

**URGENT NEWS RELEASE**

## Special Report

# Africa's Orphans

**As the number of orphans passes 10 million, some fear that figure may soon double!**

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA - When international officials and experts first predicted that 10,000,000 African children would be orphaned by the year 2000, many people didn't believe them. Now that there are nearly 12,000,000 orphans living throughout Africa -- predictions of as many as 20 million orphaned children are not considered unrealistic.

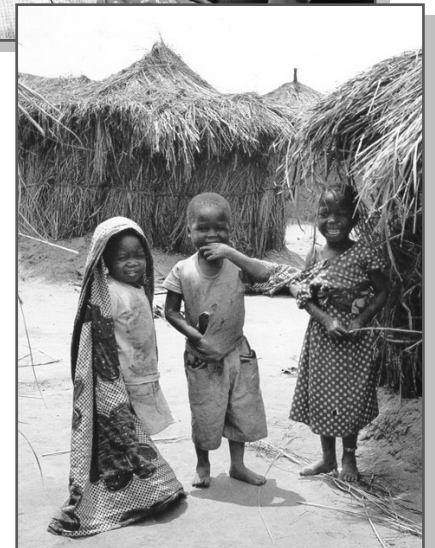
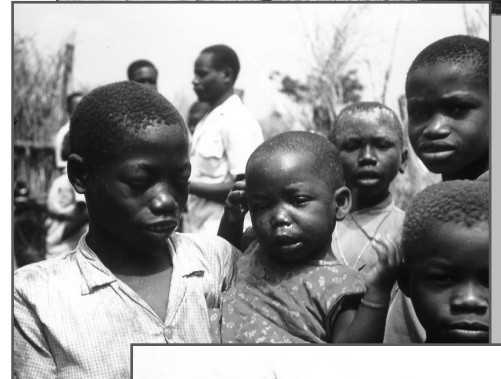
"By the year 2010, we estimate that 20 million African children will have lost their parents because of disease," cites a recent U.N. report on the plight of children. The report was presented at an international conference recently held in South Africa. "Disease will kill more adults leaving more children orphaned in Africa than any large scale war!" the study went on.

"There has been nothing like this throughout history," one official remarked. "In less than 10 years, one third of the children in sub-Saharan Africa will have lost their parents to diseases such as AIDS!" "While this is tragic now," declared a U.S. Government spokesperson, "it is going to have an incredible impact for generations to come. Think about it," he continued, "an entire generation of children is growing up undernourished, poorly educated and without the support of a family. We can only guess as to the horrific long-term consequences." (See related article on next page.)

"Many of these poor children have absolutely nowhere to go," explains Missionaries of Africa director Fr. Richard Roy. Fr. Roy served as a missionary in Chad for the last 9 of his 24 years in Africa before being assigned to direct the organization's Washington, DC, office.

"Often their adult relatives have died from AIDS and other diseases," he continues, "so the children are usually on their own. Many of them are forced to live on the streets or in alley ways . . . wherever they can find food or at least a hand-out. Many are even living at garbage dump sites -- because it's the only place they can hope to find something to eat."

"We (The Society of Missionaries of Africa) are trying to reach out to as many orphaned children as we can," Fr. Roy said, "but there are just so many who need our help. It is an incredible task! The only way we can really be successful is if people here in the U.S. partner with us. It could be the only hope many of these children will have."



The orphaned children living in sub-Saharan Africa desperately need your help! Any gift you send will help provide food, water, clothing, medicine and education to those most in need. Please use the enclosed envelope to send your donation or mail your gift to: Missionaries of Africa • 1622 21st Street, NW • Washington, DC 20009-1089

# The Poorest Generation

## The Lives of Africa's Orphans Hang in the Balance



SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA - With diseases such as AIDS, meningitis, malaria, and tuberculosis ravaging most of Africa, both national and regional officials can only guess as to what long term effect the crisis will have on children whose parents have become victims of the disease.

Some say that many of the orphaned children themselves will also succumb to disease. Nearly 16 million African children are already being treated for infectious diseases. Other officials say that while the children can be treated for the diseases, the effect of so many children losing both parents will alter the lives of children for countless generations to come.

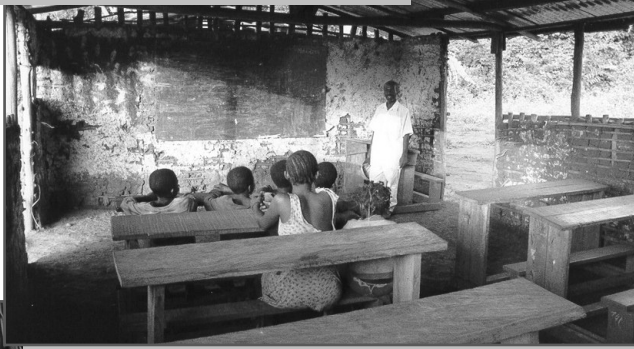
But while experts and civic leaders may disagree on many points, they all seem to agree that Africa's current generation of children is hanging in the balance . . . and which way that balance falls depends upon whatever assistance will be given by those who can offer it.

"The orphans are straining the resources of families, communities and governments," noted a recent report issued by the U.S. Government. "Children whose parents are sick are usually forced to leave school," the report continued, "to help support the family. Yet while educational

and economic security are important, the loss of a loving and nurturing family is often catastrophic!"

"In many ways, this is Africa's poorest generation of children," explains Missionaries of Africa's director, Fr. Richard Roy. "In the past, there have been times of famine and drought as well as wars that have displaced families and even created orphaned children," he continues, "but those were short-term events. The crisis facing Africa's children today is not going away. Because it is so widespread and far-reaching, it is affecting every aspect of their lives!"

"The best thing that we can do for these children," Fr. Roy concludes, "is to make every effort to give them the necessities they need for living . . . including education. If we can help them get these things, then -- as they grow -- they may have a better chance of passing through this crisis. One thing is certain -- if we do nothing, these boys and girls won't have a chance at surviving!"



The crisis in sub-Saharan Africa threatens the lives of millions of children for generations to come. Your gift will help provide basic living necessities such as food and medicine as well as education for the children most in need. Please use the enclosed reply envelope to send your donation. Thank you for whatever you can do.