



SERVING JESUS
AMONG THE POOREST OF THE POOR

THE CRY FOR INTIMACY

THE CRY: THE ADVOCACY JOURNAL OF WORD MADE FLESH

VOLUME 8, NO. 1

INTIMACY NAMED

THE NAME OF POVERTY IS OPPRESSION, THE NAME OF THE POOR IS CHOSEN

by chris heuertz

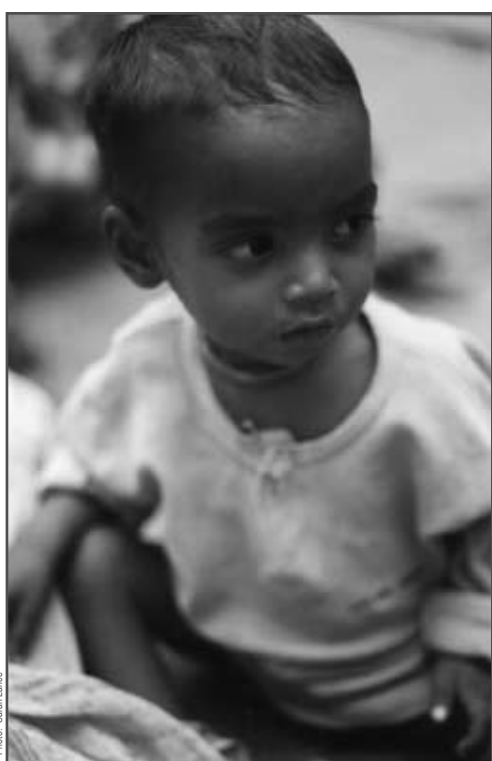


Photo: Sarah Lince

Since 1995 he has been known to us as Tuna—an unlikely name for the homeless street artist who lives on the pavement outside the government art college in Calcutta. During a recent trip to India, the guard at the college told me Tuna's real name is Dipankar Pal. Nervous to ask Tuna about his name, I gently approached the subject with him and he acknowledged an identifying fact from his painful past.

At one month old, she weighed less than 3 pounds. Her parents abandoned her because she was HIV+. Left to die, there was no trace of who she was or where her family could be found. We named her Sarah. She lived to be 100 days old before

she died and was buried in the Christian cemetery in Madras, India. Without a name she would have been counted among the faceless thousands of children who die daily, most of whom fall without a tear shed on their behalf; almost none are given a proper burial.

To the other Lima street children he was known as "Tambourine Dave" because he would enthusiastically dance around jingling a tambourine while singing praise songs on the streets. Before he died from tuberculosis, he told Walter and Adriana (WMF Field Directors in Peru) that no one actually knew his real name. His home, his future, his dignity, even his basic needs and fundamental rights had been taken from him. The only thing he could keep for himself was his name and he guarded it. It was a secret that he took with him to the grave.

These are just a few of the nameless victims of poverty. Are they nameless because of their poverty or does poverty take their names? In George Orwell's novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, a totalitarian government successfully silences and subjugates an entire society. Part of the strategy of the authoritarian structure correlates with the power of history: "He who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past," writes Orwell. In the book, an element of controlling the present is through re-naming common terms, such as replacing "war" with "peace." By taking away concepts tied to language, the oppressive structure secures its control of the present and past, and ensures that the future of the subjugated society is determined.

In modern Western societies, the power of naming someone or something can be a means of manipulative control. In fact, it has always been this way. In the first and second centuries AD, the Greek Gnostics believed that they could control the gods by discovering their secret names. However, when Moses on Sinai asked God, "Who should I tell them sent me?" the response was "I Am He who is" (Ex. 13:14-15). This mysterious, yet divine name for God is revealed in Scripture as YHWH. Interestingly, the Hebrew form of "I Am" is closely related to the divine name YHWH so it is very likely that YHWH means "He is." In our English Bible's, YHWH is translated "THE LORD" (written in all capital letters) but this term YHWH, known as the Tetragrammaton, is usually translated into spoken English as "Yahweh" or "Jehovah." Even to this day the name of God remains so sacred to orthodox Jews that when reading texts of Scripture,

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Moving Time: U.S. Office Headed to Omaha, NE

by chris heuertz, executive director

LIFESTYLE CELEBRATIONS

INTIMACY

We celebrate intimacy with Jesus to be our highest calling and created purpose.

OBEDIENCE

We celebrate total obedience which intimacy demands. Our obedience is our response and responsibility to the grace of Jesus.

HUMILITY

We celebrate humility before God and man.

SERVICE

We celebrate service which fulfills our fellowship.

COMMUNITY

We celebrate community with each other because in community, we find the greatest potential for discipleship, service, and growth.

SIMPLICITY

We celebrate simplicity as our privilege in identification with Jesus and the poor.

SUBMISSION

We celebrate submission to Christ Jesus and each other as a visible sign of our humility.

BROKENNESS

We celebrate our own brokenness as our responsibility in ministry among the broken.

SUFFERING

We celebrate suffering as part of a willing sacrifice in serving Jesus among the poor.

We focus the theme of each issue of "The Cry" on one of the WMF Lifestyle Celebrations. This quarter's issue is devoted to the topic of INTIMACY.

In the summer of 1993, WMF opened its first office in Omaha, Nebraska. The Christian community in Omaha was extremely kind and generous to our small organization and really helped WMF get off to a great start. Early in 1994, the WMF office moved to Lexington, Kentucky and by the summer of 1996 had moved again to Wilmore, Kentucky. Wilmore has been a wonderful location for the WMF office for many reasons and we are thankful for the sacrifice, love and kindness the community has extended to us.

During the 3rd quarter of 2002, the WMF U.S. office will be moving once again from its current location in Wilmore back to Omaha. The decision to make this move began in the spring of 2000 when we began praying for the Lord's direction to help us solve our office space needs.

Currently the WMF office consists of 350 square feet for five full-time staff, two part-time staff, and a number of volunteers. Options to solve our office space needs in Wilmore are very limited, so moving to Nicholasville or Lexington (the two towns closest to Wilmore) was considered. However, moving from Wilmore to Nicholasville or Lexington would mean losing more than we would gain in terms of community, church support, social safety nets, and proximity to constituents.

After continued prayer and dialogue with the WMF staff community, it was suggested that we consider moving back to Omaha. It was noted that a move to another office in Lexington or Nicholasville would be just as involved as moving a greater distance. Further, by moving to Omaha we feel we would gain more than we would lose in terms of community, church support, social safety nets, and proximity to constituents. It was brought before the WMF U.S. Board of Directors in the fall of 2001 and unanimously approved that our office move to Omaha during 2002.

The decision making process and even the actual "event" of making the decision was thorough and time consuming. Now carrying out this

decision has consumed more of our time than we could have imagined. Driving from Wilmore into Lexington has suddenly become a sentimental journey for those of us in the office. We will miss many things about Kentucky but are excited about the opportunity that Omaha will offer our community.

As we prepare for this move, we are desperately in need of your prayers. Please pray with us that:

- 1) As the move is made, the transitions will be as smooth as possible
- 2) The necessary funding will become available to cover the additional expenses required to make the move
- 3) Office and living space would be available to our community to adequately suit our needs

If you are able or willing to contribute financially toward the expenses involved in making this move please refer to the response envelope located in the middle of this issue of *The Cry*.

