The Mustard Seed Project’s Monthly Newsletter Supporting:

The Mustard Seed Babies’ Home  
Hoima, Uganda

The Sonrise Schools  
Musanze, Rwanda

Pastor Deo’s Street Children’s Ministry  
Kigali, Rwanda

The Mustard Seed Project is a 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit Corporation, whose purpose is to provide Acts of Mercy and Acts of Mission in East and Central Africa. Mustard Seed Project was incorporated in January of 1997 and currently has three active ministries in Uganda and Rwanda.

Our three primary African missions include: The Mustard Seed Babies Home in Hoima, Uganda, The Sonrise Primary and High Schools in Musanze, Rwanda and Pastor Deo’s Street Children’s Ministry in Rwanda’s capital city of Kigali.

Will you help us Bring Pastor Deo to the USA this year?

Pastor Deogratias Gashagaza serves as Executive Director of “Prison Fellowship - Rwanda” in the country’s capital city, Kigali. A Pentecostal Minister, Pastor Deo is a Godly man who has a passionate heart for the homeless children of Kigali. In 2006, Pastor Deo and his wife, Christine founded a ministry to provide food, fellowship and other basic needs to Kigali’s Street Children.

Currently there are approximately 100 children mostly boys enrolled in Pastor Deo’s Street Children’s Ministry. Their ages range from 6 to 21 years. Most of the older children are homeless and sleep in empty buildings or under bridges while the very young may live with a very poor parent or relative.

In 2010, the Mustard Seed Project Board of Directors voted to begin a partnership with Pastor Deo by raising funds to provide food for Deo’s Street Children’s Ministry. Through our joint efforts, the meal provisions for the children have increased from one to three days per week. Our combined goal is to provide meals on a daily basis.

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Through his position of Executive Director of Prison Fellowship – Rwanda, Deo has become an expert in the field of “Forgiveness and Reconciliation” in his daily work with both prisoners and surviving victims of crimes of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. Pastor Deo also oversees a number of “Reconciliation Villages” where former prisoners of genocide crimes live among genocide survivors.

An effort is underway to raise the necessary funds to allow us to pay for Pastor Deo to come to the United States on a Preaching/Speaking tour on the topic of “Forgiveness and Reconciliation”. “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” Colossians 3:13. Our prayer is to have Deo arrive in the United States in early September, 2013 for a two to three weeks stay.

If you would like to join us in this exciting endeavor here are two ways in which you can help.

• If you know of a church, school or other organization that may be interested in hosting Pastor Deo for a speaking engagement, please contact Mustard Seed Project at the contact information listed below.

• If you or someone you know would be willing to contribute towards Pastor Deo’s USA travel expenses, please send contributions to Mustard Seed Project at the address listed below. You may also contribute on-line through our web-site www.mustardseedproject.org, click on DONATIONS and follow the simple prompts.

If you have any questions about Pastor Deo’s Ministry, please contact me by telephone or e-mail. I would love to hear from you.

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MUSTARD SEED BABIES’ HOME

THE GIFT OF RESETTLEMENT

by Terry Thornton

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you, not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

Since 1994, the Mustard Seed Babies Home in Hoima, Uganda has been focused on providing for children who were abandoned, whose parents died of AIDS, whose mother died giving birth or whose families are unable to provide for them. All of the children are wards of the court until they can be resettled with their family or their extended family. The purpose of the Babies’ Home is to provide a Christian home until the children are stable and healthy enough to be reunited with capable, loving and willing relatives.
Over the past 2 ½ years, the Bunyoro-Kitara Diocese in conjunction with the Babies Home management, the Local Board of Directors and the probation officer in Hoima have been developing a resettlement program. Locating relatives for many has been an arduous and stimulating process for those involved. Training, visits and educational forums have been ongoing. Discussions, counseling and guidance have been valuable parts to insure success for all. The process takes many months. The resettlement is done thoroughly so the children, as well as, family or guardians are well prepared for the ultimate goal of reuniting with their relatives.

To date, the resettlement plans have gone well. Other children are looking forward to reuniting with their family. Sixteen of the children have been resettled. This is not only good for the community but it creates room and opportunities for vulnerable or needy babies. The local community, relatives and guardians have expressed sincere appreciation to the Babies Home management, the Local Board of Directors, Bunyoro-Kitara Diocese, sponsors, partners for the good job of loving, caring and nurturing the children. To aid the families and children in this process, commitments have been made by Help Hoima of the United Kingdom and the Mustard Seed Project to continue to pay for the school fees including scholastic and welfare items while in school.

