facilitators who earn less and who also carry out many activities in the office, and travel scholarships for students who travel a long distance to reach the Center. The other part of the donation has been used to pay 50% of the cost of the modules for each student.

Finally, we bid you farewell with renewed greetings and gratitude for the help you have given us and ask God to bless each one.

Yours sincerely,
The Facilitators of CETHA "El Cóndor"
Adults

Since 2004, Share the Blessings has supported el Centro de Educación Técnica, Humanística y Agropecuaria "El Cóndor" (CETHA "El Cóndor") in Tarija, Bolivia. The center for adult education serves students between the ages of 15 and 30 from 15 different rural communities. CETHA El Cóndor enables students the opportunity to complete their high school education or to learn a trade that will allow them to support themselves and their families.



In addition to providing student scholarships, Share the Blessings has equipped the center with kitchen utensils, mattresses, blankets and school supplies over the last five years. In 2008, Share the Blessings was also able to provide income supplements for instructors earning less than \$100 each month.



Top left: Students assemble during a graduation ceremony at CETHA "El Cóndor" in December 2007.

Top right: The director and class facilitators of CETHA "El Cóndor."

Left: Agriculture is one of several courses offered to students at the adult education center.

15 December 2008

Dear members of Share the Blessings,

Please, receive wonderful greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ from your son, Kabugo David.

Indeed the Lord is good all the time, and all the time the Lord is good.

First and foremost, I am very happy to write to you this letter, because God has enabled me to complete my course through your help. As people normally say in the proverb, "the world is like a staircase." Some people are going up and others are coming down. In that case, I praise the Lord for putting me up.

After spending 2 years at Namaliga Vocational Training School, I finally graduated on 5 December 2008 and received a certificate in bricklaying and concrete practice (BCP).

I thank you very, very, very much for your support that I have been getting through Father Joe.

I wish you very many blessings from the Lord, and a happy new year 2009.

Your son,
Kabugo David

Kabugo David is one of 52 Ugandan students who received sponsorship through Share the Blessings in 2008.



meet more STB leaders...



John Fitzgerald

My first trip to Uganda was in 2002, and it was a life changing experience for me. In my previous travels to other countries, I had only ever experienced cultures as a tourist. During this trip, though, we talked, ate and truly experienced the people of Uganda. We also saw the overwhelming need for clean water and basic education. As we talked with the children that had so little, it amazed me how much a little encouragement and money could make a

difference. On the last night of our trip, we all decided that we should, could and must make a difference by sharing what we have.

My primary role in Share the Blessings (STB) is to support the education committee by refurbishing donated computers and supplying them to schools that have few or no computers. Share the Blessings has built or enhanced computer labs for multiple schools. The schools are somewhat remote from Kampala, the major city, so we hope eventually to be able to provide them with internet connections.

I have been to Uganda four times since my first trip in 2002, and each time I am rejuvenated and reawakened to the fact that there is a way each of us can make a difference. For me this place is in Uganda.



Jen Stallings

I had the privilege of spending the summer of 2007 at St. Joseph Parish in Katikamu, Uganda. As part of my field education at Duke Divinity School, I entered into parish life—teaching at its primary and secondary schools, helping to facilitate a young ladies' Bible study, and offering reflections during student mass. Even with these responsibilities, however, my main assignment was simply to be present. I journeyed with the students, priests and parishioners, sharing

laughter, meals, prayers and even tears. In the process, those few months taught my heart what my brain already knew: these people were my family. It's a family I entered into at baptism, and my experience taught me that I cannot live without them.

I've become involved with Share the Blessings as a way to maintain the relationships I established while living in Katikamu. A large number of the students STB sponsors attend the schools where I was a teacher. My hope is that Share the Blessings might continue to offer us opportunities to live together as God's family and that together we would reflect God's new creation.



