



Her Excellency
**THERESA ABA
KUFUOR**
(née Mensah)

Former First Lady
of the Republic of Ghana

Died 1 October 2023



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Born 25 October 1935
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**ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE STATE FUNERAL
OF HER EXCELLENCY MRS. THERESA KUFUOR
ON 16 NOVEMBER 2023**



OFFICIATING CLERGY

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Most Rev John Bonaventure Kwofie | – Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Accra |
| 2. Most Rev Anthony Narh Asare | – Auxiliary Bishop, Archdiocese of Accra |
| 3. Very Rev Fr John Amoah | – Dean, Osu Deanery |
| 4. Very Rev Fr Ebenezer Akesseh | – Parish Priest, Christ the King Catholic Church |
| 5. Very Rev Fr Thomas Betuyre | – Parish Priest, Mary Mother of Good Counsel Catholic Church |
| 6. Very Rev Fr Emmanuel Obeng Cudjoe | – Parish Priest, St James Catholic Church |
| 7. Rev Fr Donatus Pallu | – Assistant Priest, Christ the King Catholic Church |
| 8. Reverend Commodore Paul Adjei-Djan | – Director General Religious Affairs, Ghana Armed Forces |

PART I: PRE-BURIAL SERVICE

1. Music
 - Police Band
 - Winneba Youth Choir
 - Amambreso Youth Choir
 - Choirs from Christ the King Parish
 - Evangelist Diana Asamoah
2. Reception of Body, Reading of Tributes and Filing Past

PART II: BURIAL SERVICE

1. Entrance Hymn **CH 309** –Angel voices ever singing
2. Introit **CH 162** – Yes, I shall arise and return to my father
3. Introductory Rites
 - Kyrie – St Jude
 - Opening Prayer
4. Scripture Reading
 - a. First Reading – Romans 6:3-9
 - b. Responsorial Psalm **CH 106** –The Lord’s my shepherd
 - c. Gospel Reading – John 14:1-6
5. Homily – Most Rev Anthony Narh Asare

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6. Prayer of the Faithful – Hear our prayer, O Lord
 - a. For the peaceful repose of Mrs Theresa Kufuor
 - b. For the family
 - c. For public office holders
 - d. For the nation
 7. Offering – Amambreso Youth Choir
 8. The Lord's Prayer
 9. Biography – Family representative
 10. Tributes
 - a. Widower
 - b. Children
 - * Poetry recital - Owusuwaa Appiah Davida
 - c. State - Her Excellency Mrs Rebecca Akufo-Addo
 11. Hymn **CH 374** – Through all the changing scenes of life
 12. Wreath Laying
 13. Song ("*Where is our God?*") – Winneba Youth Choir
 14. Prayer for the family – Very Rev Fr John Amoah
 15. Announcements
 16. Hymn **CH 364** – Now the Labourer's task is o'er
 17. Final Commendation
 18. Benediction
 19. Departure (Burial party) – Police Band

BIOGRAPHY

THERESA ABA KUFUOR (NÉE MENSAH)



Theresa Mensah was born on Wednesday 25 October 1934 in Kumasi. She was born to the late Joseph Henry Mensah Snr (aka Paapa), a colonial civil servant who hailed from Elmina, and Rose Mensah (née Maame Abena Tabuaa), the daughter of the Banmuhene of Sunyani Domase, Nana Kofi Amoah, and Obaapanyin Yaa Donkor. Maame sold textiles supplied by the United African Company. Theresa – or Aba, as she was popularly known – was the seventh of the ten children born to the couple who survived to adulthood.

The family settled in a large house in the Adum business district of Kumasi. They spoke Fante at home and were devout Catholics. The family was close-knit, so she grew up supported and surrounded by love.

Theresa started her primary schooling at St Benedict's and continued at Our Lady of Apostles (OLA) girls' boarding school in the Volta Region. During the holidays, she and some of her siblings would visit their eldest sister, Grace Quist-Arcton, a senior educationist who lived in Tamale with her husband, Edward A Quist-Arcton.

06

Theresa had an ear for languages and learned Ewe and Hausa, in addition to the Twi, Fante and English that she spoke flawlessly. After Standard 7, she declined to complete the forms that would have allowed her to continue her education at OLA. She stuck to her decision even though her eldest brother, J H Mensah Jnr (aka Brother Abew), to whom she was close, encouraged her to pursue academic study.

Theresa chose instead to work at Komfo Anokye Hospital as a staff nurse. She started this job without her father's knowledge but he offered her his support when he realised how determined she was. Paapa decided that JH Jnr should help Theresa enrol in a nurse's training course in Edinburgh in the United Kingdom. Brother Abew helped his sister with all the forms, including her passport application. The passport arrived late, when the nursing course had already started, and her brother noticed officials had made an error with her date of birth. He pointed it out but Aba refused to delay her trip further and the mistake became her official date of birth.

Between 1958 and 1961 she trained as a registered general nurse at the Edinburgh Southern Hospitals School of Nursing. Life in Edinburgh was good despite the weather. Theresa enjoyed the social life and made some good friends. One of her friends, Emma Bentil, became her sister-in-law when she married Dr Peter Mensah (now deceased), who was a sibling.

In 1962 Theresa completed her Midwifery (Part I) at the Nuffield Maternity Home in Oxford, followed by Part II at Paddington General Hospital on the Harrow Road in London, now known as St Mary's Paddington. She also undertook a course in premature baby nursing in 1963 and obtained a certificate in advanced nursing administration from the Royal College of Nursing in 1980.

Before continuing her studies in Oxford, she attended a Republic Day dance in London with a friend. Unknown to her, a young man who had recently been called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn was also going to the dance. Coincidentally, he was planning to move on to Exeter College, Oxford, to further his studies, and had been advised by a friend to take a good look at Miss Theresa.

John Agyekum Kufuor had set his heart on working in the public service and he wanted to find a Ghanaian woman to support him in that career. He asked to change partners on the dance floor and introduced himself to Theresa. They became friends. They later saw each other in Oxford and renewed their acquaintance.

The following year, during a trip to Ghana to register for the Ghana Bar, John Kufuor told his mother about his friendship with Aba. His mother knew of the Mensah family, so she told him to take a bottle of schnapps to Okyeso, the Mensah family home, by way of an introduction. John was accompanied by a relative. At Okyeso, they saw Maame and her senior brother, Master Buahin, who recognised John from his time at Government Boys' School. J H Mensah Snr (aka Paapa) was cordial and accepted the bottle of schnapps, but unfortunately he died within a couple of weeks.

The heartbroken Theresa could not attend her father's funeral. However, John Agyekum Kufuor and his family were there.

The couple decided to get engaged and were married at the Brompton Oratory in Knightsbridge, London, on 8 September 1962. Theresa was sad that her father would not be walking her down the aisle. However, her brother JH was in London on his way to a conference, so he assumed that role.

The newlyweds began their married life in Oxford and after they completed their studies they moved to Muswell Hill in north London. The couple had three children within three years. Their first child, John Addo Kwabo (aka Chief), was followed by Anne-Marie Nana Ama Ampomah a year later and Helen Nana Saah the year after that. By this time (1965) the family had returned to Ghana and set up home in Kumasi, and Theresa began working at Tech Hospital on the campus of the University of Science and Technology. She had many friends and worked alongside the best of her friends, Justina Osei-Bonsu.

In 1968, the couple had a fourth child, a son named Edward Kojo Agyekum.

When the Progress Party won the general election of 1969 and Theresa Kufuor's husband became a Member of Parliament, the family moved to Accra. He was appointed a deputy minister of foreign affairs so he travelled frequently on government business. Theresa focused on supporting him, hosting dignitaries and raising her children. Her best friend, Justina, had also moved to Accra because her husband, Kwabena Gyima Osei-Bonsu, was also an MP (for Asokwa) and a minister of state.

The idyll was short-lived. On 13 January 1972 the couple awoke to news that the government of Prime Minister Kofi Abrefa Busia had been overthrown by Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, who installed the National Redemption Council.