We anticipate that the Lord will use this move to further His Kingdom among the poor and we look forward to a sort of homecoming for Word Made Flesh in Omaha. Your prayers will be a necessary component of making these hopes a reality. Please stand with us as you hold our needs before the Lord. ■

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The Cry is an advocacy publication of Word Made Flesh. In addition to serving Jesus among the poor through ministries of compassion and proclamation of the Good News, Word Made Flesh is committed to serving the church as a prophetic voice for the poor. We strive for *The Cry* to be a voice to the church, articulating the cry of the poor for God and the cry of God for the poor.

To request a free quarterly subscription to *The Cry*, contact us at 1 (800) CRY-4-KIDS or cry4kids@aol.com.



Photo: Jonathan Milano

PAUL RASE

Paul was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska. In March of 1996, while living in Dallas, Texas, Paul was radically born again. He immediately

felt called to the nations, and in the Spring of 1998 took a four-month exploratory journey to the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Throughout this time, the Lord was planting seeds in Paul's heart concerning His love for the poor.

Upon his return, Paul had the opportunity to serve in a youth center ministering among at-risk children and teens in Omaha's inner city. The Lord began pouring out His heart for the poor of the earth and specifically invited Paul to minister among them. He then journeyed to South India in the Fall of 1999 for two weeks and returned there for four months in the Spring of 2000. For Paul, it was a time of experiencing deeper intimacy with Jesus, and a time of living in real relationship with the poor.

Paul spent the past year in the Trinity School of Ministry, a full-time training program in leadership and missions. During this same time, he had the opportunity to help start a tutoring and mentoring program for Sudanese refugee children living in Omaha's inner city. Paul will depart for the field in June, spending the first six months of his term with the WMF communities in India and Nepal. He will then move to Bangkok, Thailand in early 2003 to serve as Thailand Field Staff.



Photo: Marc Curless

MELANIE CURLESS

Melanie grew up on a farm in Western Australia. Her childhood was characterized by various family adventures to out-of-the-way places around Australia, a menagerie of pets, and Christian parents who demonstrated a genuine walk with God. She became a Christian at a young age. Melanie completed a BSc (Nursing) and a Graduate Diploma in Pediatric Nursing in Western Australia before her first

overseas experience in Pakistan as a school nurse for a missionary school. It was in Pakistan that she met her husband Marc and discovered that they shared similar goals and values.

The continuing desire to work in developing countries in a way that would make a difference in people's lives led Melanie to pursue graduate studies in Public Health and Marc to receive certification in education. After accompanying Marc as he student taught in Korea and working herself as an intern with Food for the Hungry in Cambodia, Melanie and Marc are now living in Thailand. They work at American Pacific International School where Marc teaches social studies, and they take care of a houseful of elementary boarding students. God is continuing to reveal their future with Him. Melanie joined the WMF community as International Development Advisor.

RACHEL SIMONS

Rachel was born in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and was raised in a Christian home where she learned of Jesus from a young age. Granddaughter to missionaries in China and the Philippines, Rachel developed a growing interest in missions throughout her childhood. A high school mission trip led Rachel to Romania for six weeks in 1996, where she was first exposed to a foreign culture and impressed by the vastness of God's kingdom. During her first year at Gordon College in 1998, Rachel encountered Christ in a personal way and was awakened to her need for greater intimacy with Him.



Photo: Jonathan Milano

In the fall of 2000, Rachel traveled to Galati, Romania with WMF on a Servant Team. Through exposure, relationships, discussions, prayer, and worship, God began to soften Rachel's heart to hear the cries of the poor and outcasts. The following summer, Rachel returned to Galati and God confirmed her desire to continue serving Jesus among the poor. Rachel will graduate from Gordon College in May 2002 with a degree in Biblical and Theological Studies and a minor in Missions. She plans to return to Romania as Field Staff in the summer of 2002.

DONNIE RICHARDS



Photo: Jonathan Milano

Donnie was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico. His father's Air Force career moved the family to Denver, Colorado, later to Cocoa Beach, Florida, and eventually to Margate, Florida.

Donnie was raised in a great family but had little or no contact with church until a family friend invited he and his sister to church in 1993. Since accepting Christ a year-and-a-half later, at age 15, he has been a faithful and active member of Riverside Christian Fellowship. While his family does not attend church with him, his mother and father have actively encouraged and supported his pursuit of a career in ministry, even to his pursuit of a Bachelor's Degree in Religious Studies at Palm Beach Atlantic College in West Palm Beach, Florida.

At Palm Beach Atlantic College, God began to reveal more of His plan for Donnie's life. During his junior year, Donnie met Jared Landreth and was accepted to lead a summer mission trip with the school through WMF. The five-week trip to Nepal and India was the culmination of many areas in Donnie's life. The discipleship he received from the WMF staff concerning God's heart for the poor and our lifestyle of response helped bring new clarity and direction to God's plan for Donnie's ministry. Donnie will graduate from college in May of 2002. He plans to tour the U.S. this summer with his band to help raise support as he prepares to serve in Sierra Leone, West Africa.

A Return to the Garden

by sarah lance



Sarah

I cut nails for a living. I take the hands and feet of the sweet women of Calcutta into my hands and cut their nails. It is simple and

seemingly not so profound an act, but it is the beginning of a return to the Garden. By a return to the Garden, I mean the place where we as humans are safe, secure, and unashamed before one another and God. Cutting fingernails for my dear sisters in Calcutta is the beginning of breaking down the wall that separates and isolates one human from another. It is the beginning of intimacy.

The process begins simply. She offers me her hand. Really, she is not just offering me her hand, she is offering me her heart, so I receive it as a gift. I take her hand and examine her fingernails. Her hands are rather dirty—one finger does not even have a fingernail. Looking at my hands, I see that they are also rather dirty; in Calcutta the dirt clings and finds a happy home in nail beds. Actually, I think my fingernails need cutting more than hers. I have discovered that fingernail cutting is not really the main reason for our contact. Really, our hands are meeting in friendship, four hands meeting together to engage in the grand act of fingernail cutting so that we can begin our relationship and begin to break down the walls that separate us.

I am learning that intimacy can begin in small acts of service. For me, intimacy has begun with cutting fingernails and in doing other small acts of service for the women that I

encounter both in the Missionaries of Charity care homes (Shanti Dan and Kalighat) and on the street. It began with an open ear and an extended hand. It began with an open heart and a ready soul. The journey toward intimacy continues as our relationships develop, but it all began with fingernail cutting.

Intimacy comes in those moments, those days and those hours when we stand naked before one another and feel no shame. What I mean by nakedness is in the moments when nothing about who we are is hidden. It is when our souls are vulnerable and beautiful, as we connect with one another and with God as He intended, as in the Garden before the fall.

Intimacy comes in those moments where nothing about who we are is hidden. It is when our souls are vulnerable and beautiful, as we connect with one another and with God as He intended, as in the Garden before the fall.

Adam and Eve understood true vulnerability and pure intimacy with each other and with God before they tasted from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Genesis 2:25 says, “The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.” I know this verse is often used to talk about the marriage relationship, but I think that it has powerful meaning in the context of the community of the body of Christ. The door that was closed in the Garden, Jesus reopened when He went to the cross. His sacrifice on the cross broke down the wall of

shame and allowed us to return to intimacy with our God and with people.

Now, naked and unashamed, we can meet each other in the shadow of the cross. We must extend our hands and not only accept the gift of intimacy from Jesus but from one another. Intimacy begins with us as we embrace Jesus, our intimate God, and extends itself through us into our relationships in community and with the poor.

