

We're back! We arrived at SeaTac minutes before a violent rain/wind storm hit the region and knocked out power to over a million homes! It was a fitting reception as when we left there was snow and ice on the ground and threat of more. Crazy weather coming and going! But returning to the cold and rain was welcome as we were in over 100F degree heat and in some places high humidity in the countries of Central Africa.

In all we traveled 20,000 air miles and another 600 ground miles by mini-bus. We ministered in eight prisons in three countries, four in Rwanda and two each in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In all we spoke before just shy of 7,000 men and women and almost 2,000 men and women came forward at the invitation to receive Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord. We had altar calls for prayer for the sick and over 500 men and women came forward for this as well. It was our privilege to bring humanitarian aid to every prison we visited, taking in 795 lbs of food (maize, beans, sugar, rice) and over 1,000 bars of soap. We also distributed over 100 complete Bibles (in the majority language of the country) and over 50 Gideon's New Testaments. We even took in 18 pair of reading/prescription glasses that had been donated for this trip.



The American and African PFC Team en route to a prison.

Every prison we went into had a superintendent who received us, thanked us, asked us to pray for him, and he'd participate in the church service, often opening the service in prayer! We had similar experiences at the border crossings; the officials who learned of our objective would tell us how much



the gospel helps their land. And when we were outside of the prison, preparing to go in, we'd hear singing. It was the inmates singing! When we'd walk in they'd have an inmate chorus leading the congregation in worship and praise. We'd enter in and that's how the services started! Our first prison in Rwanda held over 10,000 inmates, and 3,000 of them were at the service. What a way to start the trip! (We were not allowed to take photographs in the prisons of Rwanda, but it was quite a service!)

In addition to the in-prison services, which we always conducted with our local PFC volunteers with us, we had seven training sessions in three countries for three different PFC volunteer groups. We trained over 100 persons, including many local pastors, in the "how's and why's" of prison ministry. We talked about why we do prison ministry, how to start a prison ministry, how to grow a prison ministry, the volunteer code-of-conduct, and then we'd teach on Christian unity. We teach this in America twice per year at Prisoners For Christ University and also

now have it on the web for free downloading (www.pfcom.org). All of our training sessions had much singing, much teaching, and much prayer. Every American PFC volunteer (seven of us) laid hands on each and every African PFC volunteer as we prayed for them. We did this with all three local teams.

There were a couple of heartbreaking events that I'll share. In every prison there were both men and women (segregated). The women have their children with them in prison! If the child is five years old or younger the mothers keep the kids with them. So the first five years of a child's life can be spent in prison. We saw many children in the prisons. Another sad occurrence was learning before going into one of the prisons of Burundi that the day before two men had died of starvation. In many prisons of Africa the institutions do not feed the inmates – that's the responsibility of the family of the inmate. This prison was pretty remote and not easily accessible. For this prison our group leaders made arrangements to take in extra humanitarian aid. This "broke the budget" but we did it anyway. With joy we brought in sacks and sacks of foodstuffs (staples) that would make a tiny difference but it would make a difference.



Bob with interpreter preaching in the Congo.

Every night I'd get back to the room and work on the journal (see www.bobjordan.net). In Burundi I roomed with the president of the ministry Greg Von Tobel. As was his custom every evening he'd work on the books and other financial accounting both for the past day and in anticipation of expenses for the coming day. I can testify from firsthand knowledge, and from being a member of the Board of Directors, and from being a member of the ministry's finance subcommittee, that Prisoners For Christ is run and managed with the highest level of fiscal integrity, be it at home or on the mission field.

The Prisoners For Christ International Team has been training and equipping ministry in foreign countries for five years. In that time ministry has been established in Rwanda, Burundi, Congo, Uganda, Kenya, The Philippines, India, Russia, and Mexico. Pound-for-pound PFC international campaigns are very efficient and effective. We have other countries waiting for us to come to them. Everywhere we've gone it's been by invitation – they ask us to come and train them in prison ministry. The PFC International model is to "seed" the first year, and then "water" for the next three years to fully establish a foreign ministry site. Five regions next year will be "watered" and a new one "seeded." Lord willing I'll be on one of these campaigns. Here's the international schedule for 2007.

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| a. Feb | Philippines |
| b. 5/16-5/20 | Mexico |
| c. 6/28-7/9 | Ghana and Liberia (<i>new area</i>) |
| d. 7/31-8/9 | Russia |
| e. 8/30-9/12 | India |
| f. 11/6-11/17 | Uganda |

Probably the most enjoyable event I experienced was a visit to Pastor Kiza's home. Pastor Kiza ministers in the Uvira area of the Congo. We went to every pastor's home to present gifts (pants, shirts, hats, shoes, candy, toys, etc.) and pray a blessing over their home. Our group leader invited me to lead this prayer which I did with much pleasure. Pastor Kiza lives in a two-room abode in an area economically poor, but rich in hospitality, friendliness, and love! Both on the journey up to and back from the home (the "road" was so rocky we couldn't drive to his home so we walked) kids came



Bob & the children's escort team! (see red arrow)

out of nowhere to escort us. I had kids hanging on to every finger and thumb, they were all smiles, and they were laughing and happy. Moms looking on beamed seeing their kids having so much fun. The kids took it as a privilege to escort us and I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it!



