

THE UNEXPECTED LOVE THAT HELPED ME FACE REALITY



Achan Priscillar our former supported student and a teacher at Luigi Giussani Pre-primary and Primary School (LGPPS)

My name is Achan Priscillar, am twenty-two years old. I'm a young teacher at Luigi Giussani Pre-primary and Primary school (LGPPS). I live with my two siblings i.e., Abraham who is 19 years old and Rovia who is 12 years old; we live in Acholi quarters. I just finished my course at Kyambogo university this year where I was pursuing a bachelor's degree in arts with education. I managed to get a first-class degree and am very happy about it. However, this would not have been possible without the support of my donors and Meeting Point International (MPI). I lost my father in 2003, since then a lot has been uncertain in my life especially going to school. My mother had to struggle and look for all means of raising us. She then discovered MPI and I was enrolled for support in 2008 when I was in primary five. When I completed primary level, I still wasn't sure if MPI would continue to support me at school. However, they have supported me throughout my journey.

Unfortunately, when I was in senior four, my mother succumbed to cancer. With her loss, I now had a family to take care and provide for. That same year, I was a candidate and I still had to sit national examinations even amidst what was going on. I managed to perform very well; I got a first grade. But I decided to go to the MPI office to request them so as I might not join Advanced level (A-level) of secondary school or do a shorter course of one year so that I could be in position to support my family. However, when I talked to Rose (MPI director), she told me that they would support my family financially and provide any help we needed. This gave me strength to face the reality in front of me at that time, I felt I was not alone. I then progressed to A-level. Not only did MPI pay my fees, they took me to school that was helping me discover

myself everyday (Luigi Giussani High School). The school was always home for me, a place that made me not feel alone, a place that embraced me even in front of the death of my mother. The teachers were always caring, they wanted to find out how I was doing. They helped me embrace the reality of death and I began looking at my mother's death with positivity. This paved way for growth and maturity mainly because I was loved. I completed my senior six in 2016 and emerged as the best student in my school, this was all because of the factors I have mentioned. I also wanted to show all the girls and orphans that it is possible to make it in life even with the hardship we go through. And for me I was even more fortunate to have MPI because it is a family that never abandons you. Fortunately, I was also still accompanied at the university and in my daily life. I was given a job at LGPPS, I began volunteering there as a teacher. The same beauty I encountered at LGHS is what I found at my work place which made me grow the more.



Pricilla and Andrea Nembrini whom she works with at LGPPS.

I decided to become a teacher because of the inspiration of my teachers at the LGHS. When I was a little girl, I had the desire to teach but this desire died when I reached primary school. This was because the teachers looked at academics rather than paying attention to me. I was very shy and I could hardly express myself because the teachers were tough; when I was asked to give an answer in class, I would just start to cry. Studying was about the rules, they never took time to understand who I was. So, when I left the primary, I looked at teachers as monsters, I thought all of them were like that. But when I went to LGHS, by senior three, I had already made up my mind to become a teacher again. This is because how the teachers treated us was different from what I had experienced, they always gave us a listening ear,

they cared for us and the best of all was how they accompanied me when I lost my mother. They not only taught in a way that made me understand the

subject but they also addressed the needs of my heart. They showed me that grades were important but they also wanted to know who Priscillar is i.e., her family, what she likes. Their hearts were open to what was happening from each individual student. Mr. Wandera Joseph my History teacher inspired me so much. The way he presented himself and spoke in public was very attractive. He had this self-esteem that I admired and I wanted to be like him or even better than him.

My journey at the university wasn't easy as I was studying, working and I had a family to take care of. To face this, every night before sleeping, I had to work on a plan for the next day. I would go to work in the morning, in the afternoon, I would go to study at the University and later get home late in the evening and care for my siblings. However, I had a lot of support from LGPPS where am working and from the university. My colleagues at work always covered for me on days I couldn't make it to work because of school and the administration allowed me to reschedule my timetable to study in case they clashed. At the University, my course mates always helped me catch up through discussions in case I missed any lectures; I also consulted my lecturers who understood my situation and were always willing to help me catch up where I was lagging behind. It was tough at first to balance everything but I managed to get through it with time; in fact, I was able to learn organizational skills and planning. This degree that I have achieved is not for me but everyone who stood with me.

I want to scream to all my sponsors who ever supported me especially Familie Zöpfl that accompanied me through my university. I wish that they could feel my love, excitement and gratitude for them. They have accompanied me even in times when I felt things would never work. The fact that they decided to love me this way, that they decided to prefer me this way, to pay for me; I don't take it for granted. In the absence of my parents, they have been parents to me because it is only parents that take you to do what you desire and what you love. They loved me for what I am and it means that their biggest desire was to see me happy. I am happy and grateful and I will always make them proud. I am going to study and get a master's degree in linguistics and P.H.D that I dedicate to them. I want to reach the sky for them and for myself because it is my biggest desire. I see a value in everything that they have done. I want what I have encountered to be able to help the people out there to understand the value of life and its meaning.

Story written by ***Adoch Mary Clare***

01/11/2021