Through the hands and feet of those He has called me to live among, Jesus is teaching me what it means to be naked and without shame. We must reach out and begin somewhere, so I begin by reaching out and taking a hand and cutting fingernails. ■

Sarah lives in Calcutta and is the India Servant Team Coordinator for WMF.



One of the elderly women Sarah served in a Missionaries of Charity home.

Knowing and Being Known

by brian langley

There remains inside each one of us, albeit beyond the reach of most, a deep place that cries out to be known and accepted by others. Rarely do we permit this longing to manifest itself to others. Tragically, we sometimes don't even listen to it ourselves. We fail to heed this cry when, upon arrival from the vulnerability of childhood to places of success and maturity, we begin to believe that our need for others has waned or been "conquered." Some people have navigated through a great portion of adult life fully believing that the cry to know and to be known is simply the immaturity of children or the fodder of the weak. Others do not remember the profoundness of the human cry for intimacy until they are facing death. However, in moments of weakness, even the strong admit that the most important things in life are not accomplishments, but relationships. It is at times like these that a caring embrace is infinitely more important than the shiniest trophy.

Those in close contact with the poor, oppressed, the weak and the young have heard their cries to know and to be known. Among people such as these, the cry for intimacy surfaces often.

remember childhood, when our every word or action was governed by the approval of a parent or caregiver. Their glances and touches that let us know in both clear and subtle ways that we were special, cared for and loved met our very obvious need for

Those in close contact with the poor, the oppressed, the weak and the young have heard their cries to know and to be known. Among people such as these, the cry for intimacy surfaces often. While this cry is common to everyone, strength and pride often mask it. Sadly, we often ignore our own cry for intimacy.

Why do we forget?
Maybe because we can't

approval. In addition, because we were protected they met our need to know that we had nothing to fear. We cannot recall farther back to those tender moments when our mothers held us close to their breasts, giving us the nourishment that our bodies craved and the closeness that our infant souls needed. We began our lives with a fundamental need for closeness. But by the time we reach adulthood, the degree to which we become successful at negotiating our emotions and our relationships is the extent to which we are able to mask or forget the cry for acceptance living within us. It is precisely the people who know how to "control" their emotions who can skillfully mask their dependence on intimacy.

But those of us who have sat next to a broken person and listened with painful clarity as tragedies and abuses are recalled have heard the cry for intimacy. Those whose lives are close to the elderly know how a person can feel terribly alone even while living among hundreds of others in understaffed and underfunded nursing homes. Such people have heard the cry for intimacy. And those of us who have invited a person from the inner city streets over to our house for a family meal, and listened to stories of pain, jail and broken relationships have also heard the cry for intimacy.

The cry for intimacy surfaces more frequently among the poor, the weak and the broken. That is why Jesus went to them. When Jesus made the statement in Matthew 9:12, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick," He laid down both a motivation and a mandate for His body, the church. The motivation is to bring compassion and intimacy to those crying out for intimacy as a response to the will of God, the great physician. And the mandate is to intentionally place ourselves in relationships of trust and love among the broken—those crying out in anguish for intimacy.

Photo: Dabene Eck



A child who attends the WMF drop-in center in Romania.

At first read, this might seem obvious, but it is just as theologically scandalous today as in the days of Jesus. The contemporary theology of our age is not vastly different from that of the religious leaders who accused Jesus of involving Himself too intimately in the lives of "bad" people. "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" the Pharisees asked His disciples.

The Pharisees had forgotten both their own cry for intimacy and the heart of the God they claimed to worship, who had proclaimed to them thousands of years earlier, "If a man shuts his ear to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and will not be answered" (Pr. 21:13).

Jesus spent a majority of His ministry trying to explain what the Pharisees had forgotten—that our need for intimacy with others is to be remembered, and that those who are crying out should be heard. Listening requires nearness, which requires that we leave places of wholeness and enter into places of pain and brokenness. In turn, our listening teaches us to recognize our real and ongoing need for others. This kind of lifestyle rarely makes it into the strategy sessions or mission reports of Christian ministries—probably because our faith is too closely knit to a pharisaical response to poverty and brokenness, which condemns, divides and neglects. Yet, there is hope. We do have Jesus, and He entered into lives full of pain in order to listen and to help us all remember our need for others. We are invited to do the same. ■

Brian, Rachel, and Isabel (the sassy, soon to be two-year-old) live in Lima, Peru. They are the Peru Servant Team Coordinators.

God Have Mercy

by monica klepac

The long passageway led to an immense room with guardrails on the perimeter of the rock mound my family and the other Mammoth Cave tourists clustered upon. The sign said “Bottomless Pit” and we leaned over the metal bars to peer into the mysterious darkness below. My older brother snuck up beside me and whispered, “You know if you fall in you will end up in China, and they won’t send you home.” My seven-year-old heart started throbbing and my breath seemed to stop short of my lungs. I knew that I would be swallowed up by the endless black sea of nothingness.

“When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been dead for four days” (Jn. 11:17).

After a few more minutes of words echoing against the cavern walls, my dad herded us to the rickety metal stairs that led to the surface. I dug my sneakers into the ground and refused to climb the steps that would surely bring either death upon the rocky floor or the rest of my life in China. There was pleading, arguing, and bribery, but in the end, there was only one way out of the bottomless pit room.

“Jesus began to weep” (Jn. 11:35).

All I remember was my kicking and crying, but there surely was a good amount of gasping and groaning on my dad’s part. Step by wobbly step he lugged me up the stairs above the pit. Through the alarmingly large gaps between steps, I was looking right into the deep darkness that led to a place where I didn’t want to be. After seemingly endless huffing and struggling, we reached the cool daylight and stood around squinting at the bright world above ground.

“When he had said this, he cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’” (Jn. 11:43).

I used to think that intimacy was the warm embracing feeling you shared with

someone that enjoyed being with you. I now believe intimacy is not sharing strong, capable, admirable parts of ourselves; but in fact, intimacy is sharing our worst, scariest, ugliest parts and letting someone accompany us in the midst of the horror. It is opening up the raging furnace of anger, the wet coldness of grief. Last year, on May 31, I felt like the steps of my security gave way and I was falling into the unimaginable darkness when my son Lazarus died. Pablo Neruda captures my feeling in his poem, Sadness II,

For a moment, for
A short lifetime,
Remove my light and leave me
To feel myself
Abandoned, wretched,
Trembling in the web
of twilight,
receiving into my being
the quivering
hands
of
the
rain.

As I lay on our green-blue couch that nightmarish morning, realizing that the child I loved was no longer inside my womb, I knew that Jesus lay there too, weeping and drowning in the pool of my grief. This is why we named our son Lazarus. When Jesus wept for the Lazarus of Mary and Martha, and for the Lazarus of Joel and Monica, he went into our weak, lonely, fearful places and sat in the mud with us.

He is not the majestic, unmoved Lord but rather the one with passion who knows and shares in the anguish of the brother and sister. The fact that Jesus weeps and that He is moved in spirit and troubled contrasts remarkably with the dominant culture. That is not



Jesus praying in the garden. Statue at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Trappist, Kentucky.

the way of power and it is scarcely the way among those who intend to maintain firm social control. But in this scene Jesus is engaged not in social control but in dismantling the power of death, and He does so by submitting Himself to the pain and grief present in the situation, the very pain and grief that the dominant society must deny (Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*).

Jesus first comes with us to the deep places where few are willing to go, and then dismantles the powers of darkness that would trap us in the grief. Often I am still the little girl fighting against the very arms that are rescuing me, but I am ultimately more afraid of the pit than of where He carries me.