Theresa's husband entered detention at Ussher Fort in Accra while she was expecting her fifth child. She began to pay regular visits to her husband in prison and set about rebuilding her life with her four young children. Her brother JH was also in detention at Nsawam Prison. She drew strength from her Catholic faith as she fasted and prayed. Her strength of character and determination to do things her way helped during this period. Family and friends rallied around, with her elder sister Cecilia's husband Mr Frimpong (aka Bench) and her mother, Maame, being among the frequent visitors to the small house in Kanda.

In June 1972, Theresa had her last child, a boy named Victor Kofi Owusu Afriyie Mensah.

She befriended some of the wardens at Ussher Fort and they would sometimes come home for a meal and to collect her husband's laundry before their shift. Children were not allowed visits to the prison, a policy with which she disagreed. On Christmas Day, she took her children to Ussher Fort, muttering about them not being allowed to see their father. She told the older ones to stand outside by the small metal gate with bars in the wall which linked the cells to the waiting area and went inside with the baby wrapped in her cloth. Her determination paid off: Mr Kufuor saw the baby during that visit and waved to the other children as he walked, with a guard, to and from the visiting area.

Mrs Kufuor was a strict but loving mother. She taught her children to work hard, attend Mass regularly and always have faith in God. Their lives revolved around Christ the King Church and its school, which all the children attended. They were also registered as members of the Catholic Youth Organisation and the Boy Scouts or Girl Guides. She seemed to know everything that happened in her house and anyone caught breaking a rule was dealt with. She was a good storyteller who had a way with words and the house was always filled with laughter. She could whistle every family member's name clearly, including her husband's. She was sociable and caring and had a group of loyal friends. She was also a mother to all manner of people and the house was often full.

Her husband was released from prison after 15 months and they set about rebuilding their lives. In the middle of 1973, she began work as the first matron of the newly established Cocoa Clinic.

The Third Republic was inaugurated in 1979 and Theresa's husband re-entered Parliament as the deputy minority leader. Family life was busy, with the children engaged in extracurricular activities while Theresa continued to work full-time and support her husband. After Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings seized power in a coup in 1981, however, life became difficult. The couple decided to send the older children to London for safety. In 1982 the eldest two left and they were followed a year later by the third. Mrs Kufuor was now supporting her family on two continents. She left Cocoa Clinic and ventured into self-employment.

In 1992 it was decided that Ghana would return to democratic rule and Theresa threw herself into supporting her husband in all his campaigning. She extended her network, attended rallies and used her local language skills to good effect. She spoke Ga fluently, too. She was at her husband's side when he won the nomination to lead the New Patriotic Party in the 1996 presidential election and was there when he conceded defeat to President Rawlings.

He ran again in 2000 and she became the First Lady when John Kufuor was sworn in as President on 7 January 2001.

Theresa shunned the limelight but graciously accepted the responsibility of being a mother to the nation. As she was a nurse, she decided to focus on issues that had a bearing on women's and children's lives – the need to provide advice and vocational training opportunities for young women; community-run crèches; pre-school facilities and micro-enterprises that would lead to long-term self-sufficiency. She attended Mass at Christ the King regularly despite her busy schedule, and was often to be seen singing with the choir, which she joined in 1995.

Mrs Kufuor set up a non-governmental organisation, the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation, to assist women and children living in deprived areas. Her achievements include the establishment of development centres in underdeveloped areas of Accra such as Kotobabi and Amasaman. She facilitated the acquisition and installation of a mammogram machine for Sunyani General Hospital and sponsored training in soap-making, dress-making and shea butter processing in areas such as Kumasi, Koforidua and the then three Northern regions.

The Foundation also built and equipped a bakery in Nsawam.

She spoke tirelessly about the need to help curb the spread of HIV/Aids in Africa by setting targets for prevention, treatment, care and support. She travelled extensively, locally and internationally, with and without her husband. Theresa was a good ambassador for Ghana. She worked behind the scenes to influence government policy in areas such as free school feeding, free medical care for pregnant women and free, compulsory and universal basic education.

After her husband left office in January 2009, Theresa continued her advocacy and support work through her Foundation. She also spent more time with her children, grandchildren, extended family and friends. She visited her siblings Brother JH, Brother Peter and Sister Ama often. She attended Mass even when she was unwell, because she did not want her brother to miss seeing her at church and worry. She was proud when, in 2010, the Vatican bestowed on her the award of Papal Dame of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great.

Theresa retired from public life due to ill-health. She bore her illness bravely and with quiet dignity. She caught a cold at the end of August 2023 and was admitted to hospital. She rallied and was discharged after a few days but she remained frail. She slipped away gracefully and peacefully at the family house in Peduase in the afternoon of 1 October 2023 with her family gathered around her.

She is survived by her husband of 61 years, John Agyekum Kufuor, one sister, all five of her children and 14 grandchildren.

Theresa Aba Kufuor

Born 25 October 1934 (officially 25 October 1935)

Died 1 October 2023



EARLY DAYS









014





JOHN AGYEKUM KUFUOR

TO MY BELOVED WIFE, ABA



*“Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband safely trusts her ...”*
Proverbs 31:10-11

Shortly after what I now perceive as a clearly fore-ordained introduction by our mutual friend Dr Kwame Appiah-Poku, Aba and I met in person on 1 July 1961 at a ball at Battersea Town Hall in London, to celebrate Ghana’s first anniversary as a republic. Aba had just completed nursing school in Edinburgh and was on her way to pursue a midwifery course at the Radcliffe Infirmary, part of Oxford University. I was also on my way to Exeter College, Oxford, having just passed my Bar exams at Lincoln’s Inn in London.

My first impressions of my beautiful Aba were that of a soft-spoken and well-mannered lady; and within a year of bonding and courting, we both discovered that we very much enjoyed each other’s company. We had the same cultural tastes in art, music and cinema and shared similar social preferences. Consequently, we decided to tie the knot; and this we did at Brompton Oratory in Knightsbridge, London, on 8 September 1962.

We were joined by Chief, our first male child, on 6 September 1963. By mid-1964, shortly after completing our studies in Oxford, we moved to London to pursue our respective careers. Our second child and first daughter, Nana Ama, was born in Golders Green in London on 29 November 1964. However, due to overwhelming pressure from my family in Kumasi, we decided to return home to Ghana.

Shortly after our return to Kumasi in January 1965, I joined Okomfo Anokye Chambers as a junior lawyer with Victor Owusu as senior partner. Aba later joined the Kwame Nkrumah University hospital as a nurse/midwife. Soon after that, on 4 November 1965, Aba and I welcomed our third child, Saah, into our rapidly growing family.

Our fourth child, Agyekum, was born on 16 February 1968. By the time he arrived, I was already embroiled in the web of public service. I had been appointed in 1967 as the chief legal officer and city manager of the second city of Ghana, Kumasi. That was our entry into civic and public life in Ghana.

Aba had a very confident personality that fitted in with ease everywhere we went, and which also allowed her to cope under the most challenging of pressures.

In 1969, I got elected as a Member of Parliament of the Second Republic (for Atwima Nwabiagya in the Ashanti Region). I then also got appointed as Ghana's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs under the premiership of the late Professor Kofi Abrefa Busia. So, our young family had to relocate from Kumasi to Accra. Aba, to my delight, took our evolving life in her stride as she adjusted effortlessly, and with confidence, to our new milieu of a life in national politics and diplomacy.

Between 1969 and 1971, with both Aba and me in our early thirties, our lives seemed to be on an upward trajectory. But this was to be truncated with a shocking and unexpected coup d'état on 13 January 1972, which arrested practically all the members of the government and threw us in prison. Our world had crashed.

Fifty-four of us, including cabinet ministers, junior ministers and some Members of Parliament, would remain in jail for a minimum period of between 12 and 15 months each; having initially endured – incommunicado, for almost eight weeks – denial of any contact with family or the outside world at Ussher Fort prison. This angel of a woman, to my amazement, would survive the ordeal of raising five children on her own – in my absence, Aba gave birth to our fifth and last child, Kofi, as a single parent on 16 June 1972. Her strong and exceptionally disciplined personality did indeed come to the rescue of our family.

