

SCHEERS' PRAYER UPDATE – MARCH 2009 -- RWANDA

Window into my life



My birthday was February 21. Just as I was about to blow out my 8 candles (you didn't know I was that young!) the phone rings and who's on the phone but Kaylie, our granddaughter singing Happy Birthday from California as I blow out my candles in Rwanda! What a special treat from God's great timing!

Kigufi – 2009

Goofy name but a great place! It's a quiet retreat house run by some Catholic sisters on Lake Kivu. The Staff and Executive Committee of NCM spent the weekend there:

- * Growing together with each filling in this sentence – "2008 was a year of _____ to me; while 2009 started as a year of _____." We then prayed for each one.
- * Sharpening our mission – **helping churches in Rwanda to function as the body of Christ** – by using Paul's teaching on the church to do a serious analysis of the church in Rwanda and our service to it.
- * Rwandan proverbs were flying thick and fast – I wrote down 7 new ones – as we chatted and laughed around the meal tables together.
- * We analyzed the pros and cons of a new venture that has been proposed to us (see below).

We came away realizing anew that we are a team that shares a deep burden for the church and its health – it shapes all that we do. Any school or program we initiate is not just because we see there is no such program and feel we ought to start one. It is because we see a need or weakness with which the church needs help and we try to be a servant to the church.

My colleague, Jean Baptiste, wrapped up the weekend by saying, "This, what we call NCM, is more than the sum of us here, more than the director, Scheer, more than the programs we're doing, it is a God thing."



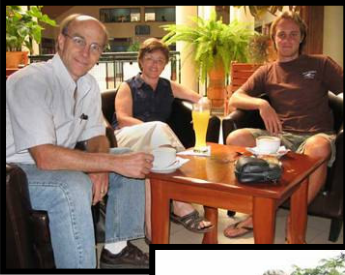
New Venture before Us

We've been approached by an existing bachelor's-level theological school about forming a new school that would be a combination of that school and NCM. Without going into detail, pray for this challenge. Partnerships can be great, creating a synergism that takes both partners beyond what they could have done alone. A partnership can also be slow death, if it's not right!

It is, therefore, one of the weightiest issues we've asked you to pray about in a long time. Will this partnership make NCM's proposed degree-program the spirit-empowered servant it needs to be for the Rwandan churches, or will it make it "just another school" – God forbid!

Andy was here!

After Andy's year in Sudan, he came to spend Christmas and New Year's with us here in Rwanda. I'll let a few pictures do the talking.



Bourbon Coffee Shop: Our favorite place to talk, over the best cappuccinos money can buy.



Camping in Akagera Game Park



Camping at Kumbya

Biking over the Rwandan hills



Finishing up our annual Yule Log

Pray for him as he's hit the job market back in California at just the wrong time – no job yet!

Thanks for the support!

We have great financial supporters, a combination of churches and individuals, some of whom have supported us since 1976 through all the ups and downs of their lives. I want to say a special thanks to them, especially in this time of financial uncertainty and loss for many. And I want those who may have to cut back to not feel guilty – "each one must determine in his or her heart what to give – and to do so cheerfully." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in a book that's shaped my life significantly (The Cost of Discipleship) said that it is God who supports his children, not our jobs. It is just that at this time he is using the job I have. Should that job fail, God is still supporting his child.

Wisdom from Rwanda

Izaba umusega, uyimenya nyina ikibwegetse.

The dog that will be worthless, you know it as soon as its mother becomes pregnant.

Not exactly an uplifting proverb! This can mean that if you come from a bad family you will be bad. But it is not always used that pessimistically. Often it means that if a person turns out bad, you can find the roots of that in his family background. Or likewise, if you see a bad, dysfunctional family, you shouldn't be surprised to find some of its children don't turn out so good.

Thank God for His grace is Christ that provides a new start to a new life no matter who we are or where we've come from!!

Partners in Him,
Gary and Laurie Scheer