One Sunday morning, I board the bus to go to the cathedral, and I see my friend Dana. This morning she is with her mother, and they are going to see the son she gave to the orphanage. My heart sneaks a glance into the deep pool of grief we share through losing our children. Though our circumstances and choices were different, I feel the heaviness of knowing that we are both mothers without children.

I get off the bus and continue to the cathedral. On the corner of a busy intersection, I meet another friend, Ionica, whom I haven’t seen for a while. She sits as I always see her, in a half crouching position with a tattered scarf on her head and an outstretched hand. Upon my approach, her light-filled smile welcomes me to sit and talk. I see the familiar marks of abuse on her face and I ask her about it, understanding only a few words through her handicapped speech. I leave wanting to take

(continued on next page)

A Call Beyond

GOD HAVE MERCY

(continued from previous page)

away the exposure to her abuse, and feeling a push even further toward that internal pit of ache that seems to have no end.

At the cathedral, we follow the movements of the standing, kneeling, and praying congregation. At one point in the service, we all kneel in response to the priest's words while the choir calls out "God have mercy."

With closed eyes, I feel myself closer and closer to the edge of that bottomless pit where I throw my unanswered questions about God's justice, goodness and love. The chorus of "God have mercy" rings out repeatedly from the alcove above me like waves carrying me in rhythm to the place I don't want to go. Finally, I fall. All the images of Ionica, Dana and Lazarus surrounded me like the rushing wind and the endless questions loom like cavernous darkness. Then, just as suddenly, the echo of "God have mercy" catches me. I realize that the voices are pouring a balm, not sending a monsoon. One by one, questions fall like coins in a fountain. Why is sweet Ionica beaten? Why is Dana trapped in this cycle of pain? Why, why, why was my sweet little boy taken from me? There is no answer to any of these questions, but even so the gracious hand of His love catches me, and I don't hit the bottom that seems to race toward me.

There is so much I don't know about God, so much that He doesn't make easy for us to see. But that summer morning, in the midst of icons, priests, and saints on the streets, His love was revealed to my wounded heart. The loving Father's gentle arms reach into the deepest, scariest places of ourselves and carry us, sometimes with struggle, above the bottomless fears toward the glory of resurrection.

Events in the past several months have changed my position about intimacy, from strolling down the lovely garden path to stumbling blindfolded through a labyrinth. My hope is that others too are in this maze with me and perhaps this will be a hand in the darkness so none of us makes our way through it alone. ■

Monica and her husband, Joel, are Servant Team Coordinators in Galati, Romania.

by tina bevill

As a young girl, I remember wishing that archeologists would uncover Noah's ark. If someone could just show me the boat on a mountaintop somewhere, then I could believe all that the Bible said was true. It sounds funny, but that is what I used to hope. I wanted some kind of proof that God's Word was real.

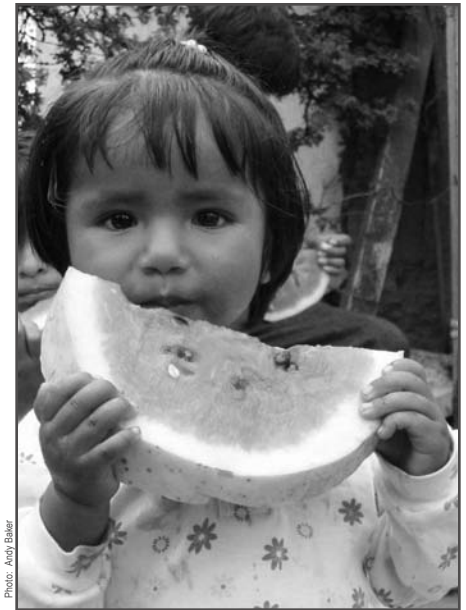
The mysterious rapture also used to scare me. I would find myself alone in the house on a summer afternoon and frantically run outside to find one of my parents or my little sister. What would I do if I were left behind? I decided I would run to the hills surrounding our valley town. A Sunday school teacher shared with our children's class one mid-week evening that she also used to fear the rapture. I could not believe that this woman, who I so greatly respected, once feared such things. Her words ministered peace to me.

In college, I traveled to Israel. I stood on archaeological sites and heard "proofs" for Biblical texts. God's Word came alive to me in exciting ways as I studied Biblical history and geography on some of the very sites where what we were learning about actually occurred.

Still, Jesus is inviting me to know Him in ways far more personal than a mere academic assent that Biblical towns and people really existed. His call goes beyond my maturing trust in Jesus' provision on the cross that has cleansed my sin and purchased for me eternal life. My name is written in the Book of Life. I praise God for that confidence!



Tina Bevill



A Bolivian street child

Still, Jesus' call to intimacy cries louder. He wants me to know Him in the disguise of the outcast and the stranger. He wants me to quench His thirst when someone asks me for a drink of water. He wants me to serve Him by serving those forgotten by our selfish, greedy and fast-paced society.

As Jesus reveals Himself to me in the faces and hugs of the poor, He reminds me of His greatness and His immense love for the world He has created. He whispers to me that the gold of this earth is meaningless. Fashion and outward beauty are passing and do not have eternal importance. Even the pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's sake is foolish.

Jesus' call to intimacy is a call to Love. He invites all of us to walk with Him on the narrow road—the road of meaning, intimacy and mature love. Jesus calls us to "seek first His kingdom and His righteousness" (Mt. 6:33a). May we hear His still, small voice and follow Him in obedience, an obedience that leads to great freedom and joyous intimacy with the very Spirit of God. ■

Tina lives in Lima, Peru and works among street children as a street educator.

Updates from the Field

Dr. Kamaleson's messages as well as staff devotionals at the staff retreat are available for purchase. The cost is \$5 per cassette, including shipping. Please contact our office at cry4kids@aol.com or 1-800-CRY-4-KIDS if you are interested in purchasing tapes.

NORTH AMERICA

JANUARY

■ The second bi-annual WMF staff retreat takes place in Atlanta, Georgia. Over 70 staff and board members attend. Guest speaker, Dr. Samuel Kamaleson, and his wife, Adela, attend the first weekend to share with the WMF staff and board.

Editor's note: Many thanks to all who prayed as we met. Your prayers were felt; we are so grateful for your care.

FEBRUARY

■ Rebecca Grant starts working full-time in the WMF office. She is the International Partnership Coordinator.

■ Chris Heuertz speaks at The Falls Church in Washington D.C.

■ Chris Heuertz speaks at Anderson University in Anderson, Indiana.



WMF family picture: WMF staff, board, and Dr. and Mrs. Kamaleson at the staff retreat.

SOUTH AMERICA

DECEMBER

■ The Peru staff partners with Mustard Seed (another ministry to street children) to throw a Christmas party for 120 street children.

■ WMF Peru rents two apartments to use as a drop-in center for street children and the clean-up begins.

■ The Fall Servant Team returns home.

■ The Peru staff takes a weekend retreat at the beach to relax and to strengthen community.

■ At different points during the month, the Lima staff members travel to the States to attend the WMF Staff Retreat in Atlanta, GA.

JANUARY

■ Jamie Reed, Tina Bevill, Emily Powers, and Walter and Adriana Forcatto return to Lima after the WMF Staff Retreat.

■ Walter Forcatto has an article published in the 2002 edition of *Into All the World*.

Editor's Note: You may order this missions handbook for \$5 at www.aboutmissions.com or by calling (626) 798-8582.

