A man wearing a brown hat, a light blue checkered shirt, and dark suspenders is kneeling on the ground. He is smiling and looking towards a group of children. One child is holding a small object, possibly a piece of candy or a toy. The background shows other people and a dusty, outdoor environment.

For the Life of the World

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

April 2008, Volume Twelve, Number Two



Out of Africa

Rev. Dr Arthur Just

There and Back Again

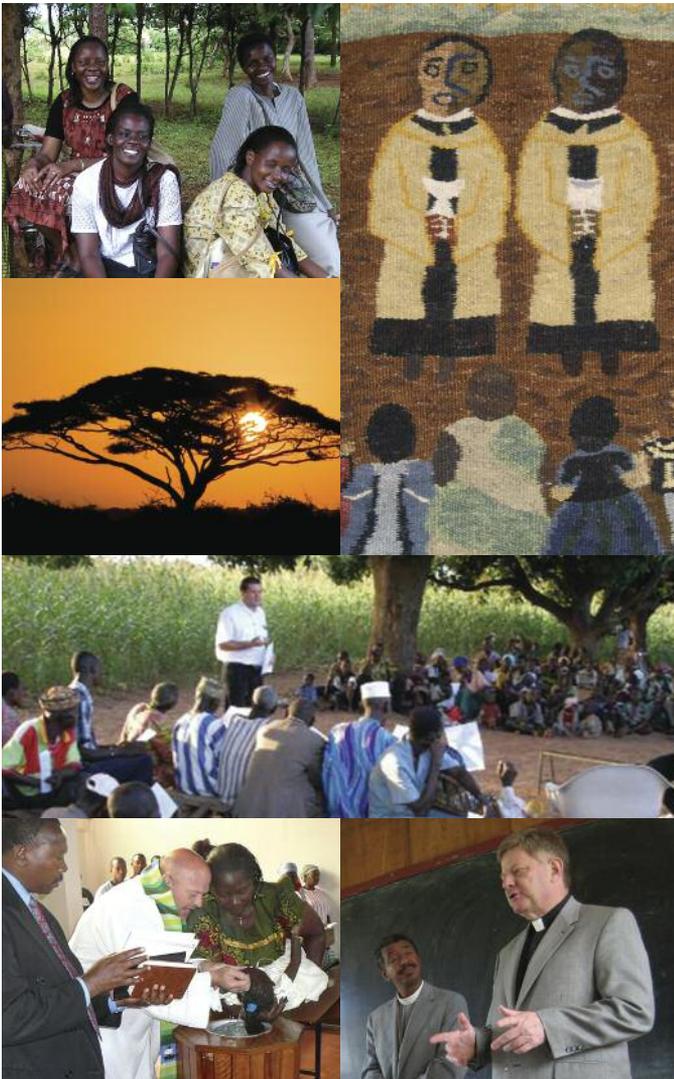
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Starving for the Gospel

Rev. James May

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The Concordia Theological Seminary deaconess program has been privileged to learn and receive mercy from the deaconesses in the ELCK. One of their leaders, Lorna Meeker, studied to be a deaconess at our seminary and now serves alongside her husband Dennis at a church in the Kibera slums of Nairobi that suffered much from the post-election violence.

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By The Reverend Prof. Robert Roethemeyer

Dr. Weber wanted this to be an investigative visit. "Come, Robert, and tell me what your eyes see and your mind thinks," he said. During what was the last two weeks of their summer holiday, I did just that. I sought to understand and then to provide options and models and solutions for a wide range of library, technology, accreditation, and utilization of space issues.

15 Starving for the Gospel

By The Reverend James May

In the capital of an African country, a white person stands out. Very frequently, people come up and say, "My friend, how are you?" The questions nearly always lead to, "Who are you, and why are you here?" I respond, "I am a Lutheran pastor, and I have been sent to teach the Word of God."

20 God Is Right There in Our Midst

By Adriane Dorr

In a country where poverty and deadly diseases are rampant, "what speaks the loudest to the people of Kenya is love. . . acts of love and mercy speak loudly and clearly," states Meeker. "It becomes an opportunity to proclaim Law and Gospel, to introduce them to Baptism, and confirm them in the gifts of the Eternal Feast of Victory."



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Mercy Mission Expedition to Madagascar: A Student's Reflection

by Jacob Corzine

Seminarians Jacob Corzine and Sam Schuldheisz with Malagasy Lutheran Sunday School Children



Mercy forever.

