The president of Oakseed Ministries, Ed Bradley, in launching this effort, declared “the AIDS pandemic and crisis of AIDS orphans in Africa is without parallel in modern day times.” According to UNAIDS, nearly 12.3 million of the 15 million children orphaned by AIDS worldwide reside in Africa, with 80% in the Sub Saharan region of the country. Because many of these orphaned children have lost their parents to AIDS, they are often forced to live with elderly grandparents who may also be ailing from AIDS. In even more dire circumstances, they are forced to take care of themselves and younger siblings without any adult.

James Tyree of Stand for Africa stated that “by the year 2010 there will be more AIDS Orphans in Africa than the total number of African Americans living in the United States.” By hosting the, “Compassion and AIDS Orphans in Africa,” essay contest, Oakseed ministries seeks to empower the youth of today to think critically about the AIDS Orphan crisis in Africa. Submitted essays should not be a clinical assessment and to the AIDS problem and figures but more of a personal response to the Orphan crisis in Africa. The Essay contest is apart of a yearlong effort to raise awareness of the plight of the African AIDS orphan; it will culminate in the Annual Day of Prayer for Children at High Risk on June 5, 2005.

Oakseed Ministries International (www.oakseed.org) announces its first annual essay contest for American youth on the topic of: “Compassion and AIDS Orphans in Africa.” The contest will run through April 15th, 2005. Prizes for the winners will include: $1,000 to the author of the best essay in each age category, and a Grand Prize of a ten-day trip to Africa for two. The age categories are: under 12 (500 words or less), ages 13-17 (800 words or less) and 18-22 (1200 words or less). Prestigious writers and leaders in the fields of AIDS education and activism, ministry, and outreach will judge the essays.

*For More Information and to receive a copy of the Essay contest Guidelines e-mail essay@oakseed.org
or call the following (toll free) number at: 877-876-9020.