



EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY  
For International Justice  
and Human Rights  
**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

# Offering of Prayers

Prayers for children orphaned and made vulnerable to HIV/AIDS

*Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me, but the One who sent me. Mark 9:37*



Every day HIV/AIDS claims the lives of 8,000 men women and children. The impact of these daily casualties is devastating to communities, families, and especially to children. Of the 4.8 million people newly infected with the HIV last year, 630,000 were children under the age of 15<sup>1</sup>. The rapid spread of HIV/AIDS throughout the developing world is not only increasing the number of children contracting the disease, but also dramatically increasing the number of children who are newly becoming orphans.

Worldwide, another child is orphaned by AIDS every 14 seconds<sup>2</sup>. Many children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS struggle to care for dying parents and meet the basic needs of siblings. Orphans often face stigma, limited access to education and comprehensive prevention messages, violation of inheritance and property rights, and limited opportunities to generate viable income.

The extreme poverty and hunger experienced by children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS, particularly girls, can force them into a life on the streets where the risks of exploitation, violence, abuse and HIV infection are extremely high.

As people of faith we are called to create an environment of hope and care for children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. On this global day of prayer and reflection for people with HIV/AIDS, please join Church World Service and pray for the protection and support of orphans and vulnerable children coping with this deadly disease.

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<sup>1</sup>Kates, J., Summers, T. *The Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic*, Kaiser Family Foundation, July 2004

<sup>2</sup>Representative Barbara Lee, *Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2004*, Second Session, 108th Congress of the United States of America, 2004.

Photo by T. Mott, March 2004: A young girl orphaned by HIV/AIDS now living with her grandmother in Bukoba, Tanzania. As part of the Huduma ya Watoto (Service for Children) program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, a major CWS partner in Tanzania, they have received house construction support.

# Prayer and reflection for children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS<sup>3</sup>

## Prayers and reflections for the protection of children

The Lord is your guardian; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. By day the sun cannot harm you, nor the moon by night. The Lord will guard you from all evil, will always guard your life. The Lord will guard your coming and going both now and forever. *Psalm 121:5-8*

## Prayer for protection of girls

We are gathered together to affirm the humanity of the girl child. We celebrate the fact that the girl child was created in the image of God and is loved by God. We claim responsibility to protect the girl child and give her the opportunity to grow without fear of being abused by anyone. We pray for a safe environment that is created by all for the safety of the girl child. Amen

### Prayer and reflection of hope for children

I pray of a world  
where the youth are free,  
Free to play with each other  
without fear,  
Free to touch, tickle and to embrace,  
Free to be themselves  
and respected for that.

I pray for a world  
here the young blossom,  
Where potential is harnessed  
and realized,  
Where people's efforts are rewarded,  
And where one can fly to reach the sky.

I pray for a world without HIV/AIDS,  
I dream of a kaleidoscope of youth,  
Who sing a song of praise  
and not shed tears,  
I dream of the fullness of life  
and no more death.

*Reflection*  
Ecclesiastes 11:7-12, 8

### A Prayer for all children

All children are a blessing from God;  
And it takes a village to raise a child.  
All children are special before God;  
Help us to be a village that raises children.  
All children are called to come unto Christ;  
For the kingdom of God belongs to them.

God welcomes all children; Help us to welcome  
all children in our homes and churches.  
We pray. Amen

*Reflection*  
Mark 5:21-43, Psalm 121: 1-8, Psalm 91:1-13

**Advocacy matters. Speak Out to build a better world!**  
Go to [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org) and click on "Global Issues."

Join us in calling on the U.S. government and key international institutions to formulate policies responsive to the needs of people around the world living with HIV/AIDS.

The education and advocacy activities of Church World Service are made possible through the generous support of individuals and churches around the country. Please join us in building a better world for people with HIV/AIDS by sending your contributions to Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515.

<sup>3</sup>All prayers adapted from Dube, M. *AfricaPraying: A Handbook on HIV/AIDS Sensitive Sermon Guidelines and Liturgy*, World Council of Churches, Geneva, 2004.