FEBRUARY

■ Sarah Dobrin, Peru Field Staff, arrives in Lima to begin her two-year commitment with WMF.

■ WMF Peru has the first General Body meeting with its Board of Directors.

■ The Langleys return to Lima.

■ Walter and Adriana Forcatto, Brian Langley, and Luisa Vera meet with Gustavo Gutierrez.

■ The staff continues to clean up the drop-in center with the help of some of the street kids and Peruvian co-workers.

STAFF RETREAT PICTURES



Throughout the week, each staff member worked on painting a plate depicting a part of him or herself.



Then, during a special time of worship, each person broke their own plate as a representation of their personal brokenness.



Everyone put their plate fragments together to create a mosaic, illustrating that when we offer our brokenness to the Body...



...God is able to create something greater and more beautiful than our individual wholeness could.



Bob Mabrey (WMF Chairman of the Board) shares with the staff at the retreat



A few Fleshie kids: Isabel Langley, Sarah Timm, Nyazole Both, Wesley and Luke Erny

EASTERN EUROPE

DECEMBER

- The drop-in center renovation continues.
- Coco, Laurentiu, Kati, and Elena complete their first semester of school successfully.
- The drop-in center hosts an all-night Christmas party for the street children.
- Joel and Monica Klepac become godparents and participate in Geanina Simion's first haircut.
- Seven staff members attend the Taize prayer convention in Budapest, Hungary.

JANUARY

- The drop-in center radiator system is installed.
- Olivia (Reichert) Stefan completes her two year contract with WMF. Recently married, Olivia and her husband Nelu are now living in Kentucky.
- Romania Staff returns from the Staff Retreat.

FEBRUARY

- The drop-in center gas line is installed.



A trip to the zoo



Coffee run



Field Directors meeting



At the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change



Fleshies out sight-seeing



Christmas program at the Madras children's home.

SOUTH ASIA

DECEMBER

- Patrick and Victoria Samuel (WMF India children's home directors) host a party at the home for Chris Heuertz's 30th birthday.
- WMF India children's homes hold a Christmas program for the community.
- The Nepal and India Servant Teams are completed.
- Josh Tucker, Sarah Lance, and Kyle Cullum leave India, and the West family leaves Nepal to attend the WMF staff retreat.

JANUARY

- The building and property for the Nepal elderly women's home is purchased.
- WMF Nepal takes in two sisters (ages 4 and 6) whose father died of AIDS and whose mother is now dying of AIDS. Gautam and Rekha Rai are now caring for three girls in the WMF Nepal home for girls.
- The India and Nepal staff members return to their fields after the staff retreat.

FEBRUARY

- Gautam and Rekha Rai are approved as full-time staff members for WMF Nepal as the girls' home administrators.
- Sarah Lance receives her second Calcutta Servant Team.
- Katie Katzmark begins a four-month internship in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Ben Oldham joins the Nepal community to begin his first term as a Nepal Field Staff member.

Spacious Intimacy: Making Room for God

In this issue of *The Insight Series*, christine pohl shares her thoughts on a new understanding of intimacy with God.

Seeking and claiming intimacy with God would involve extraordinary presumption if it weren't a possibility that runs through the Scriptures. The idea that we, God's broken, obstinate creation, could be drawn into the privileges of intimacy with the creator and redeemer of the universe should strike us as outrageous. Rather than taking this privilege for granted, we ought to be continually amazed that God both welcomes us into the deepest fellowship of the Trinity and wants to live in us.

Love is the hallmark of the Christian life and of the God we worship. But in the context of love, intimacy suggests the distinctively powerful experiences of knowing and being known, of vulnerability through exposure of the deepest parts of the self. Dependent on trustworthiness, it is a risky form of love.

An emphasis on intimacy highlights love's intensely personal character, its mutuality and oneness. Such closeness does not dissolve or swallow up the distinctness of the parties, but it does involve deepest self-disclosure. It is cultivated by a mutually sustained attentiveness to the other person. In an intimate relationship, there is such an identity and identification with the other that we begin to see with the other person's eyes, hear with their ears. We encounter the wonder of shared purpose, of shared love and loves.

Most of us understand intimacy with Jesus in a very individualistic way—a close, loving relationship between Jesus and me. Such a relationship is an amazing gift, a priceless treasure of the Christian life. But intimacy

with Jesus is also bigger and more spacious. Jesus, in the Gospel of John, promises believers that He and the Father will make their home with those who love Him and keep His word. He prays, "As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." The possibility of mutual indwelling is overwhelming: "so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and loved them even as you have loved me." In these verses we catch a glimpse of an intimate community of love that turns outward for the sake of the world (Jn. 14:23, 17:21-23).

Images of the church as the bride of Christ and as the body of Christ can help us with this more expansive understanding of intimacy. Much more than a one-to-one relation, it is a beloved and loving community that experiences such closeness and identification with Jesus. The Scriptures reserve the most intimate imagery to describe the relationship between the body of believers and God.

Intimacy with God involves three different dimensions—first is our individual attentiveness to God in prayer, Scripture reading, and reflection. Second, intimacy involves our participation in a loving community in covenantal relationship with God. And third, intimacy with God comes through the loving attention we give to others—neighbors, enemies, and especially the most vulnerable.

When we nurture closeness with Jesus and seek to be attentive to Him, our closeness turns outward. We cannot love Him without loving others. Henri Nouwen writes,

The intimacy of the house of love always leads to solidarity with the weak. The closer we come to the

heart of the One who loves us with an unconditional love, the freer we are to let the small people come close to us and celebrate their redeemed humanity with us (Sojourners, June 14, 1985).

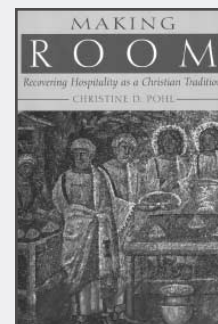
Intimacy—that tight, personal quality that has eyes only for the beloved ("my beloved is mine and I am his")—somehow blossoms into welcome to the least, the lonely and the lost. These are the very ones with whom Jesus identified and to whom Jesus opened His life.

Intimacy with God does not become diluted as more people are included in God's heart of love. There is always enough love, enough room in God's house. But we might want to ask: "What kind of hospitality would enable us to invite God to make a home in us? What personal environment is suitable for God?" In Romans 8:9-10, Paul writes to believers that the Spirit of God dwells in us, Christ in us. How can we make a large enough space in ourselves and in our communities to be able to invite God to live with us, to make a home in us?

(continued on next page)

WE RECOMMEND

Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition, by Christine Pohl. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Grand Rapids, MI: 1999.



For most of church history, hospitality was central to Christian identity. Yet our generation knows little about this rich, life-giving practice. The author revisits the discipline of welcoming strangers and provides the foundation for renewed commitment to recovering hospitality as a Christian tradition.

You may purchase this excellent book at the WMF online bookstore at: <http://www.wordmadeflesh.com/resources.htm>.

SPACIOUS INTIMACY

(continued from previous page)

While our intimacy with God ultimately comes to us as a gift, an expanded understanding of intimacy is crucial. When we recognize the significance of Jesus' words in Matthew 25 that inasmuch as we have welcomed "the least of these" we have welcomed Him, we begin to understand the extraordinary kind of identification and oneness available to us. As we love and live among those most likely to be overlooked—the poor and hungry, the despised ones, the prisoners and the sick—we find ourselves in intimate relationship with Jesus.

