

***AIDS Orphans Rising***

Sister Mary Elizabeth Lloyd, M.P.F, Ed. D.

Loving Healing Press (2008)

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Reviewed by Richard R. Blake for Reader Views (12/07)

There are alarming statistics that warn “every 14 seconds a Child Headed Household is formed.” Sister Mary Elizabeth Lloyd has written a guidebook to help alert concerned citizens of the magnitude of the problem and to provide the reader with answers the questions: “What should I know, and what can I do to help them succeed?” A Child Headed Household is defined as: children who have survived the death of their parents from AIDS. These households are made up of “little brothers and sisters struggling to stay alive and remain together as a family.” There are often three to eight children per household.

Sister Lloyd is quick to point out that the current view taken by most that these are victims dependent and powerless must be replaced with a vision of how these children have the courage to take control of their economic hardships, deprivations, and exploitation in positive ways so that they can remain together as family. It is this determination that became the motivation for Sister Lloyd to write this book.

All regions of the world are impacted by the enormity of the plight of these children. India, alone, is faced with 3,700,000 children orphaned. Statistics indicate that China has 2,300,000. Other countries around the world afflicted with the same dilemma bring the total orphaned children to over 16,000,000.

The book provides a broad selection of photos which depict bright-eyed children, resilient, with endurance and with promise, doing their best, struggling to stay together, taking the role of adults in caring for younger siblings.

Each chapter of the book offers suggestions for actions for the reader to take as members of a growing world community of concerned citizens. Comprehensive references with additional web links to organizations working with these children offer solutions which help insure that these children will survive, and will succeed.

Sister Mary Elizabeth opens her final chapter with a challenge for the reader to respond to Mother Teresa’s call to action: “If I look at the masses, I will never act. If I look at the one, I will.”

“Aids Orphans Rising” will grip your heart. The needs will linger in your consciousness long after you have read the final word and closed the covers of the book. Sister Mary Elizabeth Lloyd has presented the case for these children. Now it is up to us, the readers, to decide which suggested action steps we can take to help them succeed.