Recently the funding raised by the Mustard Seed Project has fallen short of the monthly needs for the Babies Home. 12 individuals/families have chosen to no longer sponsor children at the beginning of 2013. As you can imagine this has an impact on the operations of the home in Hoima. We thank all of those who have selflessly given to this ministry, present and past. None of this would have been possible without you. Please continue to pray for God’s Blessing and support for these beautiful children.

April is a very somber time for Rwanda

Rwanda today has two public holidays commemorating the anniversary of the 1994 genocide, with Genocide Memorial Day on April 7th marking the start, and Liberation Day on July 4th marking the end. The week following April 7th is designated an official week of mourning.

Reflections on the Genocide Memorial in the Rwandan Capital of Kigali

by Donna W. Payne

The Garden of Division and the Garden of Reconciliation were beautiful as my husband and I saw them in 2011, our first full day in Rwanda with the Mustard Seed team. Their beauty points to and contrasts with the reminders of horror near them. The gardens are central to a series of gardens at the Genocide Memorial high on a hill overlooking part of Kigali city. In this hill, adjacent to these gardens, there are buried 258,000 individuals in mass graves. There are other such memorials throughout the country and more such graves, mass or otherwise, than are, I imagine, known or countable. These are the graves of Rwandans,
mostly Tutsi, murdered by mostly Hutus, often neighbors or acquaintances, in about 100 days of brutal killings in 1994 that left corpses in the streets and villages throughout the country. The memorial has a museum of photos and text and displays. It seemed similar in concept to the Holocaust museum in Washington, DC—and it includes a section on other genocides of recent memory such as those in Germany and Armenia.

It was particularly heartbreaking to walk through a room of large photos of very young children—each with a name, age, and means of death. Another room had many family-type photos of those who had been killed. That room was reminiscent of similar photos we saw at Ground Zero in New York City of victims who died in the twin towers. Outside, the grounds were quite lovely with many gardens, and with individuals working on their upkeep. There we found the cement-covered mass graves and a large, long wall on which were engraved the names of some of the victims. That wall was very much in appearance like the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, DC.

It was the sort of experience that leaves one numb and void of much in the way of coherent thought. Beyond that, it seems so presumptuous for such as we to comment on the meaning of this place when we experience this sanitized version of genocide and find it difficult to process. What of the vast numbers of people in Rwanda who knew that evil face to face and bear scars that will always wound?

With trepidation I offer this thought: It is way too easy to think of those killers as beasts with no right to be called human. Too easy to think that they are beyond redemption or forgiveness. Too easy to think that, at our worst, we could never do such a thing. But the evidence doesn't quite match that viewpoint.

For one, what of biblical passages calling out the basic depravity of humanity—that the “heart is deceitful and desperately wicked ... Who can know it?”

For two, there have been too many examples throughout history of neighbors turning on neighbors and killing them with bare hands or with acquiescence to state killings. Do we really think that such things do NOT represent some essential part of human nature? Who is to say that, given a certain set of circumstances and fears, that it wouldn’t be me out there with a machete in my hand?

For three, we have met Rwandans who have talked face to face with killers, who tell of the grief and hopelessness of those killers who cannot bear what they have done. And we have heard of victims pardoning killers and living with them in peace. This is very hard to understand or process.

We come finally to the evidence of those so-named gardens of separation and gardens of reconciliation in the killing fields of Rwanda. We come to what our Rwandan friends have told us in no uncertain terms. That sin and evil are very real and very alive in this world. That we humans really are sinners. That God forgives sinners through Jesus lifted on the cross. That reconciliation is possible only through Christ. For us. For our enemies.

We saw in Rwanda what forgiveness is and what it costs.
When asked to share about my recent trip to Rwanda, the first words that came to mind were ‘blessing upon blessing.’ The Lord provided, protected and opened our eyes to new ministries and gave us the opportunity to spend some quality time with the children. At the Sonrise School, I had the chance to sit with five of our young people and to let them share their past and their hopes for the future.

Keza Anaise Nakure is in her final year with Sonrise School, S6. She started with us in 2001. Both of her parents died in the genocide, leaving her and one brother. When not at the school, Keza lives with her brother. She hopes to go to university and become a nurse or a doctor. Keza is friendly and wants everyone to know how much she appreciates Sonrise and the education she has received.

