

Women's Sewing Project Produces Clergy Shirts



We all understand how AIDS is spread, and for women, being economically self-sufficient gives them the freedom to make healthy choices, especially when their culture and traditions may limit their independence and make them economically dependent in an unhealthy relationship.

Ebenezer Ministries in Mityana, Uganda, started a job training program in tailoring funded by GSOC and has graduated twelve women in the last three years. When they graduate they receive their treadle sewing machine, which they have to pay back for the next student. It has helped them become self-sufficient. Their top priority: paying their children's school fees. Education is prized.

Many of the women still live in Mityana, so we encouraged a "woman to woman" development project: making women's clergy shirts for sales in the U.S. Clergywomen note that most shirts are really men's clergy shirts with a dart sewn in. We designed a more feminine style from a blouse pattern. They come in three colors and choice of collar, and cost \$39 each. All proceeds are returned to them. Interested? Call us or go to our web site for more details.

"Godly Play" Translates Well to African Setting

The most exciting new program in Christian education for ages 3-8 is "Godly Play." In this curriculum, children use supplied figures, wooden props, and felt shapes to act out Jesus' parables and Bible stories.

Children understand the Good Samaritan or Israel crossing the Sinai at a level far deeper than words alone can convey. They interact with the narrative and reach some astounding insights. Godly Play also engages their interest better than a traditional Church School program.

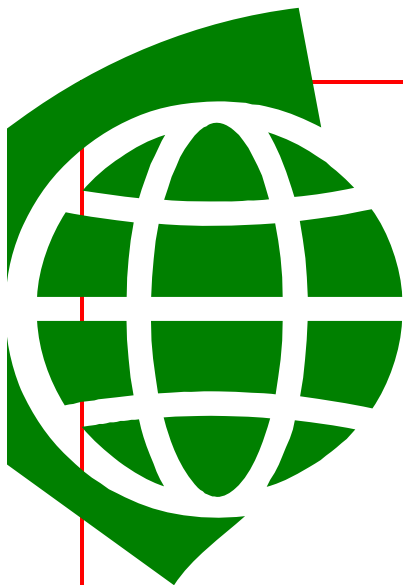
For example, in the picture at right, the script for the parable of the Good Shepherd is acted out. Children are asked to think about the dangers facing a flock, how the shepherd protects them, and how Jesus takes that role for them in their daily lives.

Last summer, Godly Play was taken to Ebenezer Ministries in Uganda where a few lessons were given to St. Mark's Parish in Kiweesa. The Revs. Edith and Benon Ssemambo translated the ritualized introduction, then the parable to their children. The result: The same level of excitement and attention as in the U.S.

Since then, Grace Episcopal Church in Wilmington, DE, has donated eight episodes of Godly Play to St. Mark's. The children have become engaged now in each other's lives.



Would your Church School like to partner with a Church in Africa? You may come to realize that for all the miles that separate us, there is much more that unites us.



GSOC Project Profile

Founded in 2002, Good Samaritan Orphanage Charity (GSOC) provides funding for African faith-based organizations that provide food, clothing, and education to victims of the AIDS epidemic.

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GSOC Contributions Help Sudan Rebuild

Close Up: The Rev. Edith Ssemambo

- *Edith trained as a teacher, was ordained in the Anglican Church 13 years ago*
- *She and her husband, Benon, co-pastor St. Mark's Church, Kiweesa, Uganda.*
- *Half the Church are children, for which she has implemented "Godly Play" Christian Ed.*

Recently, the war in Darfur has grabbed the world's attention. But Darfur is actually the second witness to the brutality of Sudan's Arab government against its black African countrymen. The first was a 20-year assault on the Christian southern half of Sudan which ended only 2 years ago.

Southern Sudan has shown incredible resilience rebuilding infrastructure and society. We have helped the Anglican Diocese of Rokon, located near Juba, Sudan, through the Mother's Union, led by "Momma" Linda Loyo. Linda's husband, Francis, is the Bishop of the Diocese, but the development and education work there are under her control.

She said in a letter, "The importance of education for the future of the region is critical. Without it, children have no hope for the future and cannot learn business and



agriculture. Improvements to education is the cornerstone on which a new Rokon must be built."

Some school materials have been provided through US Churches, and GSOC has provided funds to care for 350 orphaned boys and girls at St. Mary's and St. Joseph's school. In addition, we supplied a diesel powered grain grinder, which eliminated the old manual method and allowed women time for more productive tasks.

