... but the Stigma Kills

(continued from front page)

have enough food to feed my children — why do you want me to continue feeding this old woman?”

Dr. Kongawi stood there in disbelief at what he was hearing. But then Pauline’s son delivered the final blow. “Most ladies her age have already died,” he said. “It is time for her to die, too.”

Still reeling from this man’s ignorance and cruelty, Dr. Kongawi went back to check on Pauline. She was suffering from anemia and dangerously high blood pressure. He wanted to take her to the hospital, but she refused.

“Don’t take me to the hospital,” she said. “Please give me food to eat. If I eat very well, I will recover.”

The doctor returned as soon as possible with meat, eggs, rice, and tea. But everything he brought was eaten by Pauline’s children took all the food that remained. By this time, Pauline was so weak that she was near death. Tragically, she passed away that evening.

Dr. Kongawi was crushed. Pauline was cured! She should have been able to go on with her life and enjoy her later years. But the stigma of this disease changed that. Despite all that we’ve done to treat and educate people about leprosy, Pauline’s heartbreaking story shows us that there’s so much more left to do.

Leprosy is a tough opponent. But that’s why your giving matters so much. Your gifts can do wonders to cure this disease and combat the stigma, but we need to provide more education. We need to increase awareness. You are crucial to this fight. Don’t let this tragedy happen again. Please help with your generous support today.

When the Disease Is Cured but the Stigma Kills

What Pauline’s Tragic Story Means for Our Fight Against Leprosy

Pauline lived in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. When she learned that she had contracted leprosy, she went to an ALM-supported hospital where she was treated and cured. But the telltale signs of leprosy — patches on her skin and sores on her feet — remained.

Released from the hospital, Pauline went to live with her son and his family. She had no choice. Her husband had died long ago, and because she was elderly, she had no other means of support.

But after she’d lived there for a few weeks, her son started behaving strangely. He stopped giving her food. When Dr. Jacques Kongawi, who works with ALM, visited Pauline to check up on her, he noticed that she had lost weight. Concerned, the doctor asked whether she was ill.

“No, I’m not sick,” Pauline replied. “I am going to die of hunger.”

Dr. Kongawi, an ALM physician, was with Pauline shortly before she died of hunger. Pauline’s son and his family refused to feed her because she had leprosy. Dr. Kongawi tried to treat her and provide food, but it was too late. Leprosy’s stigma killed Pauline.

Pauline’s son, and what he heard horrified him. Pauline’s son said, “I am ashamed to have a mother with leprosy. My friends are laughing at me all the time because my mother has leprosy. She is a burden for me. I don’t...
From the President’s Desk

You Can Make a Miracle Happen

Dear Friend,

If you feel good about helping people with leprosy, you’re going to love this.

Because now you can make an even bigger difference in the fight against the disease … enjoy greater convenience when you give … receive less mail … and get direct proof of how your gifts are helping people with leprosy.

All this happens when you join Miracle Partners, ALM’s exciting program for monthly supporters. You simply tell us how much you’d like to give each month. We suggest $29 per month for a yearly total of $348, which cures one person of leprosy. You can also tell us whether you prefer to give by check or have your gift automatically charged to your credit card. We’ll honor your preferences, and each month we’ll send you a simple reminder when it’s time to give. That’s all — no more fundraising letters. Included in that reminder will be a picture of a child who was helped by ALM and your generosity.

We will, however, continue to send you our newsletter so you can stay up-to-date on everything ALM is doing around the world.

Why not give it a try? You can join Miracle Partners by filling out the enclosed reply form. If you find it’s not for you, you can cancel at any time. You have nothing to lose, and everything to gain in the satisfaction that you’re doing so much to help suffering people.

Join us, won’t you? And make a miracle happen.

Thank you and God bless you,

Bill Simmons
President and CEO

Leprosy Victims Can Walk Again!

These Amazing Shoes Change Lives — for Just $10!

When you see the feet of a leprosy victim, you often wince at how painful they look — swollen, cut, toes missing, and covered with large ulcers. Yet they’re not painful at all … and that’s the problem.

Leprosy causes nerve damage. So victims’ feet are often completely numb. As a result, people with leprosy can easily damage their feet without even realizing it. When that damage happens, it becomes difficult or even impossible for them to walk.

But the special shoes that ALM supplies change all that. These shoes protect feet from cuts, ulcers and infections. They also have special insoles that help leprosy victims walk more evenly. So people with leprosy can get around more easily to take care of themselves, to get food, and to get to work.

These shoes open up a whole new world. And the best part is, it only takes a donation of $10 to provide a pair for someone who’s suffering.

In John 13:14 (NIV), Jesus said to us, “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.” It’s an example of how we should respect and care for one another. You can do that today with your gift to help people with leprosy realize new worlds of self-respect and self-sufficiency. Please give, won’t you?

PROFILE IN CARING: Podiatrist Dr. Hugh Cross

A technical consultant for ALM, Dr. Hugh Cross has devoted his life and his skills as a podiatrist to helping people with leprosy. That’s his passion. And his pursuit of it has taken him to some of the most far-flung places on earth.

Born and raised in Zimbabwe, Dr. Cross first worked as a veterinary technician in Cape Town, South Africa. Later, he became a shepherd on the tiny island of Canna off the coast of Scotland. Finally he was drawn to Queen Margaret College in Edinburgh, Scotland, where he studied podiatry. There he became interested in leprosy because of the severe foot problems that affect people with the disease.

His podiatry studies took him to a leprosy hospital in Pune, India, where he did research for his undergraduate dissertation. That work grew into his doctoral research, for which he earned a Ph.D. Shortly after that, Dr. Cross moved to Nepal to work at Lalgadh Leprosy Services Center, and in 2001, he began working with ALM in Nepal as a technical consultant for the prevention of disability for leprosy sufferers. Dr. Cross’s compassion for people with leprosy is boundless, and his dedication to helping them through podiatry is making a huge difference in their lives.

“I work with and for some of the most disadvantaged people on earth,” Dr. Cross said. “They give me so very much that time seldom passes when I do not feel uniquely privileged and purposeful.”

Dr. Cross is just one of the many ALM professionals in the field helping people with leprosy. Isn’t it good to know that your gifts support the work of dedicated people like him?