I could not have foreseen the crash that befell us and could not, therefore, have made any provision for our ordeal. However, Aba rose above that. With her strong, prayerful faith in God, Aba's spirit would not and could not be broken. She survived on very little then; and she truly kept our hopes alive. When allowed to visit me in prison, she left me with a sense of optimism that was most assuring. I survived my incarceration of 15 months largely because of Aba. She was a woman of sacrifice, devotion, humanity and resilience.

After my release from detention, she returned to practice nursing at Cocoa Clinic, where she rose to the position of the clinic's first-ever matron. Only once did Aba strongly protest about my absence from home, as my entrepreneurial businesses kept me away for extended periods of time. Her commitment to our marriage and her exceptional will to be a loving wife, a caring home-maker and a firm but loving parent have produced the fruit of what our children have become today. She was firm, yet tender.

When I was elected to office as the second President of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, Aba would play a pivotal but quiet role in shaping key social interventions, such as including the kindergarten stage for all the children of Ghana in the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education policy; the provision of one hot meal a day to primary school children across the nation; the launch of the National Health Insurance Scheme; and the introduction of free maternal care for all.

She also worked tirelessly as the founder of the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation to support early childhood development programmes across the country. Her Foundation built three schools and gifted them to communities in Nyanyanor in the Central Region, and in Kotobabi and Amansaman in Accra.

Through her Foundation, she also provided a breast cancer screening unit to a health-care services provider in Sunyani and she assisted bakers in Nsawam and Adoagyiri with baking equipment. She established a phone-in counselling centre to support and combat the stigmatisation of HIV/Aids patients. Remarkably, Aba rendered all her community action-based services without seeking any publicity.

Aba and I shared a gleeful sense of humour, which meant we could laugh at each other; just as we could naturally forgive each other for our unfailing human shortcomings.

She and I embarked on many trips together as I pursued my political career and after I became President. However, what touched her most during our international trips was the recognition she received from Pope Benedict XVI, who bestowed on her the prestigious Papal award of Dame of St Gregory the Great. Throughout her life, she remained a devout Catholic; a passionate worshipper; and a chorister of Christ the King Catholic Church in Accra.

Aba, your departure has left an unbridgeable void in my life; but I take solace from the many mercies and blessings the good Lord has showered on our journey of 62 years: living long; the blessing of beautiful children; 14 splendid grandchildren; the honour of having served our nation together; the gift of loving; extended families; and a network of friends around the world.

I am so thankful to the good Lord God for giving you to me as my life partner. Aba, you have earned your good rest and as the words of the Apostle Paul go:

018

“You have fought the good fight, you have finished the race, you have kept the faith. Now there is in store for you the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to you on that day – and not only to you, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.”

Fare thee well, Aba. Adieu, my dearest love!

NANA ADDO DANKWA AKUFO-ADDO

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC



On that fateful night of Sunday 1 October, I had gone to the residence of President Kufuor in Peduase to, as it were, catch up with him, since it had been a while I had visited him at his residence. At the end of our discussion, he gave me the unpleasant news, one he had dreaded for some time. His beloved wife, Mrs Theresa Kufuor, our nation's former First Lady, had died that morning. I was deeply saddened by the news of her death.

Her passing reminds me keenly of human mortality, that is, that Almighty God will come for each and every one of us at the appropriate time. I am grateful to Providence that our lives crossed. She fought a good fight, and deserves the victor's crown. Hers was a life well-lived.

Mama Theresa, as she was affectionately called by most people, Aba to me, was a devoted companion of President Kufuor throughout their 61 years of marriage. She was an invaluable and constant source of advice, encouragement and prayers for him. Member of a well-known family from Odumase, in the Bono Region, and Bantama in Kumasi, in the Ashanti Region, sister of the renowned statesman, the late J H Mensah, and aunt of President Kufuor's Secretary, the brilliant diplomat, Ambassador D K Osei, she was politically astute, and was a major contributor to her husband's political success. She was a composed and articulate First Lady, polyglot, fluent in several languages including Ewe, who brought great dignity to the position.

019

I knew several members of her family, especially her celebrated brother, and I am grateful that I had the opportunity to know her too. Her warmth, kindness and grace were exceptional. She bore the vicissitudes of life with great stoicism and an unshakable belief in the sovereignty of Almighty God.

My wife, Rebecca, the First Lady, our family and I will miss her a lot.

We extend our deepest condolences to President Kufuor, their children, grandchildren, and their families on their irreplaceable loss.

We wish her a peaceful place of abode in the Bosom of the Almighty, as she deserves, until the Last Day of the Resurrection when we shall all meet again. Amen!!

Jubilee House, Kanda, Accra
7 November 2023

TRIBUTE FROM THE STATE



The late Mrs Theresa Kufuor whose maiden name was Theresa Mensah was born on 25th October, 1935 to Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Kwabena Mensah at Wenchi in the Brong Ahafo Region, now the Bono Region. Her father was an accomplished businessman who owned a number of retail shops while her mother was a homemaker.

The late Mrs. Kufuor is known, among other things, for her expertise in Nursing Management and Administration. Education was indispensable in her journey to become a great asset in the field of nursing, specifically, midwifery. She started her education at the Catholic Convent, Our Lady of Assumption (OLA), at Keta in the Volta Region. She later studied in Edinburgh, Scotland as a Registered General Nurse in the Southern Hospital Group of Nursing. As a go-getter and someone full of passion for the nursing profession, Mrs. Kufuor pursued further studies at Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford and the Paddington General Hospital in London, becoming a State Certified Midwife with a Certificate in Premature Nursing. With a demonstrated high level of knowledge, hard work, commitment and passion the late Mrs. Kufuor rose through the ranks of her profession and at a point became the Administrator at the Royal College of Nursing in London.

As an individual characterized by optimism and positivism, Mrs. Kufuor unwaveringly supported her husband in his campaign for the presidency. She became the First Lady when her husband was the second President of the Fourth Republic of Ghana from 7th January, 2001 to 6th January, 2009. She endeared herself to many people and all who encountered her on a personal level through humility, motherliness and hospitality. She played an instrumental role during the administration of her husband. A noteworthy impact she made during her tenure as the First Lady was her advocacy for the implementation of UNESCO's Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education programme for kindergarten children in the year 2007 through Government's white paper on Educational Reforms. The objective of the policy was that all Ghanaian children at the age of four should receive two years compulsory Early Childhood Development (ECD) education before entering primary one.

In line with her support for the underprivileged children and mothers inspired by her compassion and empathy, she was involved in numerous charitable and philanthropic endeavours. Her direct involvement and commitment to the welfare of poor children and mothers was also evident in the establishment of the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation (MCCDF) in June 2001. The foundation is a non-governmental organisation that operated in both Ghana and Canada, focusing on the prevention of mother-to-child disease transmission. Mrs. Kufuor's remarkable impact in healthcare, education and women empowerment caught the eyes of both local and international organisations. In 2007, she was awarded the Papal Award "Dame of St Gregory the Great" by Pope Benedict XVI for her unwavering commitment to the welfare of underprivileged children and their mothers. She also received several other awards and citations from various institutions and organisations including the Ghana Registered Midwives Association, the Ghana AIDS Commission, the Ghana Journalists Association and the Ghana Women of Excellence Awards.