LCMS World Relief and Human Care sponsored the third annual Mercy Mission Expedition to Madagascar for six Concordia Theological Seminary students under the leadership of Prof. John T. Pless over spring break. The following article is the reflection of one of the students who participated in this year's trip.

As one of six students now returning from the Mercy Mission Expedition to Madagascar sponsored by LCMS World Relief and Human Care, I have been given much to reflect upon. The Malagasy Lutheran Church and its people have left me amazed at the work of the Gospel in another part of the world, humbled by the way these Christian people bear up under trying conditions, and both excited about and concerned for the continued work of preaching the pure Gospel in Madagascar.

The Holy Spirit's work through preaching the Gospel truly is amazing. Even though the Scripture promises us that it will be effective, we have seen enough hardened hearts to know how difficult the task is. This work is easy to see in Madagascar and that much more remarkable since the Lutheran Church there, even though younger than the LCMS and composed of converts rather than immigrants, is still much larger than the LCMS.

I was also struck by the presence of the specifically Lutheran Church in Africa. I already knew of the many non-western countries that have Lutheran churches, but this was really my first time seeing one for myself. Hearing them sing the hymns that we sing, pray the prayers that we pray, and confess the creeds that we confess remind us that the Gospel is not in need of embellishment or contextualization—

the message of the cross is the same for all people.

Still, the Malagasy Christians do live in a completely different world. They are poor to an extent that is truly difficult for us to conceive. This hit home for me once in particular as I saw the home of a seminary family of four,

about the size of my dorm room at Concordia Theological Seminary. The kitchen and bathroom are both outside.

I do not mention this apartment to suggest that we try to be more frugal or because of a newfound appreciation for American luxuries; rather, because I met people, the source of whose hope, comfort, and joy is the Gospel. Less than two weeks before we were in his home, that student's mother died suddenly. Of course, he was mourning, but his joy in the resurrection is the same as our own, grounded in the knowledge that since Jesus rose from the dead, we will also do the same. So I was reminded that hardships in this life are nothing compared with the joy set before us.

I believe that it is a result of this joy that gave cause to our trip in the first place. The Malagasy Lutherans know where to find their joy in spite of hardship, and they go to great lengths to share that with others.

They provide hospitals, schools for the blind and deaf, vocational training, orphanages, and long-term care for the sick of all sorts in places called tobys (encampments of mercy), and they do this in the context of sharing the Gospel with all of these people. For them, the work of mercy stems from the Gospel but never becomes separated from it.

Finally, I noted above my excitement and concern for the preaching of the Gospel in Madagascar. The first, I have already explained. The Malagasy people are eager to train pastors and preach the Gospel and share it

The Malagasy Lutherans know where to find their joy in spite of hardship, and they go to great lengths to share that with others. They provide hospitals, schools for the blind and deaf, vocational training, orphanages, and long-term care for the sick of all sorts in places called tobys (encampments of mercy), and they do this in the context of sharing the Gospel with all of these people.

individually. For the most part, they are also eager to do this in a way consistent with the pure Gospel. But even so, there are some exceptions, and the true confession comes with a cross. They need our prayers and support as fellow confessional Lutherans that they may be encouraged

and strengthened in the true confession and the cross it brings.

As part of our trip, we were able to select a project to help support in the Malagasy Church. After some long discussions, we decided to support a Lutheran nursing school in Antsirabe. This first phase of their project is the move from rental property onto land, which they already own, near the local Lutheran Hospital. Later phases have to do with expansion. The school trains around thirty students every three years and sends them all over Madagascar to serve. They receive professional training adequate to pass a governmental exam and teaching in the Scriptures from local Lutheran pastors. It is our prayer that through our support they will be better equipped to aid the continued work of mercy in Madagascar.

I speak without reserve, and I believe on behalf of my fellow students, when I thank LCMS World Relief and Human Care for making our trip possible. It was a learning experience that will make us better able to serve in the LCMS as pastors, and I pray that God grant that this be a service not to us as individuals but much more to Christ's whole Church. 🇺🇸

Jacob Corzine is a fourth-year student at Concordia Theological Seminary who plans to pursue doctoral studies in Germany next year.



Seminarians Sam Janssen and Dan Pezzica with cows purchased for Malagasy seminary students with funds raised by CTS students



Seminarians Sam Schuldheisz and Michael Meyer with Prof. Pless at Good Samaritan Center kitchen built by funds raised by CTS students



CTS students with Prof. Pless



Prof. Pless presents books for regional seminary library to President David Rakotonirina

