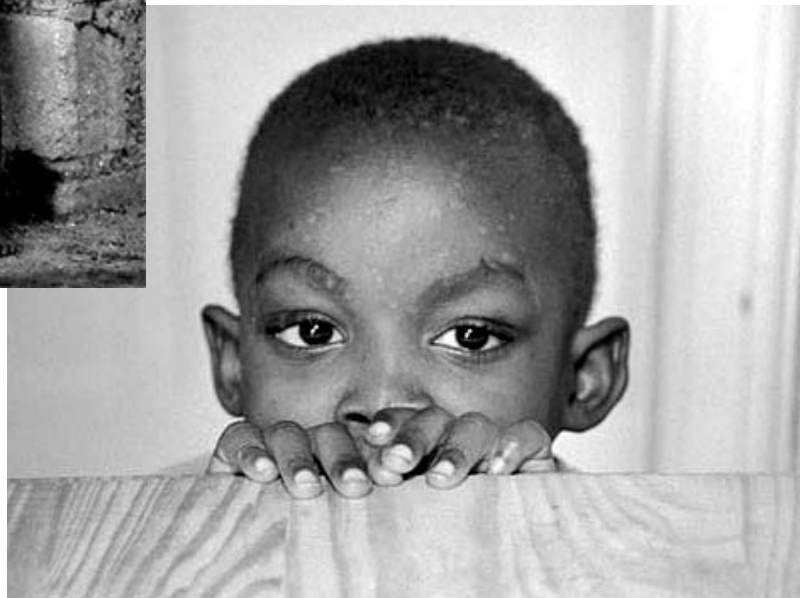


WORLD AIDS DAY DECEMBER 1

Taking Leadership: Responding to the Children Left Behind



**Resources for study,
prayer, and action in
support of children
orphaned and made
vulnerable by AIDS**

**Prepared and offered by
IHM AIDS Committee, Monroe, Michigan**

Reprints of this resource material are available online under the “Educational Resources” section at:

http://www.ihmsisters.org/www/Justice_Peace_and_Sustainability/Social_Justice/hivaid.asp

PRAYER RESOURCE

INTRODUCTION

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 10,000 men, women, and children. The impact of these daily casualties is devastating to communities, families, and especially to children. Of the 4.3 million people newly infected with HIV last year, 530,000 were children under the age of 15. 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 becoming orphans.

Worldwide, another child is orphaned by AIDS every 14 seconds. 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.

During this time of prayer and reflection for people with HIV/AIDS, pray for the protection and support of orphans and vulnerable children coping with this deadly disease.

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

CALL TO PRAYER (Stand)

The promise of the one seated on the throne:

“See, I am making all things new.”

Revelation 21:5

The promise of the resurrected one:

“I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:20

The promise borne on the wind:

The Spirit bears witness with our spirit

That we are children of God,

And if children, then heirs,

Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Romans 8:15b-17a

We worship a faithful God, keeping the promise of love.

In the name of the Blessed Trinity, one God, now and forever.

Amen

READING (Be seated)

Prayer and reflection of hope for children

I pray for 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

where 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 based on

Ecclesiastes 11:7-12, 8

RESPONSE

Leader:

We gather in the name of the crucified and risen Christ

The People:

Over whom death had no power and through whom there is life eternal.

Leader:

We gather as a remembering and a caring community

The People:

A community of faith and hope united by God's love.

Leader:

God calls to us

The People:

To care for one another, to be compassionate and merciful.

Leader:

We celebrate God's goodness and grace

The People:

In the love we give, receive, and remember.

Leader:

We experience God's goodness and grace

The People:

Through arms that embrace us when we are filled with fear.

Leader:

God bless those who care

The People:

Bless and sustain those who care for the living and the dying: who search for cures, therapies, and vaccines; those who respond day and night to our tears, our desperation, and our grief.

Leader:

We are the creation of the one Creator God

The People:

The child who cries is every child. The woman weakened and tired is every mother, wife, sister, and daughter. The man is every father, husband, son, and brother.

Leader:

AIDS leaves gaping wounds in the lives of those who have lost the ones they love the most

The People:

God, give us the strength and courage to be present in the midst of loss.

