



The Story of Ministry of Mercy Orphanage Homes

Daniel and Esther Edeh, Proprietors

Tucked away in the remote village of Otutulu in central Nigeria is an orphanage bursting at the seams with the love of Christ and overflowing with orphans and the disadvantaged. Providing food, clothing, education, and medical care for 400 children and staff keeps everyone praying and working hard.



"Auntie" in wheelchair.

The staff are amazing. Women, sometimes widowed or with physical challenges of their own, are hired by Daniel to care for the children. Each "Auntie" cares for up to twelve children 24/7, mothering them as if they were her own. Other staff members include a medical specialist, teachers for the in-house primary school, farm workers, cooks, drivers and numerous others needed for the diverse ministry. Some of the staff grew up at the orphanage. Monday, who uses crutches, manages the second branch of the orphanage in the state capital. Ojonoka, who had plastic surgery on a huge burn scar, is now Daniel Edeh's secretary (or right-hand woman). Zainab, who had part of her gangrenous arm amputated to save her life, now teaches in the primary school.

The children go to school and also help with chores such as laundry, food preparation, farming, running errands and helping care for anyone smaller than themselves. Older girls take care of everyone's hair styles.



All ages help with laundry.



Older girls help cook.



Children help with babies.

Ministry of Mercy (MoM) continues to expand its **farming efforts**. They grow yam, cassava, bananas, plantains, jack fruit, and a variety of vegetables. The old cashew plantation provides a good income once a year; and raising poultry, pigs, and fish provides much needed protein. All farming is by hand, and the children help. MoM grows a lot of food, but additional donations of cash and sacks of produce are needed to feed such a large family. Friends in the USA, Canada, and Nigeria are providing so much help, and we thank the Lord for them!



Cashew crop.



Harvesting mature corn which is used in several main dishes.

History

In 1979 **Les and Esther Nordman** were teaching at a secondary school near Esther's missionary parents' home in Nigeria when God brought Alimo, a 6-year-old disabled Nigerian girl, into their lives. They did all they could for her, but when Les became so ill that the doctor sent them back to the States, they had to leave Alimo with a local woman and go. Soon Esther's recently widowed mother, **Caroline Gross**, took over the care of Alimo. For ten years Caroline cared for her and other children with disabilities, hiring one handler per child to provide the needed care and training.

In 1992 Nigerian Christians **Daniel and Esther Edeh** founded Ministry of Mercy Home for Children with Disabilities (MoM) on their family property. Caroline's group became the first residents, and she continued to visit, support, and consult with Daniel and Esther until her Homegoing in 2012.

During the early years, MoM began to accept **motherless babies** in addition to children with disabilities. News spread, and motherless babies arrived in overwhelming numbers. And now these who would have died without special care and baby formula greatly outnumber those with disabilities.



Four sets of motherless twins.



Toddlers ready for lunch.



"Auntie" Oyibo with her flock.

Daniel and Esther Edeh also took in children and adults who were alone in the world or ostracized or in desperate need of surgery on deformed legs, gangrenous wounds, or cancer. Some have albinism and are discriminated against because of the condition of their skin and eyes. Some of the "Aunties" are widows. At MoM all these adults and children have a place to live, significant work to do, and acceptance because of the **love of Jesus Christ**.

Motherless babies continued to arrive, sometimes four in one month. So many mothers were dying while giving birth to life. Something had to be done! That something is the **MoM Medical Centre (MoMMC)** where women and young children who cannot afford medical care can receive it for free. Pre-natal and post-natal care for mothers and babies give them all a better start. Emergency C-sections save the lives of mothers and babies who would otherwise have perished together. We are so thankful for all the friends who are giving and volunteering to make this possible.



Life-saving C-section



Samson sharing the Gospel at MoMMC.

Education for the children starts with the in-house K-Primary 6 school run by Crystal Gosnell of Pennsylvania and her Nigerian staff. After graduating there, the students board at a number of secondary schools one to three hours away. Expenses for the nearly one hundred secondary school students totals about \$33,000 a year, an average of \$330 per student. Older students are in university, some in Nigeria and some in the USA. For years now the education system in Nigeria has been plagued by unpaid salaries, strikes, and even deadly attacks by Boko Haram. Because of these difficulties, MoM is starting to home-school seventy of the secondary students. Materials and more teachers are needed.



Some students studying in the USA.



Boarding students ready for a new semester.

The love of Christ shines at MoM. The children grow up experiencing it, and they are taught about Christ daily. Early morning devotions, church, and Sunday School are a big part of life. MoM also invites young people from surrounding communities join with those at MoM for fun, educational, and nurturing Bible Camps. Even Muslims are won over by the unconditional love and the respect shown to them and to everyone at MoM.



Boys Christian Camp at MoM.



Seven take the step of baptism.