



The Open Mouth

Ezekiel 2:8

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The Chastains

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“Where are You From?” It’s typical conversation opener in a wide variety of social settings around the world. However, you learn rather quickly that it’s not the best one to use within the military teen culture. There is seldom a straightforward answer: “Do you mean where I was born? Where my grandparents live? Where I spend summer break? Where I just moved from? Where I live now? Where I have the most friends? What base my dad’s stationed at?” The question is at least complicated and perhaps even meaningless to many U.S. military kids living overseas. “Where are you from?” is usually a little easier to answer when military teens from various bases in Europe come together, say at a cross-country meet or a Club Beyond camp. But even then, it is not a simple question for teens from our community. They live in three different countries (Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany). Unlike their friends from Brussels or Naples or Heidelberg, their parents are stationed at bases in small towns that people outside the region have never heard of – Brunssum, Schinnen, Geilenkirchen, Kleine Brogel. But most confusing, unlike probably every other DOD school in Europe, their school is not named after the base it serves; it still carries the *former* name of the nearby NATO base! So the one thing that unifies them, “AFNORTH International High School,” is named for a place that no longer exists under that name.

I recently watched one of the athletic teams fill out information sheets to turn in to the school’s athletic department to produce game programs. Questions like the ones above were thrown out as they discussed how they should fill in the blank after “Hometown.” “Just write down whatever place you consider home,” the coach advised. The results were interesting; interpretations printed on the program ranged from “Greece” (one student’s ancestral ethnic heritage) to “Gangelt” (a small village where another student currently resides). One of our goals in Club Beyond is to help our students create a community that becomes *home* to them; a challenge when “home” is a bit of an ambiguous term. We pray that for these teens, the words of Jesus, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” would resonate so deeply with them that they would be drawn inexorably and eternally into His heart.



Beach Break 2006 Once again, we had the privilege to spend part of our summer on the Italian coast, celebrating life with teens and sharing with them the story of Jesus and his sacrificial love. Over 30 students joined us during these two weeks of camp. It was a wonderful time of building community and developing new friendships. Several students expressed a desire to deepen their relationship with the Lord during these weeks at camp. Please pray that their passion would not be short lived and those who are “still thinking about it” really would do just that!

What a FULL Summer!

Even before cancer came along and turned our plans upside down, our vision for summer 2006 was quite different from summer 2005. Last year, after many big Club Beyond events in May and June before our Beach Break summer camp, we definitely took it easy during the next month or so of summer after camp. We had lots of family time and Steve's work hours were focused on planning for the next school year more than events with students. This year, we decided to shape our spring and summer quite differently. We "throttled back" at the end of the school year (if you can call having a baby slowing down!), with the intention of spending as much time as possible with teens during the summer weeks between camp and school starting. We filled those days with laser tag games, ice cream scavenger hunts, a summer Bible Study on the Gospel of John, cook-outs, movie nights and just plain hanging out. It was an interesting tradeoff: although I felt less prepared for the school year to begin in August (as far as programs, Club plans, messages, etc.), the time we've invested in relationships and experiences with teens has given us tremendous momentum to start the new ministry year. The culmination of the summer was taking an outstanding crew of high school students and adult volunteers to a leadership camp in Mons, Belgium over the last weekend of their summer vacation. We know they were encouraged and challenged by that time of worship, teaching and fellowship. Please pray with us that the zeal for unity and belonging that they have experienced would blossom into a passion for sharing the Good News with their school and their world.



Leadership Camp





MS Club Paper War!!

Back to School It's hard to believe as I write this newsletter about our summer activities that we are now one month into a new school year already. Ministry has gotten off to a great start (despite reduced preparation)! Middle School Club is full of energy and lots of teens are coming, including several that are definitely hearing the Gospel for the first time. For our High School program, we've kicked off a new monthly outreach called "First Fridays." The first installment was a huge success as many of our faithful core students brought their friends out for a night of gym sports, pizza, movies, and a message about God's love for them. We've also hosted special concerts by two recording artists from the States, Dan Meyers and Jeni Varnadeau. Thanks God for those fun program boosts!

Prayer Requests Please pray for:

- Middle School students to meet Christ at our fall camp in November
- Wisdom for decision about future schooling for Caleb and Joe (currently thriving in Dutch pre-schools)
- Discipline for Steve in completing work for a fall seminary class on the Gospels
- The continuing balancing act of personal spiritual growth, family life, and ministry

In Christ,  
CALEB - Joseph + Zachary



Zachary
(4 months)

MCYM: Building the Church, celebrating life with teens, introducing them to the Lifegiver, and helping them become like Him.

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