

God Loves Kids

The Ministry of Christian Communications Commission Inc.



Volunteer photographer, Bill Wegner, of colorenlargement.com and a little girl enjoy a cool blast of water from the new well at the Christ the Rock High School in Uganda.

A Well in the Village

For those of us who have faucets and spigots we can turn on to get any amount of water we want, at any time we want, a pump well might not mean much. To a village having a source of plentiful clean water nearby means no more illnesses and deaths from bad water, no wasting time walking miles to get to the water, and no sore backs and bone injuries from carrying jugs of water. The new well at Christ the Rock High School is providing clean and safe water to the entire surrounding community, where drought had left the entire populace, including our kids, without a safe and reliable source of water.

I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,
I was homeless and you gave me a room,
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,
I was sick and you stopped to visit,
I was in prison and you came to me.

- Jesus

Matthew 25, The Parable of the Sheep and Goats

Africa Trip Report: Antonio's Success Story

In June, several members of the God Loves Kids staff and many volunteers traveled to Uganda and Rwanda to check on and help the kids supported by God Loves Kids donors and sponsors. It was a whirlwind trip. There is so much good news to share, too much to tell in one Communicue. For the next few months we will be sharing news from this trip.

We were very impressed with the work of our Ugandan and Rwandan ministry partners, many of whom were children who grew up in our first orphanage, the Uganda Gospel Rehabilitation Center (UGRC). These young adults have decided to minister to orphaned children as a way of saying thank you for the help they received. They are setting up schools, churches, medical clinics, homes, and becoming the leaders in their community. This month we are highlighting the story of one such child, Antonio Ssekyanzi, who is now the Headmaster (principal) of our new high school, Christ the Rock High School.

Antonio is a bright and affable 29 year old man who writes well. He wrote is story for us recently and we thought we would share his letter with you.

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God Loves Kids founder, Lovie Phillips, holds Lovie Ssekyanzi, daughter of Antonio and Sylvia Ssekyanzi. She was 2 months old in June.

Antonio's letter – continued from page 1

I was born in the year 1978 in Butayunja village in the Nakaseke District in Uganda. My parents were Catholics by faith.

In 1980-85, there broke a civil war between President Obote Milton and Mr. Museveni who is the current president of Uganda. My father was one of the war fighters and was fighting on Museveni's side and by that time they were the rebels.

The war became serious and most of the rebels were crushed and my father died on the front-line. The homes and families of the rebels including mine were much known by the government of that time. So they came at our home and crushed all our relatives and every grown up person in our family was killed, they took all our properties and destroyed the homes and we were left helpless. We took refuge in the bush.

Our mother was raped during the war and in the year 1984, she died of AIDS. I and my other three brothers who were so young by that time, we were left in the forest and we used to walk in the bush to look for fruits and roots for a survival. We slept in the bush very many years! Life was miserable, hard and harsh.

In the year 1987-88, our eldest brother who was 16 years old took us to the Uganda Gospel Rehabilitation Center and told us that the UGRC was our new home. We stayed there and started studying and attending Sunday school class and Bible study. I was very bright and I had many friends, children and teachers.

One day, a group of white people came and of all I can only remember Mam-Lovie who brought sweets, clothes, and took pictures of us. Life continued to become hard because we had less facility and yet we were very many children in that home, the UGRC. Important of all, we expected friends at any time and whenever they visited, it could act as our Christmas. Glory be to God! There were sponsors from God Loves Kids.

I got saved in 1992. Why? Because this was the year when I was in Primary seven [like our 7th grade] and I was preparing to take my final examination (Primary Leaving Exams). The Pastor called all the finalists (Candidates) to be prayed for and I came up -- they prayed for me and I accepted Jesus Christ and he has helped me in all! Especially my education and protection.

Antonio's letter – continued on page 3

People brought babies to Jesus, hoping he might touch them. When the disciples saw it, they shooed them off. Jesus called them back. "Let these children alone. Don't get between them and me. These children are the kingdom's pride and joy. Mark this: Unless you accept God's kingdom in the simplicity of a child, you'll never get in."

- Jesus

Like 18:15 -17 The Message



Antonio and Sylvia Ssekyanzi

Antonio's letter – continued from page 2

I joined high school in 1993 and completed it successfully in 1998. I spent most of my life at UGRC and later in 1999, I married Sylvia -- since I needed a friend whom I can talk with and share the life experience. We have 3 children namely; Benjamin (5), Jemaimah (3 1/2), Lovie (2 months). We are professional teachers and work together at Christ the Rock High School.