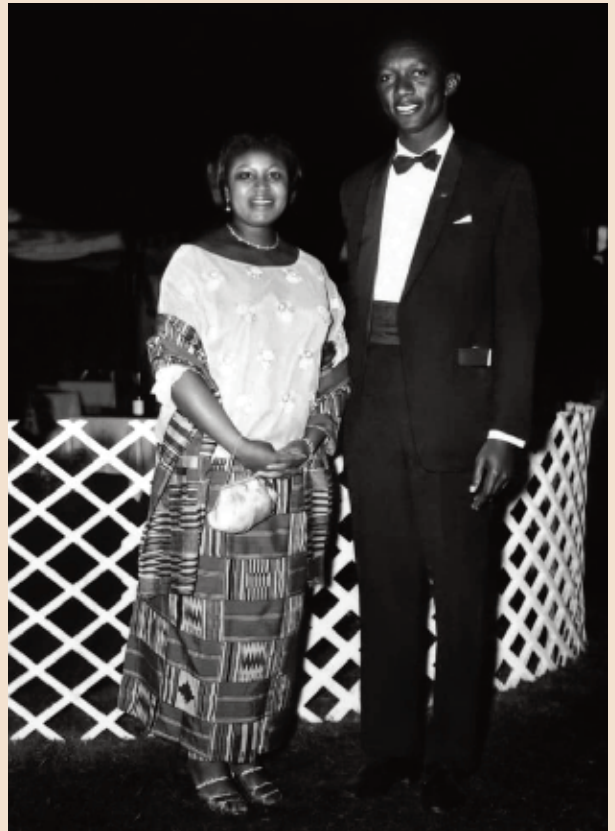
Though the demise of our former First Lady has caused us pain, yet we are grateful to God that her life was impactful. Let us take solace in the beautiful memories we shared with her and be encouraged by her legacy as we do our best for God and country.

REST WELL MRS. THERESA KUFUOR.

YOU WILL FOR EVER BE IN OUR HEARTS.



JOHN &
THERESA









CHIEF

A VIRTUOUS WOMAN



Maa was the perfect blend of calm and emotional balance. The mother I knew as a child was a very loving but strict woman. Although she was encouraging and supported all of us in our endeavours, she laid down strict boundaries and rules, which were to be adhered to at all times. Any breach of boundaries was met with swift and instant punishment at home, plus a report to your teacher requesting additional punishment at school. There was no escaping her discipline and her moral code.

She was beautiful, stylish and graceful but not given to excess in her appearance. Her hair, which was plentiful, was as close to natural as possible and more often than not she had it in her favourite, simple “Pompidou” hairstyle. She wore barely any make-up.

Maa was a bundle of energy, loved singing and dancing and was very fast on her feet if she needed to chase any of us around the house. Emotional battles with her were a waste of time, because she would not yield to anyone’s desires not to eat a particular food – or any attempt, for that matter, to dodge housework.

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She lived the Christian virtues of humility, charity and fortitude. A devout Catholic and a parishioner at Christ the King Church since 1969, she had a deep faith in God which allowed her to remain hopeful even in dire situations. She was prayerful and good at listening, which meant that, amid the noise of politics, she was in touch with herself and could decipher her quiet inner voice. This made her extremely perceptive and a sharp judge of character. She could see through people years before they showed their true nature. She managed to detach herself from the accumulation of material belongings, which gave her the space to build spiritual maturity and clarity of thought.

Most of the time, she was a person of very few words but she possessed a sharp wit and a good sense of humour. When she had to give an opinion on an important matter her opinion was clear and she would show that she had considered all the options in coming to a decision.

Maa was strong-willed and unflappable under pressure. I saw this part of her character in the crisis we suffered after the 1972 coup. There were four of us under the age of ten and our youngest sibling was born that year! Maa didn’t put a foot wrong. She somehow managed to keep us all in good form in all aspects of life.

Her ability to manage in such situations stemmed from being skilled at distinguishing wants from needs. She was able to prioritise what the family needed to do. Her unique attributes were perfect for our family and helped resolve the difficulties that we encountered.

She never put herself first, and she was a dependable support to her husband in all circumstances. She was the glue that held us together and the pivot around which we all swung. Her value system, which has served me and my siblings so well, is now embedded in a third generation, ready to be passed on to the next one.

Maa, I can only thank you for your love, your kind advice, your persistent intercession in prayer and your calm presence, especially in times of trouble.
Sleep soundly in the bosom of our Lord.

John Addo Kwabo (“Chief”) is the eldest child of Theresa Kufuor



NANA AMA



Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

“Many daughters have done well but you excel them all.”

Proverbs 31:28-29 NKJV

Our mother was a true Christian, very strong in her faith, and had an admirable personal relationship with God. She prayed about everything. Even as she drove us to school, we all prayed aloud and even harder if we were running late in traffic. She made the sign of the cross on our foreheads as we parted. She kept a rosary in *every* bag.

Whatever difficulties you had, her advice and guidance started and ended with prayer. “*Ɛ’bisa Nyame?*” (“Have you asked God?”) or “*Bisa Nyame*” (“Ask God”) and “God does not make mistakes, so soldier on and bear your cross trusting in HIM”.

Mum was warm and gentle, loving, calm and controlled, very punctual, kind and compassionate. She was very hard-working and a disciplinarian.

028

Right from our childhood, Mum was tough on personal hygiene, politeness, manners and being considerate by cleaning up after yourself.

She was time-conscious and as soon as she blew her car horn to go to church she would have us running to her car with combs, socks, shoes, jostling for seats. You could not miss Mass, either.

Mum was great fun, too, laughing as she watched us race to obey her and trying to meet her deadlines. She whistled for each of us differently as shouting out was discouraged.

Our mother made precious moments: as children, evening car rides, bedtime stories and songs; as we got older, pillow fights, teasing, jokes, as well as teaching us we could not have everything. We used to race for mangoes when we heard them fall in the yard, but sometimes Mum would quickly say, “*Me deaa*” (“It’s mine”) as it dropped, and everyone would sit still in obedience, even though Mum would never go for it or eat it.

Some weekends, especially during Dad’s detention, she would entertain us by either a ride to Ambassador Hotel for club sandwiches and pastries or fixing the girls’ hair at Auntie Janet’s salon at the hotel. We sometimes got to hear and see Pat Thomas in some hot jumpsuits with a big afro performing the Afternoon Jam at the hotel. On other occasions, we had picnics at Ridge Park and visited our Auntie Kufuor who lived very close by.

She was a “one-of-a-kind” mother because when we remember our most embarrassing moments and being told off or being punished, we all do it with laughter, falling off our seats. She was strong-

willed and would work quietly and calmly to get her children to do what was right and necessary. She accepted all our cousins and friends, treating them with much love and support, some living with us for long periods of our lives.

She had a dedicated and dependable circle of friends for her entire life, the first of these being her siblings and cousins and the closest being Auntie Justina (of blessed memory). She was also always ready to make and accept new friends, inviting or extending a hand of friendship to others.

The show of respect for each other amongst Mum's family was distinctive and admirable, referring to each other with a title before the name, irrespective of their age – brother, sister, “auntie”, cousin, with our grandma's title, “Maame”, being the greatest. There was no such thing as falling out or tensions that we witnessed. Mum practised this in all her relationships.

As I was her first girl, Mum laid out my responsibilities of service and sacrifice even before I went to secondary school: going to the market, cooking, cleaning and making sure everyone had been served. I sometimes felt I wanted to join the others watching videos, which I hardly ever got to do. I had to do “big sister duties”, which carried on, and I am grateful to her for always encouraging me to perform and deliver.

She inculcated in me hard work, dedication to prayer, serving my God, and advised me to walk away from anything that would cause me pain or let me lose my focus. “Let them have it” and “God does not make mistakes”, she would say, “*Yere wo bo: mia wo'ani*” (“Keep at it and don't give up”).

She was a beautiful woman who taught me to keep things simple and elegant in how I presented myself. Whenever she was pleased, her first favourite expression would be: “How nice.”

She supported me in all I did and raised my children with such great care, immersing them in boundless love and prayer, teaching them to put their trust in God.

Mum attended many sports and speech and prize-giving days at Trinity Montessori, Roman Ridge and GIS, cheering her grandchildren on, even as First Lady. She sat with them at church every Sunday, even when they were very young and difficult to control, teaching them to be well behaved during Mass.