Leader:

Across the infinity of space and time a common heart beats in every breast

The People:

Forbearing pain and clinging to hope we are brought to a deeper understanding of our common humanity.

Leader:

We are a family of nations united by our common priceless humanity

The People:

AIDS is a world wide crisis in the midst of which there is no “we” and “they.”

Leader:

We confess that we are all affected

The People:

When one of God’s creations suffers we all suffer.

Leader:

Today we are called to be a joyful, thankful people

The People:

Upheld by God’s goodness and grace which has the power to disarm AIDS.

Leader:

In thankfulness we commit ourselves to being a caring, justice-seeking, nurturing community

The People:

We covenant together in commitment to God and to one another.

Leader:

We will be a caring community

The People:

We welcome into our community and our church all persons whose lives have been touched by HIV and AIDS. We say to all: “You are welcome here.”

Leader:

We will be a justice-seeking community

The People:

We will oppose all forms of discrimination against persons with HIV and AIDS. We support the right of all persons with HIV and AIDS to housing, employment, services, transportation, and health care.

Leader:

We will be a nurturing community

The People:

We will care for one another and love one another. We will pray for God's creation. We will be Christ's presence in each other's lives. We will be witnesses to God's unconditional love.

Written by: Cathie Lyons and the HIV/AIDS MINISTRIES NETWORK, Health and Welfare Ministries, General Board of Global Ministries, the United Methodist Church (*Adapted*)

CLOSING PRAYER (Stand as a sign of commitment)***Prayer and Reflection for Social and Economic Justice in the HIV/AIDS Era***

God of liberation and justice, Defender of the poor and marginalized, we seek Your guidance.

Give us the vision and the confidence to become prophets when resources are looted. Let us hear the cry of the widows. Let us feed the orphans. Let us denounce injustice by the powerful.

May we demand drugs for the sick. May we demand care for the abandoned. May we denounce wastefulness by the affluent. Forgive our silence. Forgive our complicity. In Your mercy forgive our condemnation of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Forgive us when we deal lightly with the wounds of Your people. Forgive the times when we have offered artificial solutions. Empower us to tackle corrupt systems. Make us instruments of Your peace. Make us agents of Your transformation. We pray, Amen

Reflection based on
Luke 16:19-31

CLOSING HYMN (Choose a hymn appropriate to your group.)

SUGGESTED FILMS AND BOOKS ON AIDS ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

FILMS

A Generation of Hope: Orphans of the AIDS Crisis in Zimbabwe
(2004 – 10 minutes)

Highlights the resilience of children whose parents have died of AIDS.
Watch the film online at: <http://gbgm-umc.org/health/aidsafrica/hope.cfm>
Order forms for the DVD are also available on the same page.
Cost: Free
Suitable for Grade 6 and higher

Five reflection questions are included with this DVD.

Three copies are available in IHM Library

Pandemic: Facing AIDS (2003 – 113 minutes; can be viewed in segments)

Rarely have we seen such unique and personal stories of people living with AIDS than in this highly acclaimed film from award-winning filmmaker Rory Kennedy. Narrated by Danny Glover, this theatrical version of the five-part HBO series goes beyond the statistics to tell five remarkable stories from across the globe, revealing the heartaches and triumphs of real people coping with the stigma and effects of this devastating epidemic. From people like Sergei and Lena (Russia), young parents whose previous drug use has left them HIV-positive, to Alex (Brazil), a 27-year-old gay man who is trying to rebuild his health and get back to living a full and productive life, their stories are both heartbreaking and uplifting, providing a window into a world that so many of us have never fully understood. With an intimacy and sensitivity unparalleled by any other account of the AIDS crisis to date, there is no question that PANDEMIC: FACING AIDS is a "must-see" film for all. (HBO)

Available from the IHM Library and Marygrove College Library – segment on Uganda, about 10 minutes long, focuses on AIDS orphans.

Reflection questions:

1. Which story touched you most? Why?
 - Alex (Brazil)
 - Lena and Sergei (Russia)
 - Margaret ((Uganda – woman who works with orphans)
 - Ugandan couple who tested positive for HIV/AIDS
 - Bhanu and Nagaraj (young couple in India)
 - Lek and her parents (young Thai woman who dies of AIDS)

2. What new information did you learn from watching this DVD?
3. Will you take any action as a result of seeing this DVD? If so, what action will you take?

