



"Raised to Praise"

February 2005



*"Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness,
and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"
Psalm 107:8*

Dear Friends of Bethesda Outreach Ministries,

I greet you from the beautiful country of South Africa. We are thankful for the opportunities God gives us to minister here. Daily we meet individuals who are in need. We see children who are less fortunate than we and many of them are hungry and sick. We praise the Lord that through your financial gifts and fervent prayers, He has allowed us the opportunity to meet some of these needs.

South Africa has been identified as the country with the greatest number of HIV/AIDS-infected people in the world. Recent reports reveal that more than **five million** South Africans are currently living with the impact of HIV/AIDS. Statistical evaluations state that the estimated infection rates affect more than **40%** of the total population.

While this information is not new, the impact of these figures is becoming clearer to Bethesda Outreach Ministries, to the communities around us, to the South African government, and to global communities.

"AIDS orphans," "child-headed households" (homes managed by elder siblings often as young as 9 years of age) and similar terms are now commonplace in South Africa; yet encouragement, support, and service for so many of the children in need is lagging drastically.

Presently, Bethesda is servicing several communities (Temba, Pretoria, Kekana Gardens, Kanana Village, Stinkwater, and Johannesburg) and is impacting many families both directly and indirectly through placement of children in families, outreach into the community, and counseling. We presently have four childcare homes that house 27 children. We praise God for what He has given us, but the needs are greater and there are many more children who need to be rescued.

Recently, I had the opportunity to speak with four pastors who have shown interest in starting an Orphan Care Ministry within their churches. We are

encouraging and challenging local churches to begin to think “outside the box” by developing ways they might be involved. These opportunities are limitless. We are looking forward to the days ahead as we continue to develop growing ideas and thoughts so we can help more children.

Please pray with us that God would make **finances** available so that Bethesda can move ahead to build more childcare units to house more children. As you can see, the statistics are staggering. We are here to reach out and help as many children as we can, but we need finances to cover the costs of the ongoing daily operational budget as well as increase our capacity to care for more children for the glory of God.

As mentioned in previous Bethesda Updates, we have a child who was struggling with the affects of HIV running rampant in her body. We were able to get her on anti-retroviral medications and they have had a profoundly positive effect on her. We praise the Lord that there were individuals who responded to help meet the need for the cost of the medications. Tomorrow we will take another of our HIV positive children to a specialist and have her put on the anti-retroviral medications. The cost for her medical care will be about \$60.00 a month. We are thankful that at this time we have only the two children who are infected. Please pray with us that there will be individuals who would be willing to help with that cost.

We still have some openings for teams to come to Bethesda to help complete some projects. We have floor tiling to put down, kitchen cabinets to install in our Team and Training Centre, property to landscape, and a playground to build for the children, just to name a few. We would love to schedule your church to come and assist us in some of these projects. Please contact us at bethesda-temba@boi.org.

As we look ahead, we have some openings for teachers for next school year. Jacy, who is doing a wonderful job, has only committed to one year at Bethesda. That means we will need someone to fill her position in January. There are some other opportunities for ministry at Bethesda that are mentioned on the website. Please take a look at these. Remember, the harvest field is ripe and ready for harvest. We just need the workers.

Lastly, I want to thank each of you who have invested your time, your prayers, and your gifts into this vital ministry to orphans. We praise God for what He has allowed us to accomplish in the mission of rescuing children. The impact on

the community has already been great; and, we look forward to what God will do in the future through your partnership with us.

Persevering for His glory,

John Mixon for the Bethesda Team
