

# St. NICHOLAS Uganda CHILDREN'S FUND

## Newsletter

December 2017

Email: [info@ugandachildrensfund.org](mailto:info@ugandachildrensfund.org)

"Christmas shouldn't be about gifts; it should be about love, forgiveness, kindness, and compassion; to give and to be someone's angel when they need it the most."

— Nishan Panwar



### A Family Reunion.

Christmas traditionally is a time when family members come together from near and far to celebrate the holiday. This Christmas season has brought an unexpected and heartwarming reunion that began for us twelve years ago when we welcomed two orphaned girls into our program.

Florence was eight years old and her sister, Caroline, was five. Both of their parents had died and they were staying with their grandmother. Over the next three years, the girls were shifted from home to home. The grandmother died and they went to live with her sister, their great-aunt. Then she also died, leaving the girls orphaned for a third time. They were left with a paraplegic older brother who was not financially able to care for the girls. We called for a family conference and the relatives agreed that Florence and Caroline would stay with an aunt, the daughter of the one who most recently had passed away.

The girls survived and thrived and we continued with their education. Florence, 20, is currently enrolled in an advanced Diploma course in Hotel and Restaurant Management.



Florence

Caroline, 17, is studying Home Economics at a vocational secondary school.

Shortly after we returned to Uganda, Florence appeared in our office with a ten year old girl named Vicky. Vicky was her niece, but they had met for the first time that very day. Vicky's father was Godfrey, the brother with whom Florence and Caroline briefly stayed before they went to the aunt's place. This is their story:



Vicky

In 2006, Godfrey worked for a grain miller as a casual laborer. One fateful day as he was pushing open a large rolling gate, the ball bearing mechanism broke, bringing the heavy gate down on Godfrey's spine. He was instantly paralyzed from the waist down, with no feeling or motor ability in his lower torso and legs.

The company paid his medical bills during the lengthy hospital stay. Two metal braces were inserted into his back so that he would be able to sit up, but nothing could be done to restore the use of his legs. Once he left the hospital, he was on his own. There is no disability insurance. Godfrey's girlfriend was four months' pregnant at the time of the accident. She left him while he was still hospitalized and went to stay with her mother.

Godfrey was released from the hospital after five months of operations and rehabilitation. His family provided a one-room apartment, and an uncle has been providing food. Every Sunday, members of Godfrey's church carry him to the worship service. They also help with his ongoing medical expenses. Neighbors come daily to change his catheter bag. A few years ago, rats entered the apartment and began

nibbling on his legs and toes. Unable to feel anything, Godfrey would discover the grisly evidence in the morning. Church members stepped up once again, paying for an electric hookup and a light which is left on at night.

Shortly after Vicky was born, her mother became involved with another man, leaving the girl in the care of the grandmother. Godfrey had no phone and the mother's family had no way to contact him, so Vicky grew having no memory of either her mother or her father. Jjajja raised her for ten years and faithfully ensured that Vicky attended school.

Then another tragedy: Jjajja suffered a stroke, leaving half of her body paralyzed. Unable to work, she could no longer pay school fees for Vicky, now in third grade. The mother's family felt that they had done enough, and set out to track down Vicky's father. Beginning with his last known residence eleven years earlier, they questioned neighbors until the trail led to Godfrey's current home.

Godfrey was thrilled to find his long lost daughter. Vicky was also happy to finally meet her father. Seeing his condition, and with compassion beyond her years, she decided that her father needed her and she was ready to move in as soon as the school year ended in December. Throughout our interview, Vicky sat quietly on the floor doing her homework. We were amazed by Godfrey's calm, joyful attitude. Rather than

blame God for the accident, he expressed gratitude for all the people who have been caring for him. And when we asked Vicky what she intended to do after she moved in, she said she would keep the house clean, do her father's laundry, and wash the plates and utensils.

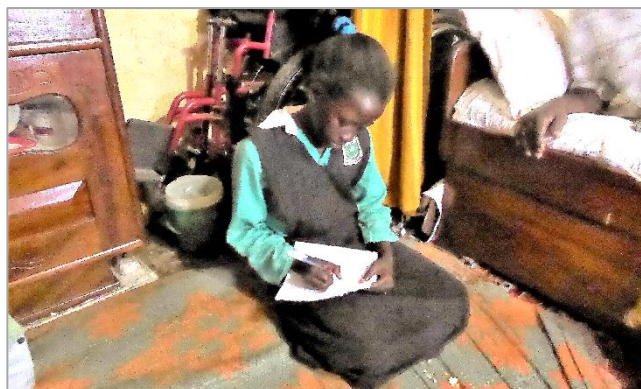


*Father and daughter reunited*

Godfrey has a strong support network consisting of family, neighbors, and church members. We are blessed to do our part and have taken responsibility for Vicky's education. She'll join our other children when the new school year begins in early February. But for now, father and daughter, sisters and aunts, are all looking forward to a very special Christmas.

Thank you for your love, support, and prayers throughout the year. We wish you all the joy of the season!

*Peter & Sharon*



*Vicky does her homework.*

We welcome your donations.  
Checks may be sent to:

**St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund**  
P.O. Box 285  
Chardon, OH 44024-0285

Or you can donate online at  
[www.ugandachildrensfund.org](http://www.ugandachildrensfund.org)

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