The Value of Life: AIDS in Africa Revisited (2004 – 54 minutes)

30 million Africans have HIV/AIDS. In the summer of 2003, United Nations' HIV/AIDS envoy Stephen Lewis returns to Africa and documents his incredible personal journey that has led from hope to despair to hope again.

After September 11, 2001 when the world's attention turned to homeland security and fighting terrorism, the promises of financial aid to Africa lay broken. Africa, with more than 6,000 people dying every day of AIDS and 14 million orphans under the age of 15, was a continent enveloped by death. Lewis was convinced that all that was needed was determination and financial resources. The most urgent need was for life-prolonging, anti-retroviral drugs for the dying. In Africa these drugs are available to only 20% of the four million people who need them.

In 2003 the momentum is finally reignited. Endless disputes concerning generics and the patents held by big pharmaceutical companies have been settled. The World Health Organization has pledged to have three million people on anti-AIDS drugs by 2005. That amounts to a staggering six million pills every day. It is the sheer volume of drugs needed that has led Lewis, along with a handful of Canadian aid agencies, to challenge the Canadian government to pass legislation allowing patents to be circumvented in favor of inexpensive, generic AIDS drugs. If the bill were to pass, it would make history. (Bullfrog Films)

Available from IHM Library

Reflection Questions:

1. During the program Stephen Lewis says: “If you have just a little support you can transform the situation. That’s what enrages me; it doesn’t take that much.”
 - Why, in your opinion, do world governments continue to under-fund (or ignore) initiatives that would effectively address the AIDS pandemic in Africa? e.g. In the U.S. we spend \$5 billion annually for AIDS vs. \$165 billion for war in Afghanistan. How can we address these distorted priorities?
2. How can we address the “double standard” regarding the availability of ARVs in western countries vs. the scarcity in Africa?

Their Brothers' Keepers (2005 – 54 minutes)

There is no normal childhood. They are the millions of children whose parents have died of AIDS. They have no time to grieve. They are the parents.

Filmed over a 7-month period, *Their Brothers' Keepers* goes inside Chazanga Compound, a shantytown in Lusaka, Zambia and follows the day-to-day struggles of two child-headed families. We see how Benny, Doris and Paul cope with a lack of food, water, health care, and schooling. They scramble for piecework to buy mealie-meal for their younger siblings. Local aid and community workers give support but lack the necessary resources. Foreign aid is too thin to trickle down.

The film alternates between the broader view and the personal detail, between tragedy and hope. Stunning photography and an exquisite musical score contrast with the surreal lives of these heroic kids.

Throughout the film are excerpts from speeches by Stephen Lewis, UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, their passionate advocate.

Their Brothers' Keepers is about children determined to survive. (Bullfrog Films)

Available from the IHM Library

Reflection Questions:

1. We are all interconnected, this we believe. What is my connection to/responsibility towards these orphaned children? How can they be more present to me in my life? In my prayer?
2. Is the situation of the orphans seen in this film “sustainable”?
 - Sustainable for them; for Zambia and the other countries in southern Africa; sustainable globally?
 - As a congregation committed to sustainability and a sustainable lifestyle, how can we use our gifts and resources to address the situation of AIDS orphans?
3. Scripture calls us to care for the widow and the orphan. How do I/how are we responding to this biblical imperative?

Coming to Say Goodbye: Stories of AIDS in Africa. (VHS. Maryknoll, 2005, 30 minutes <http://www.maryknollmall.org/description2.cfm?ISBN=136>)

This documentary is about courageous people living with HIV/AIDS in Kenya and Tanzania. Their stories are a personalized journal of the spread of this modern plague. Included are commentaries by church workers, medical professionals, social workers, and educators who stand by those suffering, especially the thousands of children orphaned by AIDS. The video leads us to reflect on the personal and structural aspects of the AIDS pandemic in Africa: poverty, lack of access to treatment, and the extraordinary social cost. Viewers are challenged to take up their role as global advocates in combating this devastating disease.

