

Hurricane Ivan brings hope for little Annlee

Tragedy is not something that one looks forward to in life. You never know when it is going to happen or how disastrous it will be. It is also not often that one hears of good coming out of some tragedy. However, thanks to hurricane Ivan, little Annlee James, a student of the Savanna-la-Mar Primary School, Westmoreland, Jamaica, will be getting a chance to better her life.

Annlee lives in a low socio-economic section of the town, where she is exposed to the ills of the world on a constant basis. She and her extended family, which includes her unemployed mother, another sibling, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and a great-grandfather, share a cramped four-room house. The house is located in an environment that makes it difficult for her to get a good night's sleep. As a result, she often falls asleep during her lunch break at school. The house was also severely damaged by the hurricane. On occasions, a friend of her mother let her sleep by her house.

According to her teachers, little Annlee attends school only four days a week. She spends Fridays and the weekend selling plastic bags in the market to help with her family's finances. In order to attend school on the other days, she gets assistance from one of the teachers, who supplies her with lunch, a set of uniform and a pair of rubber slippers.

The teachers say that they are amazed by her performance in school as despite her precarious living conditions, she is already reading well and shows good promise with her schoolwork.

Annlee regrets that her family cannot afford to get her the books that she needs to do extra work. When asked what she would like to be when she grows up, Annlee replied that she wants to become a doctor so that she can help all the sick people in the world get better.

The teachers and her mother have expressed their gratitude for the assistance offered by the two organizations and pray that this gesture will help to set the mold that will give little Annlee an opportunity to realize her dream of becoming a doctor.