Phoebe Ntegigeno is also in S6 and started at the school in 2001. She has a mother and six siblings, two of them are married. Her father died in the genocide. Her dream is to attend university to become a doctor or a pharmacist. Phoebe is quiet but determined to do well at school and to help the people in her country.

Febronie Nyirandayazi is in S6 and also started at Sonrise in 2001. Febronie has one sister who is married and a brother who is married. Both of her parents were killed in the genocide. Febronie would like to attend university to become a nurse or a doctor. She is quiet and was happy to share her dreams with me. She stated that one of the things she likes best about Sonrise is that they never hear insults because they have no parents.

Silas Bagambiki is an S5 student who came to Sonrise in 2001. He has one brother, a niece and a nephew. Both his parents have died, his father was taken in the war and his mother through an illness. Silas is a bundle of personality, a leader and an organizer. He never slowed down the entire time we were at the school. Silas shared some of his art work with us. He wants to become an International Businessman or an artist when he graduates from Sonrise.

Mediatrice Ishimo was the youngest of the students I interviewed. She is an S2 student. Mediatrice has a mother and one brother. She does not know her father. She desires to become a doctor or a pastor. Mediatrice is shy and was happy to spend time with us.

All of these students wanted us to know they love the Lord and recognize His provision in their lives. Silas spoke for all of them when he said they were enjoying the fruits of education and send “great thanks from the heart.” They want to see Sonrise recognized as being a great school.

As I spent time with these young people I heard the words of their tragic past, but I also heard that spark of joy for the present and a spark of hope for the future. What a blessing we have to be able to help them fan that spark into a reality. The Lord truly blesses each of us who can help financially and/or through prayers. To God Be the Glory!
A Family-Friendly Fundraiser for Pastor Deo’s Street Children

By Donna W. Payne
Global Outreach co-chair, All Saints Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase, MD

With 22,667 coins, almost $1200 in bills, and miscellaneous checks collected in 148 cardboard banks, the Global Outreach (GO) team at All Saints’ Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase, MD gave thanks that their coin bank fundraiser had not only raised close to $4000 for Pastor Deo’s street children***, but had engaged a broad spectrum of the congregation, especially the children, on behalf of missions.

The project was a simple one, which by God’s grace touched many hearts. The coin banks (purchased online) were white cardboard tubes with a metal top containing a slot for coins. On each bank, GO affixed an Avery-brand sticker that we printed with the photo of one of the street children, a bit of information about that child, and a request to pray for that child. Here’s an example:

www.mustardseedproject.org (donations: Pastor Deo’s street kids) Please Pray for:

- One small child took money from her own piggy bank to put in the street kids bank.
- One child went door-to-door in his neighborhood asking for donations in his bank.
- Several children tried to sell mulch in their neighborhood asking for money for their banks.
- One child wanted to know if it was OK to put paper money in the banks...not just coins. You can guess the answer to that!
- Several parents commented that they appreciated this hands-on opportunity for teaching their children about missions.

Stories such as these point to the children of All Saints’ as leaders in this project, and this was a great blessing added to the coins collected. We pray that the Lord will write this memory of service on their hearts and that they and the children in Rwanda will grow to be Christ’s faithful servants throughout their lives.

It was a joy on collection Sunday to see the long line of children marching up the center aisle of the sanctuary with the banks in their hands; and to see the congregation raising their hands toward the altar to bless the banks and Deo’s children—as all joined in the pastor’s prayer that our gifts to Rwanda would be multiplied many times to God’s glory.

***In 2006 Pastor Deo and his wife Christine formed a ministry to meet the basic needs of street children in Rwanda’s capital city of Kigali—children who have lost their parents to sickness (particularly HIV/AIDS) or violence in the years following the genocide, or who were otherwise inadequately cared for. The program now serves 75-100 children and youth. These children walk in from the city to get three nutritious meals each week, trauma counseling, Bible teaching, and education at Pastor Deo’s offices. For many, these are the only times they will eat hot food. The rest of the week they struggle to find food by begging, picking roadside fruit, or trying to find small jobs.
Dear friends,

I am sure you know marriage is difficult. Husbands and wives are putting their own desires ahead of their spouses and their children, and perhaps now more than ever, God’s teaching on marriage and family is necessary to hold our families together.