It is impossible to imagine true intimacy without long-term commitment. We do not gain intimacy with poor and vulnerable people through little forays into areas of need, but through faithful relationships of shared joys and sorrows, shared lives and hearts.

Such intimacy does not come through carefully crafted programs dependent on measurable results, but through relationships of mutual valuing and presence. Each of us yearns to be known by another, to be cherished for who we are. But, so often people want relationships with others for what they can be or can do for them. As Henri Nouwen notes, there are few who offer "love without conditions," and rare is "the place where we can be vulnerable without being used" (*Reaching Out*). Being known and cherished by another brings us to life.

Our challenge, as we increasingly know God's heart, is not to presume on the relationship or to take it for granted, but rather to cherish it. As we grow in intimacy with Jesus, He will continue to transform our love to make it more spacious and more fertile. As we share ourselves in deepest expressions of love with others, we will find that we have more love to give. Love is not a scarce commodity that we need to ration in case we run out. An intimate relationship with the Source of Love guarantees sufficient supply. ■

Christine Pohl is Professor of Social Ethics at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky. Her latest contribution is to a collection of essays called "Practicing Theology," edited by Miroslav Volf and Dorothy Bass. She is currently working on a book on community.

INTIMACY NAMED

(continued from front page)

they will avoid the pronunciation of YHWH by replacing it with "Ha Shem" (the name) or "Adonai" (the Lord).

The power of naming is also a tool used in society to control victims of poverty. We use terms to label victims of poverty that only contribute to their powerlessness. Even by labeling victims of poverty as "the poor," we have done these individuals (and ourselves) a terrible disservice. We have built social walls that divide "us" from "them," we have ascribed labels that disconnect us from any responsibility we may have pertaining to situations of poverty, and we have ascribed derogatory terms that describe a situation, not the person. Terms and names such as beggars, street kids, squatters, bums, rag-pickers, and hookers have become tools that further the dehumanizing process of marginalization. These terms focus on the environment of a person over her identity and the social standing of a person over his dignity.

The Scriptures have much to say about the power of naming. In the Psalms we discover a theology of significance in a passage in which God reveals that He knew us before we were born (Ps. 139:13-16). In Genesis, a theology of dignity is detailed through the creation of humanity in God's image (Gen. 1:26-27). In Isaiah we read of a theology of grace when we discover that God has inscribed us on the palms of His hands (Is. 49:16). These theological passages of the Scripture are all precursors to the ultimate theology of God's redemption. In Matthew, Jesus renames Simon, illustrating His theology of redemption, which continues today. Simon becoming Peter was more than a mere renaming of a man; it was the reclaiming of his humanity so that God could be glorified in it. Today, however, humanity (along with significance, identity, dignity, and grace) is stolen in the grip of poverty and is renamed, making poverty's grip relentless.

It's not coincidental that the only character named in any of Christ's parables was Lazarus, the beggar found sleeping on the street in front of a rich man's home (Lk. 16:19-31). In the world's telling of that story (even in the church's version), the rich

man would have been named and the beggar would have remained part of the backdrop of the narrative. But God's Kingdom reverses contemporary social norms in such a way that the reversal is a renewal that sets things right. By naming only Lazarus in all of His parables, Christ challenges and reclaims the world's power of naming, a naming that has been used to defame. His disregard for our labels and His renaming of the victims of poverty redeem the poor that He has chosen to inherit His Kingdom (Jas. 2:5-6).

Photo: Chris Heavertz



Baby Sarah's grave in Madras, India

[Christ's] disregard for our labels and His renaming of the victims of poverty redeem the poor that He has chosen to inherit His Kingdom.

How easy it is to exploit the nameless. How easy it is to justify our unresponsiveness to those we see only as statistics. Our perception of reality has been insulated and isolated by the way we read reality. As long as society and the church continue to steal significance, identity, dignity, grace and the potential of redemption from the oppressed, then God's image and character will be under assault.

A name makes a victim come back to life, even in death. May Dipankar, Sarah, Dave and the millions of other nameless, faceless victims of poverty not only live in their deaths, but may our embrace of them now bring life. Let us reclaim the name God has given them, "Chosen," in order to reclaim the significance, dignity and identity that He has bestowed upon us all. ■

Chris is the Executive Director of WMF. He and his wife, Phileena, spend much of the year visiting and pastoring the WMF international fields. They make their home in Wilmore, KY.

The Intimacy of Freedom

by ben oldham

Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! - Isaiah 55:1a

Freely you have received, freely give.
- Matthew 10:8b

My friendship with Jumlee Mone Krishna has revealed to me my own longing for intimacy. More than that, he has taught me about the cry for intimacy deep within all of us. Jumlee lives at the Missionaries of Charity Home for the Destitute in Kathmandu, Nepal. He cannot walk, so he spends most of his time sitting on his bed at the back of the hallway. His friends spend most of their time outside in the courtyard. Daily Jumlee asks to be carried out to his favorite spot in the courtyard to be with them. But as the days get colder, they sit up high in the sun, in a place that he cannot reach. So he is left alone. One day in December, a Sister at the home looked over at him sadly and said to me, "Jumlee is very sad today. He told me he feels unwanted."

Jean Vanier explains this pain in *From Brokenness to Community*,

For 25 years now I have had the privilege of living with men and women with disabilities. I have discovered that even though a person may have severe brain damage, that is not the source of his or her greatest pain. The greatest pain is rejection, the feeling that nobody really wants you 'like that.' The feeling that you are seen as ugly, dirty, a burden, of no value. That is the pain that I have discovered in the hearts of our people.

Jumlee is convinced that nobody wants him as he is. For him, the proof of that is abandonment.

We can relate to this pain. Our desire for intimacy often leads us toward an attempt to earn it. With our friends, we try to appear respectable, behave properly, and even hide our pain in order to be accepted. With God,

we feel that if we pray more, serve more, or sin less, we will then be acceptable to Him. Like prodigal children, we feel that we need to be clean before our Father will embrace us.

God's response, however, is not an intimacy that we can earn, but an intimacy of freedom. In Isaiah 55, God invites those who thirst to come in our poverty, and to come freely. The result of this invitation is seen in Matthew 10, when Jesus commands us "Freely you have received, freely give."

My own desire to earn God's favor came to light one afternoon in Kathmandu. I stood at an intersection of five roads, a roundabout called Chettrapati. The intersection was packed with Nepalis of all castes; beggars on foot and the wealthy in Land Rovers all converging and diverging at one intersection. I stood there that day in great frustration, as I could see the love that God had for each of them, but I had failed all day to show them that love. I stood there in anger at myself for failing so miserably, in the depression of not receiving God's love. But it was in that moment that God met me. Despite my rejection of myself, God accepted me. He revealed to me that all of the love that He had for each person there He also had for me. He said to me in that moment, "Though you are incapable of love, still I love you. You have not earned this, and you cannot earn this. Receive Me." The Father proclaimed over me in that moment the word that He proclaimed over Jesus: "You are my Son, whom I love. With you I am well pleased" (Mk. 1:11).

As His children, this is what the Father proclaims over us. He invites us, "Come...why spend your labor on what does not satisfy? Give ear and come to Me...delight in the richest of fare" (Is. 55:1-3). Can we receive this freely? Rather than living in a posture of humility, a posture of receiving, into which Jesus sends His disciples in Matthew 10, we



Ben with Jumlee in the Missionaries of Charity home for the destitute.

too often live in a position of trying to earn the favor of both God and other people.