The children still need our support, which runs about \$6,000 per year. The fertile soil provides much food, but clothing, teachers salaries, school materials and the construction of buildings takes money. Developing a closer relationship with the schools and the economic development efforts of Rokon is a great project for a school or Church. Please contact us.

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"I'd like to help you, but what can I really do?"

**"HABA NA
HABA,
HUJAZA
KIBABA"**

**LITTLE BY
LITTLE, THE
POT FILLS**

Some times we need to turn around our thinking to say, "this is what I can do." This column focuses on four groups who have made really special contributions, each in very different ways.

Our first is a seventh grade class from Demarest, NJ. Under the direction of their teacher, they learned about the problems of AIDS orphans in Africa and decided they wanted to help some children with the time and resources they had. The class had two bake sales, and

raised \$339! Great job for two days work!

A Church Thrift shop in Keene, NH has kept us on their donor list for four years and sent over \$2000 from their proceeds. Both these show the power a group of people working together can have. Shared purpose toward achieving a common goal builds strength and community.

On an individual level, a couple from Lansdale, PA, has faithfully sponsored a child in our program with a

donation of \$25 per month for more than two years.

It's exciting to know you have made a difference for the future of a child's life.

Finally, a donor in Florida gave Ebenezer Ministries in Uganda \$8000, which supplied the needs of 40 children for half a year.

We all have different means, skills, and amounts of time; every person can do something. Ask what you can do; you may surprise yourself.

Lucy Apio: GSOC Scholarship helps change a life

Much has been written about the problems in Uganda's north, where a group called the Lord's Resistance Army has been fighting the government for over ten years. Children have been kidnapped and pressed into military service by the LRA and are often abused by one side or the other.

The story of Lucy Apio is typical of that region, but is one with a happy ending. Lucy, her family and parents were all caught in a gun battle between the two sides. When the shooting was over, only Lucy and her sister survived. They had an aunt who had already fled the region and moved to Kampala, so Lucy and her sister trekked south to be with "Auntie Margaret."

Her Aunt and Uncle John took the two in, and Lucy attended school in Kampala, where she was an excellent student. But with all those children, sending her to University was beyond the means of her family.

Lucy tells us she prayed and cried at night that she might be able to go to University. She found GSOC through the Internet, and that began a long correspondence where we got to know each other. Lucy's intelligence, desire and spirituality shone through the emails, and we awarded her our first college scholarship 18 months ago.

Bill & Vickie Innes got to meet Lucy and her family last summer in Kampala, where she is a proud and grateful young woman. Lucy is studying communications at Kampala International Univ. and plans to graduate in June '08. University in Africa lasts three years and, following the British system, courses are far more specialized than in the U.S.

Sponsoring a scholarship is within the reach of a Church or individual: Lucy's tuition and expenses run only \$100/month. Think about it...



The Rev. David Natema: *Putting Faith into Action*

Many of us have mentors, or heroes, that we have never met. For Ugandan Lutheran Pastor David Natema, it was The Rev. Leon Sullivan. Rev. Sullivan was a Baptist pastor in Philadelphia, PA who started OIC, a group of job training centers connected with Churches to pass on skills to young people. OIC has grown to become a large world-wide organization, and Rev. Natema asks why that couldn't happen in Uganda.

First, Rev. Natema graduated from Uganda Christian University with a degree in theology, and he is pastor of a large Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jinja, Uganda. But he believed God was calling him to do more than minister to peoples' spiritual needs alone, so he returned to UCU and got



"In Uganda we have many needy people who run to the Church for support, and this gives us an opportunity to care for them and evangelize for Christ"

a degree in economic development.

Next, he mobilized the leaders of his Church to think about how they could work with the youth in their parish who were unemployed and had no skills to offer the market.

One of the major projects they have been working on has been the building trades. After years of political stability and 6% economic growth, Southern Uganda has a bit of a building boom. Rev. Natema now wants to solve two needs with one solution: Job training and caring for AIDS orphans.

He has carefully worked out that for \$13,800 he can build and support 40 children in a structure alongside the Church. Since the students provide the labor as part of their training, his costs are largely materials and then support for the children. In rural areas, it is common for families to support AIDS orphans with the produce from their farming, but in the cities, the economics work differently.



Uncared-for children can be seen roaming the streets, heading for a short life filled with trouble. Working together with Rev.

Natema is an excellent project for a parish interested in a long-term relationship with Christian brothers and sisters halfway around the world.