She trained them not to have fizzy drinks because it would make them hyper and not to eat in-between meals. When they got to secondary school, she had a tête-à-tête with them and gave them pocket money secretly. She taught them the importance of family, that cousins are friends and not just cousins, creating a very close-knit relationship amongst them. She thoroughly enjoyed raising her grandchildren.

I am truly blessed and short of words to express my gratitude. Mummy, you are irreplaceable and unforgettable. I will miss you every second of my life and most importantly, carry your words in my heart and mind always and for ever.

You were a remarkable lady, beautiful inside and out, and we are blessed to have had the opportunity to be your children. I know you are watching us today and saying, “How nice,” as you watch Dad, family, all friends and well-wishers honour you. We thank God for your life.

Mummy, da yie. Nyame 'nfa wo nsie. And please continue praying and watching over us.



HELEN SAAH



My dear mum ... Mummy ... Ma ... Auntie Theresa ...

I'm struggling to write this tribute because our relationship was private and I want to keep it that way. It is four weeks since you left us and I can't believe that I won't feel your warmth or hear you answer to your name again.

You were the perfect mother for me. My earliest memories of you were of a beautiful, gentle and kind woman who smiled often and would entertain guests at the house on Switchback Road.

I saw a different side to you after the coup in 1972, when we lived in Kanda. You knelt and prayed often. You fasted, too. You were strict and had rules which we had to follow. One of the earliest rules was that we couldn't claim ownership of things we found in the house or compound. Everything, including the mangoes on the tree, belonged to you, so we had to ask permission.

You told us incredible stories which you acted out and some of your songs were unique. I wonder if anyone else knows the song "*Da koro bi, Kofi sore ke school*". Your jokes would have us in stitches. We were like the Von Trapp family because we would come running when you whistled our names perfectly.

031

You taught me how to cook and bake. I remember your homemade ice cream and the first time you baked bread. It didn't go according to plan and the loaves looked like bricks. We laughed so much when Daddy gave the bricks a nickname: "Awudu Bomber". After that, you corrected the recipe and we had a constant supply of homemade bread. Christmas was an elaborate affair with a real tree, turkey and all the trimmings. As teenagers, you taught us to be punctual because you would drive off and leave latecomers behind.

You had a big heart and you were a mother to not just your biological children but to people from all walks of life. There were three of us in Achimota School but I remember when 11 children arrived unannounced for their exeat. I was nervous but you welcomed them with smiles and hurriedly prepared lunch.

Our house was often filled with visiting relatives and friends. I remember when PK came for the holidays because he taught us *Abronoma* and we would run races holding sheets with the ends tied around our waists. We learned so much from Uncle Badu, Angie, Sister Ama and Sister Afia when they came to stay. I also got freebies such as kelewele from your "daughter" Abena who sells food behind Association School and the one who sells roasted plantain near Mary Mother. You said it was important to give people moral support.

You were there for the birth of my children and you became my backbone and my prayer warrior.

Isabelle had major health issues so she spent months in the intensive-care unit. You prayed for me and with me. You told me that God will never give me a burden that I can't carry so I should be brave and pray unceasingly. You were my banker, cheerleader and nurse. You would listen quietly to my problem and then summarise it by focusing on the important points. You would say, "Leave it with me because I need to think about it and get back to you." I always felt relieved because you would solve the problem or point me in the right direction. Your practical support didn't always go to plan. When you offered to look after Eva Akyaa at night so that I could sleep, she cried so much that Daddy sent her back. He said my baby was terrorising him in his house. That was funny, coming from the President of the country.

Our relationship changed when you fell ill. I became your journalist and newsreader. I brought you the gossip and you would laugh as I read the jokes in the newspapers. We would listen to music online. Your taste ranged from classical music and hymns to Ewe folk songs like "Blewoo" and some other "unusual" musicians such as Nana Mouskouri. Particular favourites from the '70s were "Walatu Walasa" and "Gyae Nsa Nom" by Wulomɛi. We listened to Mass from Christ the King Church online and prayed the Novena, which Father Akesseh sent by WhatsApp.

I wish I could have spent more time with you but I thank God for the time we had. Thank you for loving me despite my quiriness. You gave me a voice because you always listened to my views. You were the heartbeat of the family and we would all gather around your bed reminiscing and laughing about events in our childhood, including the punishments.

032

I recently saw a plaque with the inscription, "To the world she was a mother but to her family, she was their world."

You were my world, Mummy. I love you and miss you but I will be fine because God will not give me a burden that I can't carry.

Rest in perfect peace until we meet again.

Mummy, nante yie.

Nyame mfa wo kra nsie.

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains
be carried into the midst of the sea.*

Psalm 46

AGYEKUM

THANKFUL ...



“Girlfriend” ...

My heart is broken ... shattered ... BUT, God is STILL God!!! 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, “*In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*” This scripture is NOT NEGOTIABLE, nor is it CONDITIONAL, so I am compelled by my Faith and Belief in Jesus, The Christ, to yield and align myself accordingly ...

Therefore, in this instance, too, difficult as it is to reconcile, I give my unreserved thanks to God Almighty, for HE ALONE is indeed Worthy of ALL the Praise and Glory.

For the gift of your life to me, as my mother, I am Thankful ...

For the gift of your unconditional Love for me, I am Thankful ...

For the gift of having you to seed/teach, guide and nurture my Faith, I am Thankful ...

For the gift of having you as my confidante and my cheerleader, I am Thankful ...

You would always say:

033

“Go before the Lord on your knees with every problem you encounter, because He is the only one who can deliver you in times of adversity. Always remember to give HIM thanks.”

“It’s not okay when everything is fine with you alone, while your brother or sister is struggling or has a problem. Always look out for each other.”

“Whatever you put your hands to, do it well, to the best of your ability, and do it completely ... Have a plan and focus.”

“Don’t compare yourself to others. Always be yourself and be content with what you have.”

“It’s not enough to just know right from wrong ... you must endeavour always to do what you know is right.”

Girlfriend, you were a perfect balance of Love and Discipline. The disciplinarian in you earned you many coded nicknames, such as “Severe”, “The Law”, “Chief Justice” and a few more, but somehow you always knew it was you we were referring to.

God in HIS infinite wisdom knew no one else could have been my mother, because I was sometimes more than a handful; so HE must have endowed you with extra anointing just for the assignment of raising me ...

I recall a time when I was “acting up”, even daring to announce to you that I wasn’t going to continue with school. You quickly gave me that famous “side-eye”, sized me all the way up and down, flared your nostrils slightly and nipped that aspiration in the bud with surgical precision – retorting in the purest Fante: “You can forget that dream ... I don’t know what’s going on in that head of yours, but let me tell you: no matter how long it takes, you will complete your education, whether you like it or not. In fact, on the day you die, I will make sure you go to school first, finish the day and then when you get home, you can die if you like ... Do you hear me? Now get out of my sight and go and read a book.”

I thought to myself, defiantly: “Does Mum think she is God? Now she even wants to determine when, how and the events of the day I die ...”

To this day, whenever I feel the urge to “act out of order”, I can hear your voice, speaking Fante, gently but firmly calling me to order.

You were – still are – a force of nature! You have given me so many “nuggets”: confidence, tempered with humility; taught me first to lead and to govern myself by being an independent thinker (not follow the crowd); to strive to be an empathetic and humane person willing to serve. Indeed, you provided me with a firm foundation in life and for that, I am thankful.

Thank you for everything ... your love, your patience, your time, your labour, your prayers, your guidance and all the sacrifices you made.

034

Ayekoo – job EXCELLENTLY done, Mama ...

Obaatan pa ... M’ennywa wo se so biom da ... Da yie ... Onyame enfa wo kraa nsie ...

Rest on in Paradise, Mama, till we meet again.

I LOVE YOU, MA, ALWAYS AND FOR EVER.