We must learn what it is to receive freely if we are to give freely to the poor. Remarkably, it is the poor who understand in ways that we do not what it is to receive freely. And as we enter into relationship with the poor, it is often they who teach us how to receive and how to give.

Remarkably, it is the poor who understand in ways that we do not what it is to receive freely...it is often they who teach us how to receive, and how to give.

As Jumlee sits on his bed, he sits in a posture of receiving. He cannot do anything for me to earn his food or his bath. Rather, he sits in the humility of constantly receiving. One day when Jumlee got very angry with me for not properly sitting him on his bed, I stormed off in anger. "How dare he?" I thought. "I deserve to be treated better." Though my failure to give freely led to his further abandonment, when I returned to apologize to him, he met me with forgiveness. "Maf garnus," I said, "I have done very bad." He just shook his head and smiled, and invited me to sit with him. ■

Editor's note: A few weeks after Ben wrote this article, he learned from the Nepal Staff that Jumlee had passed away. Ben writes in Jumlee's memory: "Jumlee's life was an agent of God's grace for me, for the intimacy we shared was an intimacy of freedom: the freedom to receive, the freedom to give; the freedom to invite Jesus to be with us as He invites us 'Come, you who are poor, come freely.'"

In February, Ben returned to Nepal as a field staff member with Word Made Flesh. Please pray for Ben as he reacquaints himself with the culture, ministries, staff and friends in Nepal.

Immanuel: God with “Us” and “Them”

by silas west

And they will call Him Immanuel, which means, “God is with us.” - Matthew 1:23

The relationship between a husband and wife is probably one of the first things that come to mind when we think of intimacy. There is also a tangible relationship of intimacy between parents and children. These relationships have aspects of intimacy that are visible through proximity, familiarity and understanding. They are concrete examples of intimate relationships.

However, when we begin speaking of intimate relationships between friends or people other than immediate family members, things get much fuzzier. Although many of us have some dear friends who have sustained us through trials and valleys and celebrated with us in our victories and triumphs, these friendships are exceptional. Rarely do a majority of our relationships result in a truly intimate experience. There is a space we usually establish to keep ourselves a safe distance from others. And, most of the time that defensive “distance” is mutually reciprocated. Thus, our experiences of intimacy become much less concrete with fewer tangible expressions for us to hold onto.

For many of us, entering into a relationship of mutual understanding and proximity would mean losing our sense of self. We have invested a great deal of our lives seeking to stand out in some way, to rise above the rest and set ourselves apart from others. Our whole sense of self is often dependent upon the comparisons and identifiable differences we can establish between others and ourselves. In this way, we define ourselves by creating distinctions that require us to maintain distance from one another.

These distinctions that we make are the basic component of most of our family problems, church divisions, racial conflicts, class struggles, civil wars, and ethnic cleansings. It can start by simply distancing ourselves from

a family member who threatens our own identity. But the same spirit in which we isolate ourselves from a domineering brother or bossy sister can lead us to so greatly distance ourselves from another that we cease to see them as human. Dehumanizing others enables us to commit or allow others to commit atrocities in the name of self-preservation.

To suggest that we could be capable of the atrocities that we have become aware of in our generation may seem absurd. After all, our generation saw the end of apartheid and the fall of the Iron Curtain. In fact, it is our generation more than any other that boasts of the progressive inclusion of the global market, which claims to offer equal access to education, jobs and the political system. While we may struggle with intimacy and suffer family problems and church divisions, it would seem absurd to suggest that the cycle of separation goes any deeper than that. We are a people who have turned inclusion of others into a profitable enterprise.

It is not “we” who would be capable of something like mass genocide. Only “they” could do something like that. The distinction differentiates “them” from the kind of people “we” are and righteous moral outrage is replaced by self-deceptive moral smugness. The distinction is made, and in that distinction we have defined ourselves by establishing that we are different. We have cut ourselves free of any ties that connect us with “them,” taking ourselves out of any pattern of interdependence on “them” creating what Miroslav Volf calls “the other.” He says,

The other emerges as an enemy that must be pushed away from the self and driven out of its space or as a nonentity that can be disregarded as superfluous and therefore abandoned (*Exclusion and Embrace*).

Once “the other” has been identified as anyone who threatens our own identity, it



Photo: Julie Neher

Dipa is the daughter of Gautam and Rekha Rai, who serve on the WMF Nepal Board and are full-time staff for WMF Nepal. The Rais are the directors of the new home for street girls in Kathmandu, Nepal.

becomes easy to put a face on them and to push them out until they are no longer threatening to us or until they are eradicated.

Are we capable of doing that? Is this not who “we” are? Would our righteous moral outrage at an atrocity done to us never mutate into a self-righteous moral smugness that would allow us to put a face on “the other” and drive them out? What about our ability to name the women and children, the elderly and the infirm, the prisoners and the poor of any nation that harbors terrorists as “the enemy”? Would not our engagement in anything that would harm or end the lives of people (especially the least of these described in Matthew 25) turn us from righteous protestors of atrocity committed against us into the same kind of people we tried to make clear we are not?

It is into this context, our very own personal horrifying context, that God Himself calls us to intimacy with “the other.” Christ said,

(continued on next page)

IMMANUEL: GOD WITH "US" AND "THEM"
(continued from previous page)

You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you (Mt. 5:43,44).

This was not a utopian ideal or lofty discourse calling us into intimate relationships with all people. It was not just a beautiful idea to turn the other cheek. Jesus not only commanded us to "be compassionate as your Father is compassionate" (Mt. 5:48), He Himself became the concrete embodiment of the divine intimacy of Immanuel, God with us. By calling Him Immanuel, we recognize that He has committed Himself to live in intimacy with us, to identify with our mourning and loss, and to suffer and celebrate all of life with us.

In calling Him Immanuel, however, we also must recognize that the self-giving love that led to the incarnation is the same self-giving love that led Christ to the cross. At the cross, Jews and Gentiles enter into the intimate community of Christ regardless of ethnic background, nationality, race, gender, or previous religious background. We are called the Body of Christ, which refers to the crucified body of Christ who refused to be self-absorbed even when He cried out to God to "take this cup from me." Rather, in obedience, He opened Himself up for all people to partake of His body freely and in unity.

What can be farther from the self-giving love of Christ than the self-absorbed boundaries, which we erect, between "the other" and ourselves? Christ gave Himself over to acts of barbarity so that all, including those who perpetrated the atrocities against Him, could live in intimacy with the Father. And He calls us to do the same thing. Paul writes in Philippians 2 that we must be imitators of Christ by looking to the interests of others before ourselves, having unity of mind, and humbling ourselves to be obedient to the self-giving love of God. He invites us to break down our barriers and distinctions and to be close to each other as God is with us—to be Immanuel to each other. He requires us to unmask the illusion that we are different from others and to receive a new identity that does

not depend on what makes us different, but instead depends on our belonging to God.

The Christian life is not a refuge from the different-ness of the world where we all become the same. Discipleship is not a method of making spiritual carbon copies. Christianity should not ever become a religious framework for the same exclusion that plagues the rest of our society, which seeks to marginalize and forget those who threaten our identity. As the body of Christ, we are called to celebrate "the other" as a part of what makes us one. To see the face of our Master more fully, we must be able to

incorporate the unique gifts of the entire Body without the barriers and differentiations that keep us from our own intimacy. Intimacy with Christ cannot be separated from intimacy with "the other" because the God who is with us is also the Immanuel who is with "the other." ■

Silas, Kimberly, and Jedidiah (age 1) live in Kathmandu, Nepal. They are the South Asia Regional Coordinators. Please turn to page 8 to see a picture of Jedi and Kim painting together.

