



Three St. Tim Students with Porridge

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Focus on St. Timothy School

Dear Barbara,

This month's eNewsletter focuses on one of the schools that **Journey: The Ed Colina Foundation** supports. St. Timothy School is located in a nearby Athi River slum. We came upon the school because we were sponsoring Maasai children there. We visited the students one day to determine whether we needed to supply the kids we sponsor with uniforms. We found the needs much greater than uniforms and so began our partnership with St. Timothy's. The Foundation does not oversee the educational program or hire the teachers, etc. We provide capital for building improvements, some school materials, provide some rent and a food program. All of these projects will be featured in this month's eNewsletter.

The needs at St. Timothy's School are great, as they are in so many other little slum schools in and around Nairobi. Please consider a donation on their behalf. Thank you!

Sincerely,
ED

Canaan - Athi River Slum

Wekesa is the father of seven children. His own education ended at Grade 5 when he dropped out of school.

He is currently employed at Waridi Flower Farm and has been for the last eight years. Waridi Farm is located adjacent to the Masai manyatta and our school. He comes from the Luhya tribe in Western Kenya.

Wekesa has been married multiple times and all but his current wife have died from various illnesses. His last wife died from complications of an ectopic pregnancy and bled to death in a local hospital. The two twin girls, pictured above

St. Timothy School is located off Mombassa Road in a slum known as Canaan. The place is about a thirty minute walk from my house. There are thousands of inhabitants in this slum. St. Timothy's is one of the only schools affordable to those living in that area. Like the large, well-known slum, Kibera in Nairobi, Canaan has no sewers, no trash removal, no electrical power. The electric lines and the water pipes pass by the slum but the people cannot take advantage of these services for lack of money. The inhabitants are from a variety of tribes and there are many crimes committed there. Car jacking, prostitution, child trafficking and worse - all take place from within Canaan. In fact four CID (Criminal Investigation Department) officers were gunned down outside this slum. In the daylight, Canaan is unsafe. At night it is treacherous.

St. Timothy's School was once a bar; three rooms with little or no sunlight, mud floors, windows covered with mesh or wire. The head teacher, Timothy Sila, started the school three years ago to serve children who were not attending school and whose parents did not have the larger school fees to send their children to an Athi River School. The school began more as a daycare center, opened from 7 - 5 each day Monday through Saturday. The parents were leaving their young children at home alone while they searched for funds, work, food. The school was an answer to the problem of children left all day in the slum alone. The three-room bar was converted to accommodate thirty students at that time. Currently the school accommodates Preschool through Grade Three students. The current enrollment is 150.

When we first visited St. Timothy's school, we could see that the children were more in need of food than uniforms, although most came to school with no uniforms and tattered clothes, no shoes. Food was the more pressing need.

They are in need of food first.

We found that when the children were sent home at lunch time, most went to empty shacks or dwellings with no food. Many of the children simply waited by the school gate, not bothering to go home for lunch. It was then that The Ed Colina Foundation began a morning porridge program for the 50 students enrolled at that time. We continued to provide the porridge during the month long school break. The numbers of children grew to 100. But porridge was not nearly enough. For many of these children, the porridge was the only food they were receiving each day. It was then decided to add a lunch program, feeding the children rice and beans each day. A Maasai woman builds the wood fire at the beginning of each day and the beans boil all morning long. Large pans (cooking pots), plates, cups, utensils were all purchased by the foundation. The remaining cooking issues center on finding firewood and clean water - both scarce in this part of the country.

Food is so essential for healthy children who want to learn. We are happy to provide at least the basics for these children, whose numbers have grown to 150 students!

with their father, attend our school, Esarunoto and are sponsored by the Foundation.

Mulongo, which means "first" attends our Nursery Class and wants to be a doctor.

Her twin sister Mkwana, which means "second" wants to be a secretary. Both are interested in helping people. Mulongo wants to help in the medical profession so that other children don't lose their mothers like she did.

The father's biggest challenge is providing for his children while making 4000 shillings (\$53.00) per month. At this point, he is afraid that he might lose his job at the flower farm because men aren't kept on longer than eight years. Many workers don't even last three years, due to the dangers of the pesticides used.

Wekesa thanks the Foundation and its donors for giving his children the opportunity to go to school. He looks forward to many years of sponsorship and success for his daughters.

Donations may be sent to:

Immaculate Heart of Mary Mission Fund
Ed Colina Projects
5876 Veterans Way
Burlington, KY 41005

School Sponsorship at St. Tim's



The Ed Colina Foundation currently sponsors 31 students at St. Tims. We pay a portion of the \$60 annual school fees, etc.

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Ed is currently in Kenya until the end of June 2010

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Water Problems

St. Timothy's School uses approximately 200 liters of water per day for morning porridge, lunch and clean up. This water is carried in daily by some very strong women. At times, the delivery is delayed or doesn't come at all for a variety of reasons. With the recent rains, we decided to take advantage of this blessing and purchased gutters, pipes and a 1000 liter tank placed securely near the cook shed. The cost of the gutters, piping, tank and labor come to approximately \$400. Not a bad price for clean water!

Firewood Problems

Firewood is a problem in all of Kenya. In many areas, the land has been deforested and trees either burned or made into charcoal and burned. Firewood remains a main cooking source. But in this slum area of St. Timothy School, locating firewood is an even bigger issue. We must purchase firewood from Athi River, but with the recent rains, sometimes the wood is delayed because the women carrying the wood are not able to cross the rising river. We need support in purchasing wood by the truckloads to ensure that food is able to be prepared daily. One truckload of firewood delivered will last approximately two months and costs about \$50 per load. The wood is then used for daily porridge, rice and beans



Classroom Improvements

You should understand the physical setup of St. Timothy School. As we stated, the school was previously a three-room tavern or bar; few windows, little light, no electricity. We recently rented three additional classrooms by converting some nearby sleeping rooms that were located adjacent to the school. These were single rooms rented out to individuals and families for a small fee. We took over these three "bedrooms" and converted them to classrooms. The Foundation pays the monthly rent for the rooms. But these new classrooms, along with those of the converted tavern, are very dark. For security, there aren't many windows in these types of dwellings. So the children struggle to see their books, papers and the chalkboard. The rooms are constructed with iron sheets and we are currently replacing some of the iron sheets in the roof with some transparent panels to allow light to enter. The work will be completed by laborers who live in the slum. The cost of purchasing and installing the transparent corrugated panels is approximately \$120.

Journey: The Ed Colina Foundation
WWW.EDCOLINAFOUNDATION.ORG

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