

ChildLine

AUGUST, 2008

VOLUME IV, NUMBER 2

The newsletter of the Uganda AIDS Orphan Children Foundation

www.UAOCF.org

Just a Normal Boy

Have you ever wondered what life is like for the orphans UAOCF supports? What difference does your support really make? Enock



M. is one of our children who could tell you very simply: it lets him be just like any other 10-

year-old boy. This Spring, he sent a letter to his UAOCF sponsor family thanking them for paying for his school fees. He was grateful, yet sounded just like any average Ugandan

boy: "I thank you for giving me my needs. And I like football."

You can help a child like Enock. Right now, there are five children who



have been selected to be part of the UAOCF program, but we don't have anyone to sponsor them yet. We

know their names, we know their stories, and we want to do something for them now! They need someone to give them a normal life and hope for the future. Can you help? Please contact us today!

UAOCF Does Parties

Recently, UAOCF received a new kind of request. A woman was throwing a birthday party for her husband, but they didn't want their guests to buy him gifts. Rather, they wanted to give their guests the opportunity to make a donation to a worthy cause. They were particularly interested in charities in Africa, and they heard about our work. They invited UAOCF's Executive Director, Fr. Fred, to attend the party and give a little talk to tell their guests what our organization is about and what we do for the orphans we support. He brought along some pictures that he had taken during his last visit to Uganda, so that the guests could see for themselves who these children are. Many of them responded with great compassion and generosity—we received over \$1,300 from them! What a wonderful present to give their loved one and friend for his birthday.

If you will be planning to celebrate a birthday or other event, or wonder what to give that person who already "has everything," UAOCF would be delighted to help you give the gift that keeps on giving. We could be part of your event, as Fr. Fred was in this case. Or you could give UAOCF gift cards to your loved ones. What better way could there be to show your love than by sharing it with a child in need?

Economic Crunch Hits Uganda Too

We've all been feeling it: it seems like the cost of everything has been going up, and it's getting harder to make ends meet.

Unfortunately, these economic hard times aren't limited to the United States. Inflation has hit hard in Uganda too, raising the cost of school fees, supplies, and everything we provide for the orphans we support.

Since UAOCF's Adopt-an-Orphan program began in 2003, we have asked our sponsors to give \$300 per year to cover all the child's expenses. Since then, UAOCF's coffers have been hit hard by the falling dollar. We send money to Uganda in dollars, where it is exchanged for Ugandan shillings. With the lower exchange rate, the same \$300 translates into fewer shillings. And inflation has had an even more severe impact on our budgets. An inflation rate of 5.1% per year (or 25.5% since 2003) has drastically reduced what \$300 will buy. The average cost for a year of school for our children is now about \$325 per child—and that's just the cost for school tuition, it does not include supplies, uniforms, any health care costs, or anything else. If UAOCF

does not increase the level of support for our children, they may not be allowed to finish school or take exams. We cannot allow their education, and their future, to remain in such jeopardy.

Given these circumstances, the UAOCF Board of Directors consulted with our Kabale-based management committee, and decided that we must ask our sponsors for help. For the first time ever, we are increasing the annual donation to adopt an orphan from \$300 to \$350. We realize that these are difficult times to ask you to give \$50 more. But the stakes are too high not to ask. It's only about \$4 per month more, and it may make the difference between a child being able to finish school, or having to drop out.

UAOCF has the deepest appreciation for our donors and all that you do for our orphans. We hope that you will understand the need for this increase, and continue to share your love with these neediest ones. Look for information about this increase when you receive your next Adopt-an-Orphan renewal request.

"Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man."
~Rabindranath Tagore

Progress Report

With your generous support, UAOCF is now sponsoring 315 orphans! One hundred and thirty are sponsored by individual donors or families, 150 by the De Miranda Foundation, and 35 from grants that UAOCF has secured from the Hilton Foundation and Northrop ECHO. We will be applying to renew those grants in September.

Help UAOCF While You Shop

If you attended our Heart to Heart celebration in February, you heard about the Ralphs grocery store program to donate money to non-profits, including UAOCF. If you shop at Ralphs, participating in this program means that a portion of your total will go to UAOCF. And those donations add up! Only eleven people have signed up for UAOCF, but in only three months, those eleven people generated \$73 in donations! And it didn't cost them a single penny more than they would have otherwise paid.

This program used to work by registering your Ralphs Club card and identifying UAOCF as the organization you want to support. Ralphs has now

dropped the Ralphs Club program, replacing it with the Ralphs *Rewards* card. All Ralphs stores have *Rewards* card applications. Even if you had a Ralphs Club card and registered it for UAOCF, you need to get a new *Rewards* card for your shopping to continue to benefit UAOCF. If you have a *Rewards* card and haven't registered it, please do it right now! Go to the Ralphs home page (www.ralphs.com) and click on "Community Contribution." On the page that comes up, there will be a box titled "Participant," with a button that says, "Sign Up." Click the sign up button, follow the instructions and fill out the form. It's quick, it's simple, and it's a completely painless way to raise money to help our children!

Want another way to support UAOCF while you shop? A website called GoodSearch helps non-profits through online shopping (www.goodsearch.com). Go to their site and type in "UAOCF" as the organization you want to support. Then click on "GoodShop" to go to the shopping page. It lists lots of categories of stores to choose from. Over 500 websites participate, including many where you may shop already—Amazon, Best Buy, Sears, and lots more. GoodShop takes you right to those sites, and you shop there just like you normally would. Each site donates a percentage of what you spend to UAOCF. But only if you go to the site through GoodShop! Give it a try next time you shop online.



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Email, Anyone?

ChildLine is a great way for UAOCF to keep in touch with the folks who support us. We'd like to start sending out email updates between issues with more stories about children, important issues that come up, or other UAOCF news. You can help spread the word about UAOCF by forwarding these updates to your friends. If you want to get the email updates—or if you'd like to receive ChildLine by email—please send us an email to let us know at admin@uaocf.org. And rest assured, UAOCF will *never* share our mailing list or these email addresses with anyone. We respect your privacy.

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Evaluation Report

Twice each term, our staff in Uganda visit all the children's schools to check on their needs and welfare and to monitor their progress. At the end of each term they send us a report of their findings, along with any recommendations for changes or improvements. The latest report was very positive. Children who previously had poor academic performance are catching up with the others in their schools. Each school has a care taker teacher who volunteers to give special attention to our UAOCF children, and we will begin giving these teachers a small stipend to encourage their work. Groups of guardians are meeting to

support each other and our program in Uganda. Following the recommendation of our Uganda team, we have begun screening all our children for HIV, since they are at high risk, given that one or both parents died of AIDS. Those that are HIV-positive are linked to appropriate services. As we learn more, we continue to improve the services we provide to our orphans.

To adopt a child (\$350 a year) or donate any amount, please send a check (payable to UAOCF) to: P.O. Box 64485, Los Angeles, CA 90064. You can also call 310-479-8396, or use your credit card to donate via our website: www.UAOCF.org.