AGYEKS

KOFI

TO MY FIRST TRUE LOVE



Welcome to a love story of 51 years of pure happiness, brought about by this one woman I call Mum, aka Mama Tess. This lady was so naturally beautiful that she barely used any make-up. So simply did she dress that she always stood out enough to project a presence wherever she went. So confident a woman that she had an impact on so many lives, without hogging the limelight, even though she was a first lady of this country for eight years. And that smile of hers could disarm any man. How could I not love her?

Being four years younger than my closest sibling and with Dad travelling much of the time, I became your boyfriend when all the others left for secondary school and abroad. You kept me like a handbag, dressed me up in ties and jackets and took me everywhere, including church and post-Mass meetings. I had your personal attention, which I loved, but it also restricted me from other pursuits such as football, which I enjoyed immensely. Yet it was a good bargain, as I felt you needed me as much as I needed you and I loved being the centre of your world.

Through all the changing seasons of my life, Mum was the one who offered me a safe haven at no cost whatsoever. I made many mistakes along the way but never did she make me feel silly, useless or out of place. Yes, there were stern discussions and corrections, but she always knew how to end these making me feel rejuvenated.

035

Although she had five children to mother, she was mine alone, I thought, because of the way she made me feel. She knew how to comfort me when I was low, how to inspire and refocus me when I felt lost and how to bring me down a notch or two when I showed signs of pride or acted like a hothead. So great was the bond that she could just look at me and at once tell my mood.

I remember one time, as a teenager, I was deep in thought about a problem when I came into contact with her. She just looked at me, did not ask what the matter was, but simply advised me that whenever I felt things were beyond my control, I should kneel and pray to God for direction. It was the best advice anyone has ever given me. I have used it many times and each time, after praying, things have changed for the better.

There was also the tough love which I never appreciated until I was older and independent. The review of the dreaded school report card always started with a long discussion with Dad which bruised my ego. I mostly had good grades and thought having one or two Cs never hurt anybody. In my mind, I always had better grades than some of my friends so I always came to you looking for comfort. But our discussions almost always ended with the question: "If your friend jumped off a cliff to their death, would you follow him?"

It was a stark reminder not to follow others blindly. However, this rhetorical question was almost always followed by the encouraging statement: “You know you can do better – *enti, Kofi, yere wo bo* [so Kofi, try harder]”. Back then I never grasped the depth of this statement but I quickly understood in my primary years that failure was not an option and that there was always room for improvement. Such statements have become part of a strong foundation for me. Till today, almost like a general’s rallying call to his troops, I hear your angelic voice saying, “*Kofi, yere wo bo*” whenever I face a struggle, knowing I can find a solution and improve lives of people around me.

A beautiful soul that I loved and shall never forget. I never thought I was a mummy’s boy, but looking back now I think maybe I am. I say this because I loved Mum so much that when I met my wife, Edith, and we decided to get married, I had the nerve to tell her that if the marriage was to work, she had to accept my mother and find a way to be in her good books. Being older and wiser now, I recognise that the request could have been the beginning of World War III but I was blessed with a Superwoman called Mum and, in typical fashion, she took Edith as a daughter and they bonded pretty well over the past 23 years.

In that time, as my children came along, Mum offered them the same caring, gentle wisdom. I know they cherished every minute of the grace that you poured into their lives.

As an adult with three children, I look back at what you did for us and I can only feel grateful. There were so many times you could have given up on life, with the politics, the coups d’état, financial difficulties. But you never gave us, your children, a reason to miss out. You took everything in your stride and provided us with a great home and good memories only. We went to the best schools, you accommodated our friends, built our confidence and gave us a lifestyle that afforded us the ability to live life to the fullest on our own terms. I have said thank you to both you and Dad on many occasions but I shall repeat it here today in front of family, friends and loved ones. Thank you for a good life and for ensuring that I am the man I am today.

I could go on for ever. It is so difficult to let you go. But I believe the good Lord who gave me to you has a very good reason for taking you away. I pray that He gives you the best resting place until we meet again. Thank you for loving, nurturing and supporting me, my siblings, my wife and my children. You will always have a place in my heart, Mum. I will love you forever.

Rest in perfect peace.
Your true love and baby last,
Kofi

GLADYS



Auntie Aba was a beloved mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and aunt. My parents were great friends with Auntie Aba and Uncle Kofi. As a teenager, I enjoyed the warmth of moments shared between our two families, especially on my visits to her Dzorwulu residence during school holidays.

Her home was a sanctuary of welcome, filled with shared meals and hearty laughter. Auntie Aba held a firm stance on discipline, ensuring the younger generation adhered to proper conduct. Her fashion style, unique and captivating, left a lasting impression, as did the treasured photographs of her time abroad, standing proudly beside Uncle Kofi at various gatherings. Time spent at her home in Dzorwulu also served as an introduction to her extended family, creating a rich backdrop of cherished memories spanning Ghana and England.

My relationship with Auntie Aba deepened when Chief and I began our journey together. She often stayed with him on visits to London and I would tag along on her few shopping trips. With a keen eye and fondness for unique collectibles, Auntie Aba would playfully remark that her precious selections might be mistaken for “old stuff”. We spent many evenings sharing stories and laughter with family and friends drawn together by Auntie Aba’s visits.

Auntie Aba was a nurturing presence in the upbringing of our children, sharing months with us during their tender years. While I was still in London, she accompanied Chief to ensure that Kofi’s first day at school in Ghana was filled with love and support. Alongside Uncle Kofi, she was instrumental in helping Chief build a befitting home for us in Ghana.

037

Auntie Aba embodied the virtues of a steadfast Catholic, her life a testament to faithfulness and moral integrity. She stood as a beacon of strength and principle, holding the threads of her family tightly woven for decades.

In her later years, health challenges arose, yet Auntie Aba’s spirit remained strong, her love for her family as bright as ever. She never failed to mark her grandchildren with the sign of the cross when they visited.

Auntie Aba, you were a wellspring of love and care in the roles of mother, mother-in-law and grandmother. As we learn to navigate the world without your physical presence, I am filled with gratitude for the precious moments shared and the lessons learned.

May your gentle soul find eternal rest and may eternal light perpetually shine upon you, now and for ever. Rest in perfect peace in the bosom of our Lord.

Amen.

RENÉE



This is so difficult to write. There is no way I can fully express how I feel, except to say, “Thank you for everything you have done for me; things you have taught me in your own subtle way. The 25-plus years that I have been married to your son Agyekum have opened me up to a culture and traditions very different from what I’d always known. But, being the gracious woman you were, whom I’ve grown to know and love, you always made me feel at home and welcomed me to the family.

You taught me so much about so many things. You were a woman of few words, but just watching you, your actions spoke volumes to me about how to carry myself in different situations and with different people. For that, I am eternally grateful.

If I can sum up everything I want to say about you, I believe these verses from Proverbs 31 speak to who you are:

*A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.
Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.
She brings him good not harm, all the days of her life ...
She gets up while it's still night to provide food for her family ...
She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy ...
She is clothed with strength and dignity ...
She speaks with wisdom and faithful instructions are on her tongue.
She watches over the affairs of her household ...
... her children call her blessed ...
“Many women have done noble things, but you have surpassed them all.”
Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Honour her for all she's done and let her works bring her praise at the city gates.*

Mum, rest well in the arms of our creator, until we meet again.

With love and gratitude,

Renée

EDITH

FROM ONE SMALL MRS K ... TO THE ORIGINAL SMALL MRS K



Every well recall the first day we met: that I was instantly mesmerised by this small package of a woman that legendary stories had been told of. It was at the wedding of Agyekum and Renée in New Orleans 25 years ago. There and then, I teasingly told Kofi that the best things come in small packages and that we 5ft 2½ women are wonderful.

Mummy never said a lot but on a few occasions she shared personal details that made me admire and love her more. One such moment was when I shyly objected to being called Mrs K in her presence because I felt it was not proper. Mummy looked at me, with a smile and said, “Edith, take it. You are equally Mrs K and it is hard work.” We both laughed and I understood the message clearly.