Burundi Prison, Men, Women, Juvenile

In the eight prisons we visited I had the privilege of sharing from the scriptures four times (a copy of those messages is included). Twice I preached in Rwanda and twice in the Congo. I was emcee for a service in a prison in Burundi (see photo). All seven of us had speaking roles in each service. I shared a testimony once (at our first prison before 3,000 men and women!) and gave a brief greeting in two other prisons. Some of us preached from the scriptures, others on the team shared their personal testimonies. All of us participated in prayer at the altars for those who came forward.

Three of the brothers were veterans of many international campaigns. Four of us went for the first time, but we all have many years of experience in American jails and prisons and we all functioned very well together. We had no meltdowns, arguments, sicknesses, or needless troubles of any kind (we learned that this was a rare thing!). PFC seeks to take “newbie’s” on these trips for training, development, and personal growth purposes. Sometimes that comes at a price as emotions and inconveniences may seem to be “exaggerated on the mission field.” But we had been prepared well by a series of meetings and a full 100-page manual of what to expect and how to behave. I roomed with Don D. in Rwanda and Congo and we had excellent fellowship. Don is a volunteer chaplain at the Monroe Correctional Complex where’s he’s ministered for 18 years.



Bob & Don in a pre-trip training session.

I thought it good to report to you too that the men of the Washington State prisons where we volunteers regularly minister had us on their prayer watch. On Christmas Eve I was back at the Washington Correction Center for Men in Shelton, Washington. There I learned that every member of our team of seven had an inmate praying for them specifically by name every day. It meant so much to me to learn this from my inmate friends at the chapel in the prison. I was able to give them a good report and testify that God had answered their prayers on our behalf. There were also churches, friends, and our families praying for us. It was comforting to have been on this missions trip with my brothers knowing that the saints back home were praying. God heard and answered those prayers.

Did you know that I’m an honorary African? It’s true! Whether it was in prison, church, or at a volunteer training session whenever I shared that I have eight children the place would erupt! I was looked upon favorably by the locals for having so many kids – as they do! It got to where the pastors who went with us to the prison would reach over and say “make sure you tell them you have eight children.” Some spoke this in English, others through an interpreter, but they still wanted me to say it! It was always a hit! They said that I was African and I had to agree!

We found the people of Africa to be kind, cheerful and giving. Their church services lasted almost four hours with multiple choirs, children’s skits, offerings, prayers, sermons, you name it. In the city and countryside we’d wave from the bus and virtually every time the men, women, children, and police would have a big smile and wave back. The local volunteers were energetic and positive and sang often and praised God continuously. What a great people!

Let me share a bit here on some items quite different than in American society...

What I Never Saw:

- A train or train tracks
- Curbside Waste Cans
- Traffic Lights (except in Kenya)
- Children playing with dolls/toys
- Babies crying
- Small children misbehaving
- Fathers with small children (it was always the mother with the children)
- Obviously pregnant women
- Cats
- "For Sale" sign on any property
- Franchise restaurants (KFC, McDonalds, Taco Time, etc.)
- American-made vehicles of any kind
- Kids fighting (or anyone for that matter)
- Diet soft drinks or any canned beverages
- Baby strollers

What I Seldom Saw:

- Dogs (saw less than six in 4 countries)
- Tattoos (one man and one lady only)
- Senior citizens (60+ years or older)
- Private ownership of a car (except in Kenya)
- Persons wearing jeans (maybe six persons the entire trip)

- Anyone overweight (maybe six in all; they walk a lot and have a lean diet so everyone is trim)

What I Saw A Lot:

- Christians with the joy of the Lord
- Mosquito nets over the bed (three of the five places we stayed had them)
- Kids hauling water containers home
- Women dressed in long colorful gowns
- Men wearing slacks, ties, suits, dress shoes
- Locals traveling by foot, bicycle, motorcycle (taxi) or van (taxi)
- Everyone used horns to announce their presence, not to tell the other guy to get out of the way
- Friendly people virtually everywhere, waving and smiling as we drove or walked by



Kids Carrying Water and Waving to Strangers!

It's hard to leave behind an experience like this; it seemed we had been gone for a long, long time. I forgot what an engineer does (my profession), but when I did return to work it all came back (whew!). Our PFC president said it best at the ending session when he stated we "take out a part of our heart, and leave it in Africa, but we fill that void with the deposit that the African people have given us."

While on the field I took a list of names of all of those who encouraged me on this trip through word or deed and carried those names with me wherever I went, and thanked God for you and prayed for you while I was half a world away. You are a great blessing to me and I'm glad to have you in my life! Because of your kind support I was able to contribute to the preaching in the prisons, the teaching of our numerous volunteers in Africa, and the supplying of much humanitarian aid to the pastors and inmates. I felt very productive on this trip, as did all of our team. We all were active participants.

I'd like to end with a couple of Bible verses that have increasingly meant a lot to me, especially after seeing how Central Africa is recovering from genocide, war, corruption, and disease and is rebuilding. The Africans have a long way to go but even in their lack they are giving and reaching out to those in yet greater need. Their spirit is amazing, and it's the Spirit of God in them that compels them to do the good things that they do. It is marvelous to behold! It is the power of God that changes lives!

Ephesians 3:20 – 21 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

May God's richest and best be yours in 2007. Sincerely and with appreciation, ***Bob***