Martina Young

As the bookkeeper for STB, it could be easy for me to describe my role as purely administrative. However, it was the stories we heard from our friends on their return from Uganda that drew us to help form STB. I found myself drawn into a collective vision that a small number of people could make a difference. During this same time, I was blessed to travel to Bolivia—like Uganda, a beautiful country, with beautiful people who are being challenged by everyday

life. We were later blessed with a contact through the religious order Faithful Companions of Jesus to assist in an education project there. I hope that we can continue our work even in these difficult economic times as I am confident that the Holy Spirit will continue to provide us direction and opportunities to help those in the Majority World.



Monsignor Michael Shugrue

I became involved with STB after my pilgrimage to Uganda with the first group of ten parishioners from St. Michael's Church in Cary, NC who accompanied Father Emmanuel. The friendly Ugandan people we met were industrious but in great physical and economic need. When we returned from the pilgrimage to Cary we developed a name for the group, "Share the Blessings;" and we spent about a year trying to determine how we should best

respond to this introduction into the life and culture of our Ugandan sisters and brothers. We decided that our two priorities would be building wells to provide villages with clean water and granting children scholarships so that they can attend school—in places where these projects would not ordinarily be possible.

What has meant the most to me is developing new friendships, especially with priests whom we met during our pilgrimage. Several times each year we email each other and encourage each other in our priestly ministry. From our initial meeting with them and from subsequent emails, I have learned some of the daily obstacles facing these priests as they attempt to minister to their people.

For me, STB is about fostering relationships with Ugandan friends and sharing our blessings with sisters and brothers who lack most everything we take for granted. But they do not lack faith and joy!

Water Update

At the end of 2008, Share the Blessings approved construction plans for its thirteenth well. We are happy to report that we have since broken ground for this latest well in Buganga-Nkozi, a parish located in Uganda's Mpigi District. Joseph Bizibu, whose organization *Water Action for Rural Ministry* was recently awarded non-profit status, is helping to facilitate our relationship with members of the village and is overseeing construction.



The third well sponsored by Sacred Heart Church in Joliet, IL was commissioned in July 2008.

On March 7-8, 2009, Fr. Emmanuel Katongole presided over masses at Sacred Heart Church in Joliet, IL. He brought gratitude and prayers from the people in Uganda and shared pictures from July 2008, when Share the Blessings commissioned the third well sponsored by the parish. At the end of Sunday mass, Fr. Ray Lescher presented Fr. Emmanuel with a check for \$5,000—the amount it costs to build another well. Share the Blessings is grateful for the parish's generosity and is in the process of selecting a site for its fourth well, with plans to commission it this summer.

If your group or parish would like to find out more about sponsoring a well in Uganda, contact info@share-the-blessings.org.

how to share...

pray with us.

Please join us in praying for:

Ugandan students who have finished secondary school and are applying to university or searching for employment.

The students and instructors at CETHA "El Cóndor" adult education center in Tarija, Bolivia.

Father Joseph Kakooza, parish priest at St. Joseph Parish, Katikamu, and in-country supervisor of STB's education efforts.

Joseph Bizibu, founder of Water Action for Rural Ministry (WARM) and STB's in-country liaison for well projects.

Sister Anne Morrison, FJC, who oversees STB projects at CETHA "El Cóndor" in Bolivia.

Jay Carney as he runs the Hogeye Half Marathon on Sunday, April 5.

Share the Blessings, that we are able to uphold our commitment to the students we sponsor even during these difficult economic times.

The Share the Blessings board as it transitions at the end of March.

partner with us.

☐ I would like to share the gift of education.

I'll Help	Student Status	One Term	One Year
	Primary, day student	\$60	\$180
	Secondary, day student	\$80	\$240
	Primary, boarder	\$100	\$300
	Secondary, boarder	\$150	\$450
	Seminarian	\$160	\$480

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

☐ I would like 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.

Share the Blessings, Inc.
500 Francisca Lane
Cary, NC 27511



*"I have set
you an
example,
that you
also should
do as I
have done
to you."*

- John 13:15