

Helping Orphaned Teens Beat the Statistics

The prospect for Russia's orphans is frighteningly dim. Buckner International told *Mission Network News* that 10 percent of orphans who graduate from the orphanage system commit suicide within three years. Many others end up involved with drugs, prostitution and other crimes.

Sasha joined an Operation Mobilization team that works with at-risk children and youth in Russia last fall. A former drug addict himself, Sasha feels that he can connect to many of Russia's youth, especially their orphans.

Recently, Operation Mobilization was able to start working with a vocational school for orphaned teens. According to statistics, most of them will go on to be sent to prison, die from narcotics, or become homeless and die from disease or alcohol. Only 40 percent are likely to go on to live normal lives with a family and employment.

Eleven Dead After Protest Over Jones' Koran-Burning

When controversial Florida pastor Terry Jones burned a Koran last month, he probably never expected it to lead to nearly a dozen deaths—and he's not apologizing for it, either.

At least 11 people were killed in Afghanistan, including some United Nations officials, in the wake of a protest in response to a Koran-burning Jones supervised. Jones watched as fellow

pastor Wayne Sapp drenched a Koran with kerosene and burned it after finding it “guilty” in a mock trial, ABC News reports.

The apparent peaceful protest turned violent when demonstrators suddenly attacked the United Nations office in northern Afghanistan. Protestors opened fire on security guards and set fires inside the compound, according to the Associated Press.

President Barack Obama condemned the attack and offered his deepest condolences to those injured and killed, as well as to their loved ones.

Quarterback Uses College Football for Christ

While college football in the United States ended in January, many colleges and universities are preparing for the 2011 season in the fall. Spring football practice opened this week. And at least one football player knows what his focus will be this year-Christ.

Starting quarterback for Michigan State University Kirk Cousins was on the campus of Cornerstone University to talk about his faith and football. Cousins believes he knows why God has given him this opportunity: “to use that platform to glorify Him and to point back to Him, in a world where a lot of people really aren’t following Jesus and aren’t choosing to honor Him above all else. In a culture where it’s really about sports, God can take something that’s broken and use it to point back to Him.”

According to Cousins, God has given him a great opportunity to

serve Him. “There’s not many things where 75,000 people come and watch you, and they boo and cheer you depending on how you do,” Cousins says. “So there are pressures. But that only causes me to stay even closer to the Lord and that much closer in my faith walk.”

Carter Returns from Cuba, Calls for Ending U.S. Embargo

✘ Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter has wrapped up his trip to Cuba—and he’s calling for the U.S. to lift the decades-old embargo.

“I think we should remove the embargo ... I hope for the future, all Cubans could be completely free (to travel to the United States) and U.S. citizens also will be free to travel to Cuba,” Xinhua press reported Carter as saying before leaving Washington. “It was a great pleasure for us to return to Havana, I hope we can help to improve the relations between the two countries.”

Japan Struggles to Combat Radiation Threat

✘ Highly-toxic plutonium is seeping from the damaged nuclear power plant in Japan’s tsunami disaster zone into the soil outside.

Radiation levels in the sea near quake-damaged Fukushima Daiichi plant are 3,000 times above legal limits. The new numbers suggest that radioactive water continues to leak from the plant, threatening coastal livelihoods. Radioactive materials have also been found in locally-grown vegetables.

Even as more bad news emerges, it doesn't change the struggle to survive the next 24 hours for the hundreds of thousands of people who remain homeless. Government reports say there are 27,600 who are dead or missing. Damage could reach \$310 billion, making the quake, tsunami, and radiation crisis the most expensive natural disaster on record.

Are You a Sheep or a Goat in the Imperfect Church?

You know the drill. It was the end of a long workday. I was racing from one errand to another before it was time to pick up my daughter for our dinner date. I didn't have a moment to spare...

So when Richard, a disheveled character with enough sand on his face to nearly disguise the scar on his cheek, approached me asking for money to buy food, it took me a minute to catch on to what the Lord was doing. I honestly didn't have as much as a penny in my pocket and apologetically told him so. After Richard walked on by, it suddenly dawned on me that I was standing in front of an ATM machine!

"Hey mister!" I cried out after him.

Richard turned around slowly as I raced up to him with my debit card in hand. We were standing in front of a Subway, so

I invited him inside for a meal. Richard had a grateful heart, but also an aching one. He hugged and kissed me and thanked me profusely for the double meatball and tuna fish footlong sub—then he dropped the “S” bomb. Richard told me he wanted to kill himself.

“Brother, do you know where you’ll go when you die?”

Coalition Urges Gov’t to Enforce Obscenity Laws

A former leader of U.S. Department of Justice prosecutions against the porn industry on Wednesday dispelled claims by a front group for that industry that they do not distribute illegal material. ??

In a letter distributed to members of Congress by the Association of Sites Advocating Child Protection (ASACP), the group states that Congress does not need to prosecute illegal adult pornography producers and distributors under existing laws because “they are not involved in obscenity.” ??

“Nothing could be further from the truth,” says Patrick Trueman, CEO of Morality in Media and former chief of the U.S. Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Criminal Division. ??

How Does Bible Numerology Play Into Middle Eastern Revolution?

✘ Israel's military airstrikes targeted and hit a terrorist squad in the Southern Gaza Strip on Wednesday.

According to Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), the site had launched rockets toward Israel on Tuesday. Hamas is reporting that a Palestinian citizen was killed and another injured in Rafah city.

Meanwhile, Egypt's Foreign Minister Nabil Elaraby issued a statement on Wednesday asking Israel to show restraint. But Israel has vowed to protect itself.

"The IDF will not tolerate continued rocket and mortar fire aimed at the communities of southern Israel," the IDF said in a statement. "The IDF will continue to act decisively to thwart any attempts to harm Israeli citizens."

Making Sense of the 4/14 Window

You've heard about the 10/40 Window...but you might not actually know what it is.

The term was coined by Ralph Winters, a missiologist who saw an area of the world that contains the largest population of non-Christians.

Winters brought this to the attention of the delegates gathered in 1974 at the Lausanne Conference on World Evangelization, pointing out a huge swath of the world that extends from 10 degrees to 40 degrees North of the equator, and stretches from North Africa across to China.

Kimberly Daniels in Showdown for Jax City Council

✘ Kimberly Daniels is in a battle. But this time, it's not spiritual warfare with principalities and powers—well, not exactly.

After a much-hyped March 22 election for Jacksonville's City Council, Daniels, founder of Spoken Word Ministries, an inner-city multi-racial church in Jacksonville, is in a run off with Republican opponent David Taylor.

Daniels, who ran on the Democratic ticket, will continue her battle in a May run off election.