Available from the IHM Library and Maryknoll

Reflection Questions:

1. What is our responsibility in the face of the crisis for children created by the AIDS pandemic?
2. What concrete actions are possible?

Out of Hiding, Into the World: Thembi's AIDS Diary. NPR, All Things Considered, April, 2006 (23 minute CD, audio only)
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5311801>

Thembi Ngubane lives in one of South Africa's largest townships, a sprawling sea of houses and shacks made of wood planks, tar paper and sheets of tin. She has a boyfriend and a close relationship with her mother and father. She is also living with AIDS. Thembi was 19 when she first met radio producer Joe Richman in Khayelitsha, outside Cape Town. She was among a group of South African teenagers he interviewed about AIDS in 2004. He gave her a tape recorder and for a year she recorded this intimate audio diary that brings listeners into her home, among her family, to witness her daily struggles and triumphs.

CD available from IHM Library or on-line through Radio Diaries.

Reflection Questions:

1. What struck you most about Thembi's story?
2. What new questions does her story raise for you?

Where Have All the Parents Gone? Prod. CNN, July, 2006 (Approximately 40 minutes)

This documentary, narrated by Christine Amanpour, focuses on AIDS orphans and the people who care for them in remote villages of Kenya.

DVD available through IHM Library or through CNN.

Reflection Questions:

1. What is the impact of the AIDS pandemic on communities?
2. What steps can the international community take to respond to the situation of AIDS orphans?

Yesterday. (96 minutes) Prod. Videovision, 2004

As beautiful as it is heartbreaking, the Oscar-nominated drama *Yesterday*, brings an intimate human perspective to the AIDS crisis in Africa. On the surface, it's a harsh and devastating story about bad things happening to good people, but such a limited description robs the film of its warmth and tender compassion. Best known for his 1995

drama *Cry the Beloved Country*, director Darrell James Roodt returns to his native South Africa for this moving and heartfelt portrait of a young, devoted mother named Yesterday who learns that she is HIV positive, and remains determined to stay alive until her young daughter Beauty is old enough to go off to school. Her husband is also stricken with AIDS and Yesterday cares for him even as they are ostracized by fearful neighbors in their tiny Zulu village. *Yesterday* puts a human face on a global crisis that's too often viewed in impersonal terms.

Available at local video stores or from IHM Library.

Reflection questions:

1. As you watched the film, what touched you?
2. Did you learn something new as you watched the film?
3. Three principles from the Earth Charter are:
 - “Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.” (No. 11)
 - “Secure the human rights of women and girls and end all violence against them.” (No. 11a)
 - Empower every human being with the education and resources to secure a sustainable livelihood...(No. 9.b.)

If these principles had been put into practice, what changes might have occurred in the lives of Yesterday and Beauty?

BOOKS AND STUDY GUIDES

The Heaven Shop by Deborah Ellis (Oxford University Press, 2004).

The Heaven Shop is a poignant story of a child caught up in the AIDS pandemic in southern Africa. Binti, 13, lives in Malawi, attends a private church school, and stars in a weekly radio show. Her mother is dead, and then her father dies. No one talks about why until her tough grandmother, Gogo, announces that they died of AIDS. Binti is taken in by cruel relatives, her sister becomes a prostitute, and her brother lands in prison, but they finally reunite with Gogo in a poor rural community. Ellis, who has written about children in crisis in Afghanistan, Israel, and Palestine, and visited Malawi, creates a vivid sense of the place and characters that are angry, kind, brave, and real. The facts about AIDS--the statistics, denial, discrimination, and ignorance--drive the story. Proceeds from book sales go to UNICEF.

A teacher’s guide (Grade 6 and higher) for use with this book is available at <http://www.unicef.ca/portal/Secure/Community/502/WCM/EDUCATION/assets/pdf/TheHeavenShop.TeachersGuide%5B1%5D.pdf>

Two copies of the book and a study guide are available in IHM Library; also available from www.Amazon.com

Our Stories, Our Songs: African Children Talk About AIDS, by Deborah Ellis
published by FitzHenry and Whiteside, Allston, MA 02134

Ellis spent time in Africa collecting the experiences of children for *Our Stories, Our Songs: African Children Talk about AIDS*. The book is geared to a young audience, giving youth in Africa a chance to share their lives with their peers in the developed world. It provides a good introduction for kids who want to know more about AIDS and about how their lives might compare to those of children elsewhere in the world.

