

# Our Own Home

A refuge for orphans living with HIV/AIDS in Jinja, Uganda



Dear Friends,

[www.africaourownhome.org](http://www.africaourownhome.org)

February, 2009

**“Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed – in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. The trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”**

**--1Cor. 15: 51-52**



*Jackie*

Facing the crowd of weeping children, I swallowed hard. “God always answers our prayers, you know.” I was trying to reassure them, but wasn’t really sure enough myself at the moment. “We asked God to heal Jackie, and now she is even healthier than before. We asked God to wake her up from the coma, and now she is awake in His presence. She doesn’t even have AIDS anymore, or TB, or malaria, or leukemia. So even though we are sad and we miss her, Jackie is happier than she would ever be here on earth.”

**Our little Jackie Namukose, the child I told you about in last month’s newsletter, died on the 30th of January.** She was already weak from TB, and a combination of malaria and leukemia that seemed to take hold overnight was just too much for her.

Having seen seven of our other children successfully defeat TB -- and some of them were very, very sick – we had high hopes for Jackie’s recovery. None of us was fully prepared for the swiftness of it all. In 36 hours she went from playing dolls in the yard with Aligaya to, well, playing dolls up in Heaven.

I once was asked what the worth of these children’s lives are. Knowing that they are terminally ill and their time may be short anyway, why devote all our energies to caring for them? This is the attitude of many about AIDS, so I wasn’t shocked by the question. The answer is simple: Because we believe that this life is not all that there is.

Yes, we want all of our children to live as healthy and full an earthly life as possible, but consider this: Recently some friends of ours lost a healthy toddler in a car accident. He did not have AIDS. We never know when or how we will leave this earth, whether or not we have AIDS. Jackie, like many of our little ones, comes from a Muslim family. Now suppose she lived to be 89, but never found Jesus? **This life is not the end, friend.**

One of the first things everybody noticed about Jackie was her sweet spirit and childlike faith – both in God and in the goodness of mankind. She was able to be loving, even to those who abused and neglected her. She just didn’t know any other way to be but loving.

We miss the way she ran into our arms each morning with her joyful greeting. “My Mommy! My Daddy!” We miss her gentle voice singing, “He’s mine, He’s mine, Jesus is mine...” throughout the compound. There is no doubt in any of our minds that Jesus was hers, and Jackie was His. I suppose there is no morning or evening in Heaven, but I can so clearly imagine Jackie running with the same exuberance – probably more – into Jesus’ arms, joyfully crying, “My Daddy!” Yes, Jackie is in “her own home” – the real one -- at last.

“You turned my wailing into dancing; You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give You thanks forever.” --Ps. 29:11-12

**A season of sorrow has passed, and a bright morning stands before us, full of new mercies.** We acquired the house next door to the one we have been occupying, and the girls moved in mid-Jan! The “old house” has become the boy’s house, so there is a lot more privacy for the older



***Our new addition -- for our girls and babies!***

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kids. The new house, the “girl’s house”, is very large, so we've planned to put babies in the same building with the girls. Jackie’s illness coming so soon after the move, however, prevented us from doing anything to prepare the baby section of the house for residents. We had no cribs, no staff yet, and – gulp – only a few diapers! “No problem,” said we, “babies can wait to come until we finish preparing for them.” God said, “Ready or not, here I come!”



***Our first baby -- Elijah!***

**Yes! Our very first baby – Elijah Mukisa -- arrived at seven yesterday evening,** much to our surprise (and pleasure)! We made a frantic run to town collecting formula, bananas, and other essentials. Then, since there were no cribs and no nursery staff to look after him, William and I brought him home with us!

Elijah is over two years old, but severe malnourishment and neglect prevented his fontanel (soft spot) from closing. He never learned to walk or talk, and lacks the strength to hold his bottle or even grasp his rattle. His mother, being insane, poured hot water on him, causing serious burns. In addition, she failed to give him the proper treatment for his AIDS.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” --Jeremiah 29:11

We believe there is still hope for this little boy to gain health and strength. We also believe that he deserves the best for however many days he may remain with us. Most of all, we believe that little ones like this are precious in the Father’s sight. That God has a good plan for each child that has passed through our doors, and all those yet to come. He said, “Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.” Serving them is serving Him. Can that ever be a waste?

As one of our dear uncles, Uncle Richard, remarked sincerely, “It is a privilege to serve them.” At Our Own Home, we will go on serving them while we have them. Some may live through their thirties or longer. Some will have children of their own. Others may not have much time with us left, so we love them in the hope of being with them again someday, and never having to say goodbye then, when the trumpet sounds for all of us.

“Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” --1 Cor. 15:58

With love and thanks, Mommy Holly

Please visit our website at [www.africaourownhome.org](http://www.africaourownhome.org)! Here you'll find an overview of our ministry, pictures, our newsletter archive, volunteer, contact and donor information. Please share and e-mail this link to anyone who might be interested in learning more about Our Own Home!

**Thank You for your continuing support and generosity that makes all of this possible!**

We are still requesting donations of cloth diapers, Balmex or similar generics, and baby toys that can be sterilized (boiled)...not teethingers or cloth toys. Of course we always need children's multi-vitamins....and some deodorant for the older kids.

**Please share this work** with your church or others you know who may be interested. If you know of someone who would like to be on our mailing list, please send us their address by mail or e-mail at the address in the next paragraph.

**If you would like to make a donation**, please make checks payable to **Our Own Home** and send to: 1075 Beaumont Dr. Casper, WY 82601. We also accept credit card and Paypal donations online at [www.africaourownhome.org](http://www.africaourownhome.org). Donations are tax deductible as permitted by law. If you have any questions at all, please call Joe at 307-267-2712 or write [joe@africaourownhome.org](mailto:joe@africaourownhome.org).

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