

franciscan

# message

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Here is how to tell if a servant of God has the true spirit: When the Lord does some good work through him, he does not swell with pride, knowing its weakness, but regards himself as nothing and below every other man.

Words of St. Francis

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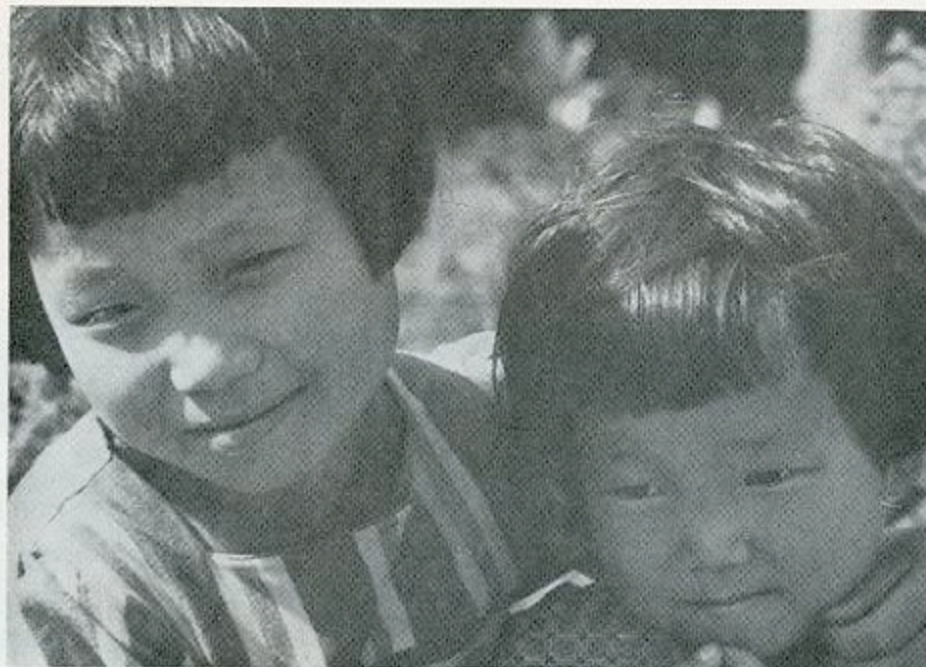
COVER: Children of Compassion, the title of this month's feature story, is also a way to describe these six beautiful children: Billy, Lisa, Becki, Danny, and (rear) Carol and Lori. Miss Florence Wedge tells about these children and about who and what COMPASSION is.



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## The Children of Compassion

by Florence Wedge

Carol, Lisa, Lori, Becki Billy, and Danny.

Koreans all. According to Pat Boone, "six of the finest investments in the future that I have ever seen."

They toured the United States for six months in 1971, under the direction of Miriam Swanson, Vice President of Compassion, Inc. One unfor-

gettable highlight of their trip was their appearance in a TV special to familiarize American viewers with Compassion's outreach to the world's underprivileged children.

The six who came were called "the Children of Compassion." Truth to tell, the title applies to more than 23,000 children in more than 13 countries whom Compassion has

taken under its wing, thanks to its generous sponsors and contributors. Here, briefly, is the story of Compassion since its launching in 1952.

For a few years, it was only a thought in the mind of Rev. Everett Swanson, a Chicago evangelist min-

renamed Compassion, Inc., to help Korean youngsters in need.

Long before his untimely death in 1965, the founder saw Compassion's ministry becoming increasingly effective and appreciated. Thousands of children were already being helped



istering to Republic of Korea troops during the Korean War. The sight of thousands of destitute children digging into garbage cans for scraps of food tugged at his heartstrings. Back in the U.S., he organized the Everett Swanson Evangelistic Association, which shortly thereafter was

materially and spiritually in war-ravaged and poverty-stricken areas. The good work has continued to progress under the capable leadership of its President, the Rev. Henry Harvey, and the devoted staff members of Compassion.

Originally aimed at assisting

Korean tots, the agency soon faced the challenge of broadening its horizons. Today, with the financial support provided by sponsors and contributors, it befriends disadvantaged in Korea, India, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Spain, the Philippines, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and the U.S.

Compassion has also extended a helping hand to hundreds of native evangelists, pastors, and Bible teachers. (A retired Wisconsin sponsor, who wishes to remain anonymous, is sponsoring ten native Korean evangelists at a monthly cost of \$22 per evangelist.) Compassion funds have permitted the establishment of more than 1500 churches in Korea alone. The agency provides vocational training, rehabilitation and extended medical care for handicapped children; it helps finance the secondary and higher education of qualified youth. Among Compassion's other projects are the translation, publication, and distribution of Christian literature and its WARM program (Winter Aid Relief Money) to supply its little charges with clothing.

Closer to home, Compassion has launched its "Street Ministries" to enable youngsters from Chicago's Cabrini-Green area to attend a Christian-oriented summer camp. It has also found sponsors for scores of Indian students at the Southwest Indian School near Phoenix, Arizona. These students represent 25 different tribes, including the Navajos, Apaches, and Cherokees. (Sponsorship of these Indian students is \$36 monthly per student; sponsorship of children in other countries is \$12 monthly per child.)