As an adult reader, what struck me was the simplicity of the stories. The kids Ellis interviewed speak plainly about their lives. That's the tragedy and miracle of kids; they only know what they know.

Ellis has done a tremendous job in giving these children a voice, one that will inspire, sadden and educate other young people. She finds hope without sugar-coating the realities. Indeed, it is the hope of these kids that you remember after the book is put away.

A Curriculum study guide for Grades 6, 7 and 8 is available at:
http://www.accessola.com/osla/bethechange/pdf/ji_from%20fact%20to%20fiction.pdf

Two copies of the book and study guide are available in the IHM Library; also available from www.Amazon.com

We Are All the Same: A Story of a Boy's Courage and a Mother's Love (New York: Penguin, 2004).

The author, an award-winning senior correspondent for ABC News, has written an extraordinarily moving account of a courageous South African boy's battle with AIDS that is also a scathing indictment of South African leaders who have failed to confront the AIDS epidemic in their country. This powerful account puts a human face on a catastrophic epidemic that grows worse daily.

Reflection questions are contained in *Many Stories, One Community*, April 2005, available at www.ihmsisters.org

Available in the IHM Library or from www.Amazon.com

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR WORLD AIDS DAY 2008

1. TAKE THE CITIZEN'S PLEDGE

Please join us in asking the next President of the United States to create, support and fund a comprehensive plan to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic. We have to let the candidates know that HIV/AIDS is an important issue for the next election. We have to call on the next President to make clear commitments – and then make sure he or she meets those commitments.

The following **Citizen's Pledge** will be presented to the presidential candidates to demonstrate strong public support for a bold plan to address HIV/AIDS:

As a citizen, I want to see the next U.S. President present a bold plan to stop the AIDS crisis, fully funding universal access to services at home and abroad.

In the U.S., we need a comprehensive plan to reduce HIV infections and increase access to care, especially in hard-hit communities of color. Globally, the next President should provide no less than \$50 billion over five years to fight AIDS, while also directing an additional 1% of the U.S. budget to programs that work to eliminate poverty.

This will enable the U.S. to at least double the number of people currently on AIDS treatment, support scientifically based, comprehensive prevention efforts, respond to the needs of orphans, and strengthen essential health systems. A bold plan to fight AIDS will help the next President renew America's ties to the global community and put our humanitarian values into practice.

To sign the pledge and join with other concerned individuals calling for action on HIV/AIDS, go to <http://www.globalaidsalliance.org/page/s/08citizenpledge>

Your personal contact information will *not* be shared with any specific candidate or campaign.

2. **WRITE A LETTER OF SUPPORT**

to someone ministering to persons with HIV/AIDS (sample letter included along with names of those to whom you could write).

“I know AIDS is out there; I have seen it and lived with it. If I could speak to the world, I would thank those people that have helped children like me. Because of them I have three meals, a safe, warm place to sleep, an education, and most of all I have people around me that love and care for me. I am very thankful for that.”

Frida, an orphan living at the UNICEF-supported Anglican Children’s Project in Lusaka, Zambia

WORLD AIDS DAY

December 1, 2008

Dear _____:

My name is _____, and I am a (*an associate*) member of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Monroe, Michigan. Our congregation’s HIV/AIDS Committee members and many other IHMs are committed to work to increase awareness of the AIDS pandemic, engage in legislative advocacy and to stand in solidarity with those living with AIDS or struggling with the reality of the disease within their families.

Many IHM sisters and associates throughout the world currently work or have worked with those living with AIDS in several African countries, Haiti, Latin America and in the United States. From them (*or from your own personal experience*) I have learned that working with people with HIV/AIDS and their loved ones is a very challenging and demanding ministry. The generous and courageous people who are caring for individuals and families living with AIDS deserve our support and gratitude. Mindful of that reality, and with a deep sense of connectedness and solidarity, I want to thank you for your presence to and support of our sisters and brothers who live with HIV/AIDS.