In the year 2000, I joined University and I completed University studies 2003 with a Bachelor's Degree in Education (B.A.E. with Honors) and in 2004, I was asking God to pave a way so that I can get a job and I desired to work with Christian institutions.

God gave us a vision and we used to share it with Pastor David and other grown up UGRC children and later to sponsors. We therefore started together a high school which solved the problem of many UGRC children who were about to join high school since some had dropped due to lack of facilities.

Since I had the vision, for high school God made it real! For example, when met, I was fully appointed the headmaster of the high school. Indeed I was qualifying!

The school started operating in 2006 and this is my second year in service and I like my job and love children too! I am really a blessing to these children I lead because I share with them my life experience -- I was just like them.

Special thanks goes to you Sponsors! You brought me out of the bush and then to the Service, from the dust bin to the table. I also thank God for my life and the life of other children I lead. We love you friends and pray for you. The Bible says that "show them the way they should go..." I promise, I will and they will bear the fruits.

Yours in Christ,

Antonio Ssekyanzi

Head Master -- Christ the Rock High School.

Can We Blame THEM?

Africa is a bloody place where thousands of people die or are displaced in political upheavals. This has been going on so long it becomes tempting to write Africa off as a no-win continent. After the 90-day Rwandan genocide the world political community said "never again," but we are now counting years of genocide in Darfur, Sudan. Before Rwanda, there was the massive slaughter of civilians by the troops of Charles Taylor in Lyberia and Milton Obote and Edi Amin, "The Last King of Scotland" in Uganda, just to name a few. Millions of Africans have been forced to run for their lives, fearing their leaders or neighbors might kill them, if hunger and disease don't get them first. Africa is a huge mess -- it is easy to get Africa-fatigue and become tempted to blame "them." Until we remember Jesus was one of "them." Remember, Jesus started life on the run, escaping a political slaughter (Mat. 2:17). He was an immigrant, a minority, from a backwater village far away (Micah 5:2) -- just another refugee in Africa ("out of Egypt I have called my son" -- Mat. 2:15 & Hosea 11:1). If we write "them" off, we write Jesus off. If we give "them" a cool drink of water, or something more, well that is something else entirely. "... I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,..." (Mat. 25)



Lovie Phillips tries out the new deeper well at Christ the Rock High School. The water is clean, abundant, and safe which is making everyone happier and healthier. The well was paid for with a generous gift from a couple from Dallas, Texas. They wrote a note on their mailed check "GO DIG THAT WELL!" so we did!

Success Cycle: From Orphan to Student to Teacher

Christ the Rock High School may not look like much to an American who is used to seeing suburban high schools with their filled student parking lots, football stadiums, and cheerleaders.

In Africa, Christ the Rock High School's campus is considered to be quite nice. Consider the amenities, you can enjoy as a Christ the Rock student. You can study inside a building with a roof that keeps out the rain and sun. The building has windows to let in light. It is made of concrete, not mud, so it doesn't need as much work to keep the walls up. (Mud wall maintenance is a group activity -- everyone is expected to participate) It has green grass, shady trees, and a new deep well with clean drinkable water in abundance. It even has a toilet, it may just be a pit toilet, but it has a concrete floor, not mud. You may have to share it with 240 other kids and 18 staff members, but it's a toilet. Plus, if you are a sponsored

child from one of God Loves Kids orphanages, you get to go for free! In Uganda, high school is like college, you pay a lot to go, and if you graduate your jobs prospects are much better.

Since many of our kids were growing up fast, we had over 58 sponsored children needing a high school education. Private school was going to cost \$34,800 a year for all of them to go. The solution, came from the now grown first generation of children who grew up in the Uganda Gospel Rehabilitation Center, our first Ugandan orphanage. They and their families banded together to staff the high school to give the younger children the opportunity to continue their education. A God Loves Kids donor bought an existing campus, and volunteers remodeled it. The school is now in its second academic year. The private school is the only one like it in the area and has a full enrollment as a result.

Things aren't perfect, they need more toilets and income to take good care of the staff, but Christ the Rock is a real source of pride of all of us, sponsors, staff, and kids alike.

Jesus answered,
"Everyone who drinks
this water will be thirsty
again, but whoever
drinks the water I give
him will never thirst.
Indeed, the water I give
him will become in him
a spring of water well-
ing up to eternal life."

John 4, 13-14 The Message