To me, she was the epitome of class, beauty and brain. Mummy, thank you for sharing your baby last with me. Thank you for the first hug 25 years ago, a hug that never ceased. Thank you for your candid advice when your baby was now expecting a baby of his own, who was to be named after your father-in-law, Kojo Agyekum. Thank you for passing your name, spirit and looks to Awura Aba. Thank you for sharing your birthday with our baby last, Ampomah, and constantly reminding me that she is special because “she is also your mother-in-law! *Asew kono foaaa ...*”

039

The entire family, including my sisters, is missing you already.

Love always,

Edith, Mrs K ...

Edith Akua Abrefi Kufuor is the wife of Theresa Kufuor's youngest son, Kofi Owusu Afriyie Kufuor



GRANDCHILDREN

Nana-Aba

My grandmother was the matriarch of our family. The house started and ended on her word. Her internal strength was bolstered by her Catholic faith and she shared that faith with us all. Her spirit was our bedrock.

I loved hearing stories about her childhood, stories that showed her willpower in the face of doubt, her determination to pursue her dreams and support her husband while he pursued his. Every time I got a peek into her history I was wowed and inspired.

She was beautiful and always had her hair done. She took pride in her appearance, took care of herself and took care of her family. She gave us life and shaped us into a community. My guiding prayer is to have even a portion of the grace, fortitude and care she had.

Grandma, I'll miss you. I'll always wish we'd had more time but you are resting now and I know we'll meet again.



Kofi

In the haven of her home, my beloved grandmother gracefully wore the mantle of second mother, her presence a constant, nurturing force in my childhood. With open arms and love, she welcomed her grandchildren into a world where affectionate care knew no bounds.

Her spirit, resolute and steadfast, was a beacon guiding me through the labyrinth of life with wisdom and grace. She instilled in me the profound essence of faith, teaching me to be God-fearing and to tread the path of righteousness with conviction. In her gentle embrace, I learned the power of prayer and the strength that comes from steadfast belief.

Beneath her bed, a treasure trove of Ferrero Rocher awaited: a secret indulgence she was always ready to share. Those moments of shared sweetness were more than mere treats; they were precious snippets of time, weaving a bond that time could never erode. Her laughter, her warmth and the gleam in her eyes as she shared those chocolates with us are imprinted in our hearts.

A matriarch with a vision, she championed the cause of education reform, her voice a clarion call for change and progress. Her advocacy was not just testament to her belief in the power of education, but also a lesson in compassion and benevolence. She taught us that to be good to others is the highest virtue, a lesson that we carry in our hearts as her enduring legacy.

Now, as she embarks on her heavenly journey, she leaves behind a tapestry of memories, rich and vibrant, and a family that misses her with a depth that words can scarcely convey. Her legacy lives on in the people she touched, in the lessons she imparted, and in the love that we carry for her, now and always.

To my dearest grandmother, a tribute of love and eternal gratitude. Your memory is a cherished melody in the symphony of my life, resounding through the ages with love, wisdom and grace.

Nana Yaa

There aren't enough words to describe what Grandma meant to me and how painful it has been to lose her, even though I knew this time would eventually come. I never expected to hear that she had passed on 1 October, only two weeks after I told her I was going to London and that I would see her after I returned on 5 October.

I will never forget how she prayed for us and with us every morning before we left for school. She always showed up for me. She attended almost every one of my primary school speech and prize-giving days and she even agreed to be a guest of honour and hand out prizes on many occasions. She also made it to many sports days, fully kitted out and looking cute in her visor, polo shirt, capris and trainers despite being a busy first lady.

She made sure we had an active childhood, and she spent days with us outside watching us race up and down the driveway or playing games with us to make sure that her grandchildren did not spend their summer holidays in front of the TV. Our parents knew her as a disciplinarian but she was always soft and gentle with us.

I cannot recall her even raising her voice at us when we were naughty and she had only a handful of non-negotiable rules: about going to church every Sunday, keeping to our 7.30pm bedtime, eating all our food before having dessert, and never chewing gum or drinking Coca-Cola.

I will cherish how she came with me on my first day of boarding school and helped me unpack and insisted on arranging my wardrobe. Before she left, she handed me some pocket money which she had carefully wrapped in a pink tissue and coyly told me that this one was just from her and separate from the one she and Grandpa had given me earlier.

I will especially treasure all the memories from recent years of Grandma eating the pancakes, cakes, pies and ice creams I took to her on Sundays, which she had earned ten times over, after years of treating us to kebabs, pastries and Fan Yogo every Sunday after church while we were children.

It pains me that you will not be here as I navigate the rest of my life as an adult but I know that you are at peace and resting with God, watching over all of us, and that all your prayers for us will come to fruition. You were a grandmother to so many people outside of our family, you touched so many lives. You were an angel on Earth and now you are singing with the angels in heaven.

Love,

Nana Yaa



Izzie, Akyaa and Nhyira

Our grandma was a constant presence, our cheerleader from the days of our birth to the day she left. She had time for us, no matter how busy she was. She was there for Isabelle's first surgery when she was just four days old and continued to be there for all the others that followed.

She would stand in for Mummy when she was away and come with loads of food to ensure we were all taken care of. Whether it was a First Holy Communion, holidays or birthdays, either she was there in person or she would phone.

Oh, and how could we forget the perfectly timed carrot cake, which always made an appearance! We didn't like it but Grandma wanted the healthy option.

She always knew how to make us feel special – ensuring there was Vita Milk for Nhyira, pizza and meat pies for Evie, and she kept tins of baked beans and corned beef in her cupboard for Isabelle because she couldn't eat spicy food.

You encouraged us to do our best by working hard in school and would advise us on how important it is to do things the right way. You taught us to be close to God and believe in Him. You would bless us on the forehead every time we saw you and you taught us to say, "Jesus, I trust in you."

There were always treats after church, so this was the highlight of our week. You were very proud when Isabelle became a Mass server and when she carried the cross into church at Easter.

We know that you are up in heaven and are still cheering us on. We will cherish these memories for ever and we feel so blessed that we had a grandmother who did everything she could to help us grow into confident, hard-working people. We know this was your way of showing us you love us, and we will never forget it.

Rest in perfect peace, Grandma.

Love always,

Isabelle Grace, Eva M and Jonathan



Nana Durowaa

042

In the fabric of my life, there is a thread that shines brighter and more vividly than all the others, and that thread is my beloved grandma Aba. To put into words the depth of my admiration and love for her is a daunting task, for she is more than just a person in my life; she is a source of wisdom, love and inspiration. This tribute is a humble attempt to express the impact she has had on me and the mark she has left on my heart.

My grandmother, a graceful and resilient woman, has always been the cornerstone of our family. She possesses a quiet strength that radiates through her every action. Her nurturing nature has provided a shelter of love for all of us, a sanctuary where we could seek comfort and solace in times of need.

Sleepovers at Grandma's house when I was younger were the best. She always sat us down to listen to her stories of the past, and each one was like a treasure chest filled with life lessons. Grandma Aba was a delightful mix of nurturing and stern, adept at making her love and discipline coexist in perfect harmony. She was the custodian of our sweet-tooth's desires, and we could always count on her to have chocolates by her bedside. If not, there was always some carrot cake close by.

Yet her strict side emerged in the form of a locked door to the coveted fridge room where soft drinks were stored. This room held the keys to every grandchild's paradise, and we had to ask her for access each time we craved a refreshing drink. She never entrusted those keys to anyone else, always keeping them securely in her bag, which she carried with her wherever she went. It was a lesson in responsibility and the importance of moderation, an expression of her love and concern for our well-being. This quirky combination of indulgence and discipline became a unique and cherished part of the memories we had with her.

Grandma Aba's presence has always been a source of comfort, and her gentle touch could heal any wound, physical or emotional. She instilled in me the value of kindness, empathy, and the importance of family bonds. As I write this tribute and adapt to the difficult task of saying goodbye, my heart swells with gratitude for the countless lessons and memories my grandmother has gifted me. She has shown me the power of resilience, the beauty of simplicity and the importance of family bonds. I will strive to be even half the person she is, for she is not just a grandmother; she is a light in the lives of all who have been fortunate enough to know her.