On World AIDS Day and everyday, I offer you my prayers, support and gratitude for all you have done and continue to do for those in our world who live with the reality of HIV/AIDS. You are making life worth living for people living with the disease. May God bless you and continue to sustain you in your ministry.

In prayerful solidarity and gratitude,

People to whom you could send letters of support and care:

Pat Aseltyne, IHM
1809 Wichita, #4
Houston, TX 77004
sisterpat@casahope.org

Peg O'Shea, IHM
PO Box 513, Merrivale 3291
South Africa
iti05728@mweb.co.za

Annette St. Amour, IHM
23 Vicbern Court
304 Vause Road, Durban 4001
South Africa
annetteihm@absamail.co.za

Thoko (colleague of Peg O'Shea's)
c/o PO Box 513, Merrivale 3291
South Africa

Sr. Alison Munro, OP
AIDS Office, Director & Staff
SACBC
PO Box 941, Pretoria 0001
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Dominican Sisters
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CATHCA
PO Box 52015, Saxonwold, 2132
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Director & Staff
Siyabhabha Trust
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PO Box 941, Pretoria 0001
South Africa

Fr Michael Czerny, SJ
PO Box 21399, Nairobi 00027
Kenya

Bishop Kevin Dowling, CSsR
PO Box 45, Boshhoek 0301
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diocrust@mweb.co.za

Sr Amelia Murphy, MSA
PO Box 1629, Highlands North 2037
South Africa
msageneralate@intekom.co.za

Elizabeth Schilling
PO Box 1572, Bronkhorstspuit 1020
South Africa

Dr. Rosemary Edwards
Hospice of St. Joseph
c/o LYNX Air International
PO Box 407139
Fr. Lauderdale, FL 33340-7139

Daniela Gennrich, Director
PACSA
PO Box 2338, Pietermaritzburg 3200
South Africa

Ms Shalaza Madlala (working in the inner-city parish, Emmanuel Cathedral)
86 Umgeni Heights
40 Kenville Road, Durban 4051
South Africa

Mr Kimoto Kungwa (working in the inner-city parish, Emmanuel Cathedral)
305 Esselen Court
26 Park Street, Durban 4001
South Africa

Patricia Xaba (working in a large township north of Durban, Kwa Kristo Umsindisi Parish)
E1540 Ntuzuma, PO Kwa Mashu 4360
South Africa

Mrs Margareth Nzama (working in a rural area in the Corpus Christi Parish)
Chibini 3 – Box 2619, Ozwathini 3242
South Africa

3. MAKE A CONTRIBUTION

Catholic Institute of Education, Education Access Project, Johannesburg, South Africa (ministry associated with IHMs for over 15 years) Write CIE, Education Access Project on memo line of check; make check out to “South Africa Development Fund” and send to:

South Africa Development Fund
555 Amory Street
Boston, MA 02130

Kopanang Project (women’s project and source of Cosmic Walk Tapestries exhibited in Detroit and Monroe in December 2006) Write “Kopanang” on the memo line of the check; make check out to “South Africa Development Fund” and send to:

South Africa Development Fund
555 Amory Street
Boston, MA 02130

IHM South African AIDS Ministries

IHM Sisters
CBO Attn: Carol Janowiak, IHM
610 W. Elm
Monroe, MI 48162

Casa de Esperanza de los Ninos

Attn: Pat Aseltyne, IHM
1407 Wichita
Houston, TX 77004-9998

Bishop Kevin Dowling, CSsR

Make checks payable to IHM Sisters
c/o Joan Mumaw, IHM
Leadership Council
610 West Elm Avenue
Monroe MI 48162

Haiti Marycare

55 King Street
Danbury, CT 06811
www.haitimarycare.org
tlarkin@haitimarycare.org

Soup Kitchen with a Purpose run by the Catholic Archdiocese of Durban AIDS Care Committee for orphans and child-headed households.

Make checks payable to Annette St. Amour, IHM and put “Soup Kitchen” on memo line.
c/o Carol Janowiak, IHM
610 West Elm Avenue
Monroe MI 48162