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Dear

I hope you are enjoying the Christmas season and all that it offers. I would like you to allow me to take this opportunity to tell you about a girl in Rwanda named Christine. She was born in Rwanda in the early 90's. Whether it was because of the genocide or other causes, we don't know, but both her parents died when she was just very little. She, along with her younger sister, were taken in by an aunt. However this woman was already taking care of her own children, and feeling overwhelmed she turned to a friend, begging her, "Please take one of these children for me." The woman accepted and took in the girl called Christine.

Unfortunately Christine was not taken in as a member of the family. Instead she was despised and was soon made to serve the family. She was severely mistreated and told things like, "Why didn't you die with your parents? You'd be better off dead!" Year after year the words sunk deep into her soul, and it became a part of her. As a young teenager she wanted to escape the pain, so she ran away into the bush and could only think of ending her life. It was there that the police found her and brought her into the police station- and that is when her life made a dramatic change.

Pastor Charles, of Africa New Life Ministries, was in the police station that day on other business. Just a few months earlier Ten Talents International, in partnership with Africa New Life Ministries had started an orphan home for street children. The Kanombe Home already had several children in it, but after learning about Christine Pastor Charles felt compelled to help her. He brought her to the Kanombe Home and it was there that she first experienced the love of a mother, through the house mother there. She also found a family of several brothers and sisters in the other children living there. It was also there that she encountered the saving power & love of Jesus Christ, which eventually set her free from the scars & nightmares of her past.

Right now we stand on the threshold of a whole new ministry opportunity in Rwanda. God has provided 7 ½ amazing acres in the capital city of Kigali (we call it the Acres of Hope). There are literally thousands of children on the streets of Kigali. Whether orphaned or simply with families too impoverished to provide for them, these children find the harsh and dangerous life on the streets of the city to be their only option. We want to provide another option- the Home of Innocence.



Christine, April 2004

This home, with others to follow on the property, will be a transitional home, where we will not only get a child sponsored but place them into a local family who will adopt them as their own child. We will use the time the children spend in the home, from 6 months to a year, to minister to them and to their prospective family. We see this as a way to help not just a few children but hundreds. We like to say this is not just a “good” plan, but a “God” plan.

The first phase of development on the Acres of Hope (which includes the first transitional home- the Home of Innocence) will cost \$180,000. Right now we have been able to raise \$100,000 of that cost. We know God is going to provide, since this is His plan! We plan to rent a home while we wait for the remaining funding to come in and hope to have children in this home by Christmas. It will add about \$5,000 to our budget, but will allow us to meet immediate needs of vulnerable children.

Right now we have three team members in Rwanda, interviewing street children so that we may determine which children are ready to be helped to a new life. There are so many needy children, so many who are desperate to have a chance at what we take for granted- regular meals, education, a safe place to sleep at night...

I would like to remind you that Christmas is about value. Some people might think that means getting the most “bang for your buck”, or the value of a gift given or received. The value that I’m talking about however, is the value placed on each one of us when Jesus stepped aside from his heavenly throne and became God “in the flesh”. He came to live, so that he might take the punishment for our sins on the cross, and then triumphantly rise from the dead to set us free forever! Do you understand the great value God placed on you when he did that? Do you know just how valuable you are? Do you realize that God places that same value on each one of the children who are living on the streets right now? I’m asking you to give to help us make the Home of Innocence a reality. This could be one way to make your Christmas really meaningful this year. Reach out to those less fortunate across the world. Help us to reach them with the message of God’s love & hope. We believe these children really will grow up to change their nation!



We hope you have a wonderful Christmas & a very blessed New Year!

Sincerely,

Mike McColm

P.S. As you think of Christmas please remember Christine and the other children like her. We would love to have you be a part of changing the lives of destitute street children in Rwanda. Any gift you can give will bring us that much closer to making the Home of Innocence a reality!