Editor's note: If you enjoyed reading this article, you may be interested in reading Miroslav Volf's book, "Exclusion and Embrace." This resource is available for purchase at our online bookstore. <http://www.wordmadeflesh.com/resources.htm>

S E R V A N T T E A M S

THE SERVANT TEAM is a four-month commitment to serving Jesus among the poorest of the poor. Discipleship is primary, identifying ourselves with the poor through community, research and ministry. The Servant Teams are open to people who are willing to be broken in service to the least of these. We are currently receiving applications for the teams.

TEAM DATES are August 15 - December 15, 2002 (application deadline April 15, 2002) & February 15 - June 15, 2003 (application deadline September 15, 2002).

APPLICATIONS and more information about the Servant Teams may be obtained on our website at www.wordmadeflesh.com. You may email us at Cry4Kids@aol.com or call the U.S. office: (859) 858-0064 or 1-800-CRY-4-KIDS.

Servant Teams are offered in these countries:

BOLIVIA teams will focus on building relationships with the poor and destitute in the La Paz area.

NEPAL teams may work with the destitute, street children and the elderly in the city of Kathmandu.

INDIA teams may work with street children, the destitute and the elderly in the city of Calcutta.

PERU teams may work with street children, in pediatric AIDS care or in slum community development projects in Lima.

ROMANIA teams will spend time developing relationships with street children in the city of Galati where WMF operates a day center for at-risk children and children living on the streets.

Meeting Him

from brent anderson, director of administration

What if, instead of being able to see Jesus most clearly in worship or in the reading of His Word, you were able to see Him most clearly within another person? Perhaps you have noticed this before; you may have caught glimpses of compassion, peace or joy that you knew couldn't be evidenced by human will or emotion alone. At least for a moment, you could see the incarnation of the Holy Spirit within another life.

What if, instead of being able to see Jesus only within the life of another believer, you were able to see Him within the life of any other human? Since God created human beings in His own image, you would be able to see Jesus, even faintly, in the lives of all persons. You would recognize that He loves all persons equally and that He wants to redeem us all from our sin. The corporate body of Christ, the church, would still belong to those who claim Him as their Lord and Savior and to those who fellowship with Him in His sufferings. However, we would also recognize the mystery of His presence and His grace to all people.

Asking these types of questions isn't heretical, but answering them may be. Still, there are passages in Scripture that speak about these types of mysteries.

"He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?" declares the Lord (Jer. 22:16).

I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me. I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me (Mt. 25:40,45).

Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me (Mt. 25: 41-43).

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world (Jas. 1:27).

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth (1 Jn. 3:16-18).

There are many more passages in Scripture that connect our relationship with Jesus to our relationship with our neighbors. Jesus, when asked what the greatest commandment was, replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" and "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt. 22:37,39).

Many of us think that it would be easy to be a Christian if no one else were around to push our buttons. If it were just me and Jesus, then I could feel His presence in a more direct and pure way. However, our intimacy with Him is incomplete and stilted when we are not in right relationships with the people around us. Worship and meditating on His Word are crucial to knowing Him better. The problem is that being in relationships with the poor is also crucial to knowing Him better—but we don't talk about that much.

At Word Made Flesh we talk a lot about "being" the person that God created us to be, and we de-emphasize what we need to "do" as a Christian. But being the person God created us to be also depends on being the person God created us to be in front of others. Let us seek Him, in worship, in His Word, in the fellowship of other believers, and also in the lives of the poor.

He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; He seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor (1 Sam. 2:8).

Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom He promised those who love Him (Jas. 2:5)? ■

Brent lives in Wilmore, Kentucky and is the Director of Administration for WMF.



Photo: Chris Heuertz

STREET ADDICTION

by daphne eck

We call him Samuel. Phileena Heuertz, WMF Director of Child Advocacy, wrote about this street child in the last issue of *The Cry* ("To Follow in His Steps," Vol. 7 No. 4). In 1998 Phileena befriended this little boy who was living at the Chennai (Madras) International airport. He was dirty, malnourished, sick with dysentery and unable to speak. He couldn't tell us his name and upon research, we found he had no known caregiver. An orphanage in the city agreed to take Samuel in, but he left after only a few days. Our staff found him at the airport again and this time brought him to live in the WMF children's home. He ran away from the WMF home too—back to the airport. Why would such a needy child resist what he desperately needs: a safe home with people who love him? While a distrust of people, demonic influence and activity or a fatalistic approach to life may keep many children from breaking free from street life, *street addiction* is often a street child's most persistent foe. Helen Shedd writes in *Street Children*,

The street offers the children a life of complete irresponsibility. Street children believe they are completely free to do what they want when they feel like doing it. In order to understand street addiction, you must realize that for many children, coming to the streets has been a long process. Many come from abusive home situations or situations of abandonment or severe poverty. Many children begin their escapades on the streets by begging or trying to earn money. Others are on the streets to spend time with friends, escaping difficult situations at home. On the streets, children discover others experiencing the same plight. These peers can sympathize with them and, over time, become "family" (p. 129).

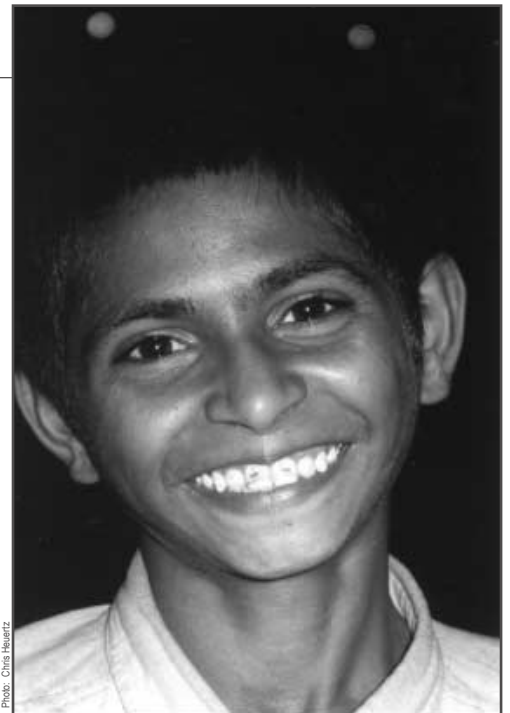
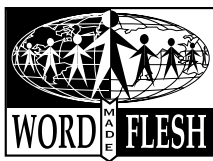


Photo: Chris Heuertz

This picture of "Samuel" was taken in December. He is still living at the Chennai airport.

Please pray for Samuel who is seemingly caught in the trap of street addiction. We last saw him in December; he was still living at the airport. There are many children in the world like Samuel, for whom God longs to provide and set free from the bondage of street life. Please pray that children such as these would not only desire, but also *know* the love and protection of a real family. Pray that God would place a yearning for home and for Him in these children's hearts. And please pray that we, the church, would receive these children as God moves in their hearts. ■

Editor's note: If you want to learn more about street addiction, we recommend the book *Street Children*, edited by Phyllis Kilbourn. To learn more about this resource, please visit our website at <http://www.wordmadeflesh.com/resources.htm>. The book is only available for purchase from MARC Publications. You may place your order by calling them at (800) 777-7752. For orders outside the U.S., please write to marcpubs@wvi.org.



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