



Woman Strong

A success story

HOLY TRINITY PEACE VILLAGE KURON



My name is Notabo Mary Nakura. I am 17 years old in 2021 and I was born in Nyanyangachor of Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan. I am a Toposa girl with two younger brothers. My father died when I was only 5 years old. My mother died two years ago.

At that time, the men from my mother's side wanted to get me in an arraigned marriage. They only cared about cows. My mother was against this but after the death of my father she had no power and the whole family turned against her. They were determined to make a bride of me even arranging

my marriage at two years of age. But my mother was strong and wanted her only daughter to attend school. Finally, as my mother had no one supporting her in the village, she was forced to move to Kuron with us children. But these men persisted following her. It became so bad that finally Bishop Paride Taban stepped in.

Bishop obtained funding for me through Friends of Kuron Village, so at age thirteen I was sent to Uganda with another girl, Susan Mark. We stayed with Bishops relatives in Kiguba town, Mosindi District, Uganda. I was enrolled in Blessed Damien Primary School in the 3rd grade. For the first time in my life, I was treated with respect and consideration. I was able to develop myself fully. I was judged on my merits and not on how many cows I would fetch in marriage. I proudly finished my studies there through the 7th grade which is equal to Primary 8 in South Sudan. You can even see how good my English is.

That time in Uganda was great but also challenging. I learned how to rely upon myself and my spirit and will became stronger than the other girls. I was alone but God was with me. What was difficult was the different culture and language. But I persisted and received good marks. The most difficult was that my mother died of a broken heart while I was gone. She had suffered so much in her life and I think she just lost her health. There was no family to help her even in death. Because of this my brothers lost their minds for a short time. When they recovered they scattered; one to Ethiopia and I haven't heard from him since and the other to Narus. I only heard he is there at age nine with someone helping him. I cried when I heard all this news from so far away. But what could I do? I had to keep studying for another two years.

It was the time of lockdown for the Corona Virus so there was no school in Uganda. Finally, in August, 2021, I returned to South Sudan to see if I could find my brothers. Bishop's niece, Ms. Rose Eiyo, took me into her home and let me stay with her at Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron for a short time. I didn't communicate with my brothers yet.

Now in August.2021 I enrolled in the St. Thomas Secondary School. I am so happy to be able to continue my studies. I accept my



situation. I obey and trust those who are assisting me. They love and care for me. They are my next family. My dream is to be a doctor because I feel I want to help those who are suffering and sick. I admired the doctors even before my mom's death. I wish I could also cure people. If that is not possible, then I would like to be a teacher. It is such a great profession. I want to help the poor in need which is a good thing. My math teacher once told me, *"....teaching is not just a job, but about helping the poor..."*

First of all, I thank God for such wonderful people who helped me...especially Bishop Paride Taban who is like a father to me and Friends of Kuron Village who were so generous. My advice to others is to have faith and be strong. No matter what comes, don't let yourself be stressed and give up. You should encourage those who are even weaker than you. God is there and He will help you. With faith and hope you can overcome anything.

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