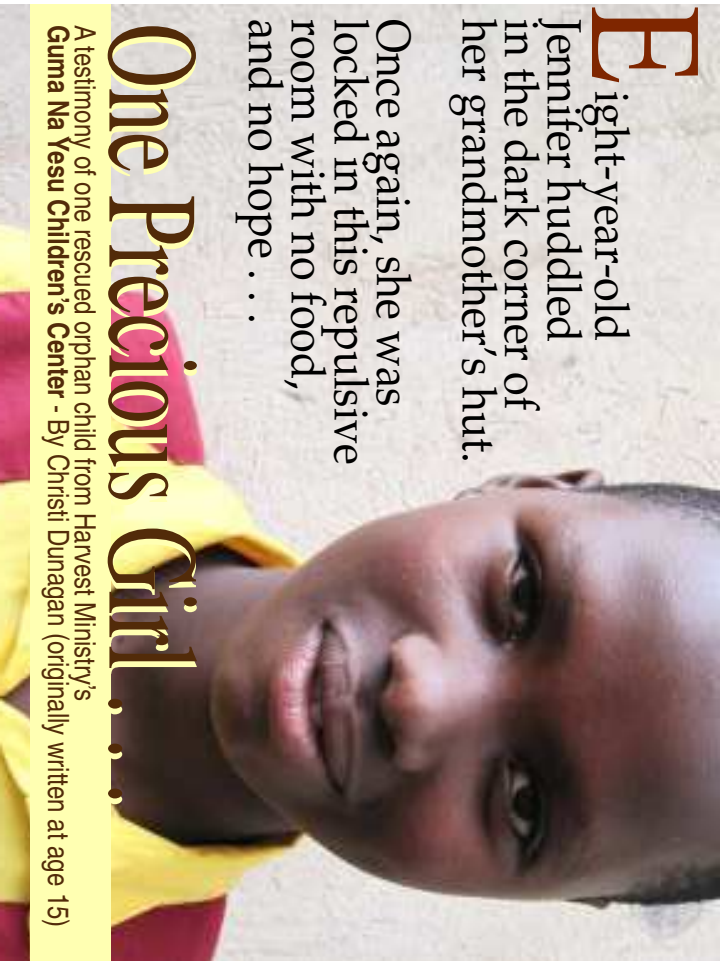


**E**ight-year-old Jennifer huddled in the dark corner of her grandmother's hut.

Once again, she was locked in this repulsive room with no food, and no hope . . .

## One Precious Girl

A testimony of one rescued orphan child from Harvest Ministry's **Guma Na Yesu Children's Center** - By Christi Dunnagan (originally written at age 15)



Sometimes Jennifer was left alone for days while her grandmother wasted what little money they had. Most likely, the old woman would return home – drunk – and beat the girl until she could barely stand.

Jennifer knew nothing of happiness.

When she was very young, her parents were victims of Uganda's number one killer: AIDS; and now, she was yet another victim: of poverty, hunger, and abuse.

Hearing footsteps outside her door, Jennifer looked up. Maybe she would finally be released from this small damp prison she was forced to call home . . . but no.

She cringed, as the footsteps drew nearer and she recognized them, not as those of her grandmother, but as the sound of one of her uncles. Again one was coming . . . Too often they came . . . to use little Jennifer

Along with hundreds of other orphans, this child now has a home. People are feeding her, ministering to her hurts, and loving her. Slowly, she is learning that life is not just pain and horror, and she is discovering joy. Slowly, her emotional wounds are healing. Finally, Jennifer is becoming the girl she was born to be.

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It was during my junior year of high school, when I went on this mission to Africa with my mother and an elderly pastor's wife. I traveled by rugged dugout-canoes to several remote islands where the poverty was great. In Uganda, I met Jennifer and many children like her -- all left as orphans due to the trauma of war and AIDS -- and the experience made an incredible impact on my life.

As I walked through the narrow village streets, the air reeked of fish, body odor and garbage. Little children flocked around me, holding my hands, touching my hair, and gazing deeply into my eyes. As they longed for some sort of love and affection, I wished I could just "wrap them up," hide them in my suitcase and take them all home. But obviously, that wasn't possible.

During this outreach, my mom and I decided that we could no longer just sit back and "feel" compassion. Thousands of orphan children were dying from malnutrition and neglect. We knew God was moving our hearts to take action.

In February, 2006, Harvest Ministry founded Osanidde Village (which means "You Are Worthy" and sounds like "Oh Sunny Day"). This beautiful island-based orphan ministry quickly grew to care for 160 precious children in 16 loving homes. This joyful place became known for the prayers of the children and the abiding presence of God.

In the early days, there were many time-consuming details -- organizing child photos, recruiting sponsors, doing computer work -- but the results have been worth every effort. Within a few short years, Harvest

Ministry added the responsibility of support for several hundred more orphan children in desperate need at Guma Na Yesu Children's Center. Then, right on the 5-year anniversary since the founding of Harvest Ministry's orphan outreach, we all trusted the Lord as we transitioned into another new season.

In February, 2011, Harvest Ministry released Osanidde Village to become an independent and completely indigenously-led ministry; and simultaneously, we began a brand-new orphan ministry in S.E. India! And as of several months into this transition, all of the orphan ministries and children are doing well!

We know we will never be able to help every needy orphan child; but we're doing what we can, and by God's grace, we won't give up.

For all of us, it's finally a new day. No longer will these children roam the streets, beg for meals, or sleep "wherever." In Jesus' Name, these little ones will be safe and cared for. And with smiles on their faces -- just as Jennifer now has -- these orphans will finally have a chance to become the children they were born to be.

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This photo of Jennifer gives us a glimpse of one real-life rescued girl, (six years after Christi first wrote this testimony). This precious young woman is still living with our friends, Naboth and Alice, at Guma Na Yesu Children's Center, and she continues to be a beautiful example of God's hand on these children. Jennifer is very bright and hard-working, and she leads worship for Sunday school. Her hope and happiness is restored, as God has healed her wounds.

Currently, as of the fall of 2011, Harvest Ministry is caring for nearly 700 orphan children (providing love, food, education, clothing, homes, and spiritual training) through Guma Na Yesu Children's Center in Mbarara, Uganda, East Africa, and through Aasha - "Hope" - Children's Home in S.E. India. Please keep us, and all of these children, in prayer!