Sponsors come from all parts of the U.S. and Canada and 22 foreign countries. Some are students taking part-time jobs to earn the monthly amount; some are senior citizens who have to economize in clever or unusual ways to save the required support; and there are the in-betweens, the mature men and women whose loving extends beyond parish, town, and homeland. A few samplings from correspondence received at Compassion headquarters, 7774 West Irving Park Road, Chicago, Illinois 60634, make fascinating reading:

"I am 11 years old and I am trying to do things for my world now. I would like to contribute to your organization. Here is a check for \$5.00. Jeannie Pussycat." (Portsmouth, Ohio)

"The name 'Compassion' is what attracted me to 'adopting' my little daughter." (Champaign, Illinois)

"I received a great thrill from seeing your wonderful program, 'The Children of Compassion,' on television. I am nearly 87 years old and still get much joy out of sponsoring my boy." (Rockwell City, Iowa)

"We are thrilled with 'our son' in Indonesia. The pictures that come and the feeling of love that we have for this family makes us happy to be a part of Compassion. We would like to get on a tramp steamer and go see him. . . . He sounds like a real treasure."

Incoming letters from overseas bring their moments of wonder, jubilation, and sometimes sorrow. Here are a few excerpts from children's letters:

"When I got the gift, my mother broke into tears. She told me that you are the only best person in the world." (Java)

"I put red carnation on my clothes on Mother's Day. The red carnation is for having mother and white for having no mother. I have you, so I will always pray for you." (South Korea)

"I thank the Lord that I receive support from you. My love for you will never die. May I call you mother and father? May the Lord bless you with overflow." (Indonesia)

"I was so glad to act as an angel in the Christmas program. I pray that God will give me wings so I can fly to my family in America. Don't be surprised one day if I come to your home with wings." (India)

"I praise the Lord that I now have someone to look after my welfare. I shouted with joy and I cried for I never have had the feelings of belonged to anyone before... just an orphan. I study mathematics, social studies, science, and three languages." (India)

A good number of U.S. and Canadian sponsors have participated in Compassion Orient Tours and had the happiness of meeting and embracing their sponsored children. One woman visiting her sponsored boy in Korea took him with her to another orphanage to see a girl she was also sponsoring. When they arrived, an older orphan who saw them broke into tears. She had recognized the small boy as her baby brother whom she had not seen for six years. Compassion arranged for brother and sis-

ter to live thereafter under the same roof.

The sponsor's monthly \$12 provides food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and basic education for his or her sponsored child. Sponsors receive a photograph and a case history of "their" child and occasional letters are exchanged. Sponsorship may be cancelled at any time, although most sponsors establish a bond of loving concern and continue their support until the child reaches age 18.

It is a joy for most sponsors to know that the sponsored children have their spiritual needs met. Their life-oriented training includes church and Sunday school attendance, also Bible study and evangelistic services on as personal a basis as possible.

Rev. James Somerville, one of the main apostles of Compassion of Canada, has underscored this Christian-oriented training after returning from a trip to Asia:

"In Korea I saw some of the 130 homes where Compassion is caring for 10,000 orphaned and abandoned children. There were blind children learning to read by touch and find their place in life. There were also the crippled, the deaf, the mentally retarded, the children of leprous parents. They were being lifted out of poverty to a new life with meaning, but even more than that... they were being shown 'His way.' I discovered wherever Christian people are being touched with Compassion, there is hope for even the 'least of these, His children.'

"It was also a great joy to walk with Christ in Indonesia. You could



Photos courtesy of Compassion, Inc., Chicago

sense the joy and love He generated throughout His church. I was glad to be a part, through Compassion, of what God is doing there."

Some time ago, a little girl in Ohio wrote to Chicago to find out if Compassion was really "on the level." She asked, "Do you really have this company? I would like to have proof mailed to me." With their answer, the Chicago staff included a clipping in which the widely syndicated columnist Ann Landers paid Compassion this glowing tribute:

"This is a superb organization which has done a world of good for thousands of orphaned Korean children. I know the key people in this organization and I have been to their Chicago installation and met

them personally. They are dedicated, energetic, and completely honest."

The little Ohio girl was reassured. So are many prospective sponsors and contributors when they learn that stringent standards have been set up for the care of children and the distribution of funds. Promotion and administration costs are kept at a minimum. A well-known audit firm regularly examines Compassion's books. Its field offices around the world constantly supervise the care of children and make certain that all sums are used properly and in keeping with the donors' wishes.

Compassion is deeply appreciative of the supreme value of prayer for the successful outcome of any venture. On the other hand, it wishes to

emphasize that prayer is not enough, whenever it can be accompanied by material help. This thought was well brought out by A.J. Gordon, who has written these poignant lines:

"I have long since ceased to pray, Lord Jesus, have compassion on a lost world." I remember the day and hour when I seemed to hear the Lord rebuking me for making such a

prayer. He seemed to say to me, "I have had compassion upon a lost world, and now it is time for you to have compassion; I have given my heart, now give your hearts."

Prayer from the heart and a hand open in giving are what really help Carol, Lisa, Lori, Becki, Billy, Danny, and all the other children of Compassion.

### YOUR NAME, O LORD

by Carol Sanborn

Your name, O Lord, envelops me  
With burning love and ecstasy!  
In fact, it's like a soothing tune  
Which makes my heart and Yours commune!

Perhaps that's why it saddens me  
To hear it used as blasphemy!  
I wonder whether people who  
Have used it thus know WHY they do!

It doesn't prove maturity —  
For tots use words as easily!  
It doesn't show great manliness  
For women, likewise, can transgress!

The only reason I can see  
Your name expressed as blasphemy  
Is that some people have not learned  
The great respect You've more than earned!

They haven't learned to love like You —  
And therefore know not what they do;  
Or sadder yet, some really know  
And just forget the love they owe!

I realize frustrations come,  
And people's minds get strained and numb;  
And words, sometimes, express the way  
A person feels a certain day!

But other words suffice as well  
When cursing's all these words can tell!  
Now, were this done, O Lord, above,  
Once more Your name would connote love!