

AOM ORPHAN MINISTRY UPDATE

In this year, 2008, we want to begin a new tradition, that of sending updates to you sponsors as to how the ministry is progressing, so you can share with us both the joys and problems faced by Themba Le’Ntandane (Hope for the Orphan). In this new update, I will share with you the difficulties faced by the staff of Themba as they begin the new school year. Also, I will introduce these members of staff so you can know and appreciate them better, and I will give you a picture of where the finances come from for the ministry.

SCHOOLS OPEN UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES

The Zimbabwe school year normally begins in the middle of January of each year. But in this distressful year, with Zimbabwe in complete economic collapse and teachers fleeing the country, many of the schools did not open until the beginning of February. Now all our children are back attending school and we are very thankful for this. But the schools are seriously understaffed, with one high school only having 6 teachers and another 4. Of course the children’s education is suffering.

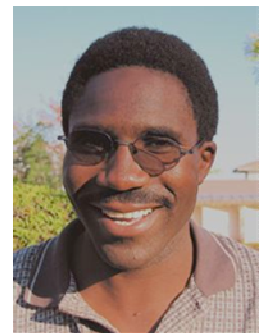
We are asking you to pray for the children, for the teachers and for the staff of Themba as they sift through the possibilities of how we can help our children. Cornelious writes that one possibility is to bring in tutors for the children, but this would be an extremely expensive solution. So please pray that we will have wisdom from God as we face this latest difficulty.

THEMBA STAFF IN BULAWAYO

I don’t know that I have ever fully introduced you to our Themba staff in Bulawayo. We are blessed with the best of the best when it comes to each one of those who minister to our children. (Lynn Nuzzo, our new USA Orphan Sponsorship Coordinator is being introduced to you in a separate letter, so you will meet her that way. She’s great!)

Cornelious Moyo - Director

Cornelious is the director of Themba Le’Thandane and is one of the finest men I have known here in Africa. He is totally dedicated to each of our children, and to their families and caregivers, even to the point that he sometimes takes the children into his own home when the situation demands it. He and his wife, Nomathemba, have a 2 year old son.



For the rest of the staff members, I will use Cornelious' description of them he shared in one of his recent reports.

Soneni Tabulawa - Administrative Secretary and Field Sponsorship Coordinator

“Soneni is always busy behind the scenes, working on the sponsorship database, taking the children’s photographs, and of course compiling and reporting on our finances. It has always been a pleasure to work with her. Her love for the children is so great. Without her, I (Cornelious) would make very little progress.”



Similo Thebe – Counselor and Minister to the children

“Similo is the wife of a pastor and is very passionate about the issues of abuse. She is a Christian counselor who is very sensitive to the needs of others. She has a good team spirit and is one of the pillars of the team who does not give up easily.”



Sibangilizwe Dube – College student on attachment from Midlands State University

“Sibangilizwe is a mature young man who is willing to learn from others. His contributions to the spiritual growth of the children can never be taken for granted. Sibangilizwe is always willing to go the extra mile with the team.”



HOW THE MINISTRY IS BEING FINANCED

Day to Day Running Expenses: The regular, day to day expenses of the ministry is being covered by the sponsorships that each of you give toward AOM's orphan ministry. This includes the uniforms, school fees, medications provided for the sick, staff salaries, vehicle and office expenses, etc.

As the sponsorships increase, we will be able to take more children into the program (we now have 165 children and there remain thousands that are in the same situation as our children). **We are very grateful for the part each of you plays in this vital part of the ministry** to the children.

Extraordinary Expenses:

- (1) **Food Distribution:** The day to day running of the ministry does not include the distribution of food. Because of the desperate food crisis in the country, late last year we began giving each of the families food packets of basic foods stuffs, i.e. corn meal, cooking oil and soya protein mixes. Because of this extra expense, we made an appeal to all subscribers to the AOM mailing list, and sufficient monies were given to cover the food for the next several months. As the food crisis continues, we will probably be making another appeal when these funds are used. **We are very grateful to every person who gave to assist these helpless children.**
- (2) **Vehicle Repair:** The vehicle used in the ministry has "seen a number of years" and began to give many problems in this last year. As the food was being distributed, the engine was burned up and the vehicle was inoperable. The vehicle is vital to the ministry, and so we let a number of people know about this need. As a result, generous contributions came in again, and the pickup has been repaired. Again, **we thank God for the generosity and love of those individuals and congregations.**
- (3) **Future Needs:** As we look to the future, we see the need for a newer vehicle and another computer for the office. As we face these needs, we will ask God for guidance as how he would have us meet them. Please join us in praying for this wisdom.

As administrator of the AOM Orphan Ministry, I thank God for each of you and the contributions you make toward the well being of these children. You are God's blessings to us. May he shine his face on you and your families!

Janelle Avery, AOM Orphan Ministry Administrator