This is especially true in Rwanda today, a country that has gone through many trials. The marriages and families of Rwandans face daily struggles, whether trauma from the past, partners who are HIV+, or a “traditional” culture that oppresses or abuses women and children at the hands of their fathers and husbands.

The Lord God said, “It is not good for man to live alone, I will make a suitable companion to help him.” Genesis 2:18

God’s word, and the church as its messenger, has the power and responsibility to pierce through this darkness, bringing healing, reconciliation and enlightenment.

Mothers’ Union of Shyira Diocese is doing just that. Through our daily activities we seek to help families learn how to live the way that God desires for them. With God and donor’s support, we have held seminars on recovering from trauma, and promoting peace, reconciliation and unity.

We have fought poverty by teaching women marketable skills and giving them microloans so that they can sell their wares to support their families. We have created economic and agricultural cooperatives to share knowledge and give women better outcomes.

And finally, we have fought HIV/AIDS by hosting seminars and workshops teaching women, youth, and sex workers raising awareness, teaching about the dangers of HIV/AIDS, and removing stigma against people with the disease.

But it is not enough. Even though we attempt to faithfully serve through all of these activities, there are still problems we cannot reach on a widespread scale.

Many of the issues we have addressed are the outgrowth of the true problem – the spiritual problem that remains the core of this issue.

People are not putting God at the center of their lives, their marriages, and their families. This is clearly manifested by some of the tragedies we have encountered. An increasing number of couples are signing divorces, and many of the couples we counsel are fighting and desiring to separate. They say that their partners are producing children outside of the marriage, which increases instability in the home. Partners who are HIV+ also provide a struggle in marriage, as one spouse, often the man, wants to sleep with the woman without protection, which can lead to disputes in the household. One such instance led to a man being imprisoned after killing his wife and 3 year old child when he failed to abstain due to his HIV+ status. This pain inside the homes of Rwanda leads to mistrust, anger, and accusations, which makes the problem worse.

It is in light of these issues that Mothers’ Union is seeking to hold a new, Diocese-wide conference for men and women surrounding marriage and family life on July 25-28.

With the thematic verse of Genesis 2:18, “Then, the LORD God said ‘it is not good for man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him,’” this conference will seek to promote God’s truth about marriage to broken men and women in our region.

Through this conference, we plan to give married couples a solid, Godly foundation, while fighting against spiritual decline in the home, church and nation. We will help rebuild broken relationships into relationships full of love, affection and peace, which will in turn transform homes into loving and faithful households.

All who attend - including Mothers’ Union members, men and women in the Church, local leaders, and engaged young men and women - will benefit from this conference.

But an undertaking of this size is not easy, and it requires a lot of help. Some attendees will be able to pay a small amount to attend the conferences, but many cannot, and even the amount they pay will not cover all of their costs. In order to make this conference a reality, we need your help. We need support to rent tents for the meetings, rent sound systems, pay for accommodation for people who cannot afford it themselves ($1.70 a night), and provide meals for attendees. In order to have 2000 people attend this conference, our total need is $26,784, which is only $13 per person.

Please, help God’s truth reign and heal the families of our land. 2 Chronicles 7:14 says “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their sins; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

As a people, we seek to repent of abandoning God, seek his face through prayer and corporate learning, and be healed. Please help make this desire a reality for the people of Rwanda by enabling them to have access to theological truths that are easily available in America (through easy access to books, preaching and podcasts), but have eluded many of the Rwandan people. Let’s together bring God’s truth into the homes of Rwanda.

If you are interested in supporting this project, please do so by writing a check to the Mustard Seed Project, with “Mother’s Union” written in the memo section, at: 1305 Merchant St. Ambridge PA 15003.

With supreme gratitude,
Chantal Mbanda
If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to the mountain, “Move” and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.  
**Matthew 17:20**

### OUR GREATEST NEEDS!

**Mustard Seed Babies’ Home – Hoima Uganda**
- Sponsorship – Sponsorship – Sponsorship

**Sonrise Schools – Musanze Rwanda**
- Sponsorship – Sponsorship - Sponsorship
- Purchase of a School Vehicle - approx. $50,000USD

**Pastor Deo’s Street Children – Kigali Rwanda**
- Food for the Children – Food for the Children – Food for the Children
- Monetary Donation for Pastor Deo’s September Mission to the USA