In her presence, I have learned the true meaning of love, the strength in vulnerability, and the grace in ageing. My grandmother is not just a chapter in the story of my life; she is the heart that beats within it, and her legacy will continue to inspire and guide me as I journey through the pages of my own story.

Rest in perfect peace, Grandma Aba.

Love,

Nana Durowaa



Kwaku

I still cannot come to terms with the fact that I will never see Grandma again. I can still hear her soft voice encouraging and reassuring me.

When I was much younger, I always sat next to her on Sunday at church as she kept trying to teach me to follow the order of service. She also taught me to shake a gourd rattle as she did in the choir. I used to get carried away and shake out of sync and my gentle grandma would only put her hand over mine and guide me to do as she had taught me.

I didn't go to Sunday school with Nana Yaa until much later, as I wouldn't leave my seat between Grandma and Grandma Mary. She was so glad when I started learning to become a Mass server and told me how proud she was of me when I was initiated and started serving.

Grandma attended my sports days, even at nursery, and on one occasion I stopped in the middle of a race to wave at her.

Thank you for being at all my important occasions, such as First Holy Communion, confirmation and birthdays, too.

Thank you for our small talks sitting on your bed and in the family room. I loved and will miss your Sunday fufu ("round food") on the upstairs porch.

Oh, Grandma, how could you leave just like that? You have been there all my life and it's very difficult to imagine my life without you.

I know you would have said to me, "Kwaku, be strong. This is part of growing up and you can do it if you put your mind to it."

I can't say thank you enough for all your love and how confident you made me feel.

You will be in my heart until I see you again.

Hannah Nana Aba Kakuma

I celebrate the life of my beloved grandmother. She was a remarkable woman, one whose love and care touched the hearts of everyone fortunate enough to know her.

My grandmother was a light ever present in our lives. Her kindness and compassion were unmatched. She had an incredible ability to make each of us feel special. Her presence was a source of strength and comfort for us all as her grandchildren.

From her comforting smile, to her contagious laughter, and even her hilarious yet cheeky remarks, every moment with her was a blessing.

As I say my goodbye in this tribute, I am confident that it is not the end.

In John 11:25-26 Jesus says:

“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die ...”

The Word of God is my hope and my comfort; on this Word, my heart can rest easily.

I was blessed to have her in my life, and her memory will be a source of peace for me. Thank you, Grandma, for the love you gave and the lessons you taught. I love and miss you dearly.

Your namesake,

Nana Aba



Kojo

There are so many memories that stick with me from my time with my grandma.

She always had this soft but secure control over the space around her, whether in the way her quiet voice could carry to summon anyone in the house, no matter how far away, or how without fail she would invite us to her meals on Sunday.

The one that lies deepest in my heart is from when I was a bit older. She had become frail by then but I did not understand fully what this meant for her health. So, being the child that I was, I wanted to show her how strong I had become.

She asked for her usual greeting hug and I embraced her, making sure my hands circled her wiry frame as securely as I could, and then hoisted her in the air for a few moments.

My mother was shocked and my father was quick to stop me and tell me off, reminding me that I could have hurt her.

What stuck in my mind was her response. She could have agreed: I'm sure throwing her around wasn't so good. Instead, she gave me a wide smile and hugged me back. It was such a positive response that I really believed I had done nothing wrong at all.

I realise now as an adult that her ability to smile was a sign of her virtue. How many days did she suffer as she supported Grandpa? How many days did she spend worrying about her children? How many days did she suffer as her physical state deteriorated? Her virtue was a will of iron, cold enough to resist through all the hard times, but warm enough to be the core of the whole household.

I will never know now if my hug hurt her, but I will never forget that deep smile. I am extremely proud of my grandmother's efforts and I hope I can emulate them some day.

Kojo

Awura Aba

To my grandmother, the woman I was named after:

I miss you. I wish I wasn't an ocean away so that I could have been close to you as you passed. We were always kindred spirits with a special kind of understanding between us – a little inside joke that only we knew existed when we spoke.

Your legacy will live on inside me and I will cherish the moments that we spent together. I'll never ever forget you, my lovely, witty, fabulous grandmother.

Rest in perfect peace.



Nana Ampomah

To most people she was the former First Lady Theresa Kufuor, but to me and many others she was Grandma. She was a caring and beautiful woman who left a feeling of warmth and sophistication wherever she went. She was one of those people who made a lasting impression without saying much. Each word out of her mouth was wisdom.

I will miss our Sunday visits, her kind voice and gentle touch. Birthdays won't be the same without having her to share them, but her legacy shines on in all the lives she touched and I know that she is in heaven smiling down on all of us.



Francis Nana Yaw

Grandma,

You may have passed on but your memory will always live on within us. Thank you for your warmth, your care, your constant, indiscriminate love and everything that you have done for me. I know you are in a much better place and I will be for ever grateful and thankful that you are my grandmother.

Rest in perfect peace until we meet again.





ESTHER MENSAH



My beloved sister, to the world you were Mrs Theresa Kufuor, but to me you will always be affectionately “Sister Aba”. You were the most glamorous of all my sisters and I admired you so much. I always wanted to emulate you. You were always ready to advise me and guide me whenever I had a problem. You were also always available to support your siblings and nieces and nephews, as you always believed in giving “moral support”.

You were indeed a blessing to the Okyeso clan. You were my counsellor and advisor and I will really miss you.

I knew one of us would leave before the other, but losing you is such a blow! I feel so alone.

You worked so hard to take care of all your family and the extended family.

I pray that the dear Lord grant you the rest you so deserve.

Sister Aba, damirifa due!

Esther Mensah is the sole surviving sibling of Theresa Kufuor

SISTER AMA GRACE



Mama's journey in life was marked by her unconditional love and commitment to her family, and her relationship with God was the greatest. Her faith was unwavering, as she was a devoted Catholic. Her spirituality was the guiding force behind her compassion and her commitment to serving others. Her love for music was to be adored and it was at her side that my joy for choral music blossomed.

Mama, during my time of need many years ago you were a blessing that warmed my heart. I shared some of the memorable years of my life with you and I will not part ways with your life-changing lessons. To me, you have been simultaneously a sister and a mother.

Thank you for welcoming me into your home, graciously sharing with me your wisdom, teaching me to show strength amid hardship and, most importantly, being humble and content with what you have. I will always remember the good things in life you helped me to see and enjoy. Indeed, there were tough times, but your words gave me strength to move on and keep persevering. Today I am a better sister, wife, mother, friend and individual overall.

There is so much I can say about Mama but today I choose to remember her as a wise and articulate woman who leaves a chest of treasured memories behind which we will hold dear. She leaves a legacy of teaching her children and wards the important things in life, which include seeing the beauty in growth and believing in tending to the needs of the most vulnerable.

049

One of her joys in life was her love for gardening, a reflection of her nurturing nature, as she cared conscientiously for her plants.

Today, as we reflect on our great loss, we do so with heavy hearts. We have lost not only a sister, mother and friend, but also a tireless advocate for the disadvantaged and vulnerable. Her absence leaves a void that cannot be filled, not only for the family but for the entire nation. Let us celebrate her with love, cherish her memory and continue her work, striving to make the world a better place, just as she did.

May God keep you in a special place where you can keep an eye on us singing joyously in the heavenly choir in the halls of our Almighty Father.

Mama, nante yie! Nyame 'ngye wo nto nekuku mu.

Sister Ama Grace is a first cousin of Theresa Kufuor

OKYESO NIECES AND NEPHEWS



Our beloved Auntie Aba is gone, headed to her well-deserved place of eternal rest. We are left bereft by the loss of our second mother, but we are grateful for her life and the fact that she is now at rest.

Auntie Aba, though the youngest of the older Mensah sisters, lived and breathed her role as our second mother in an exemplary fashion. She took us all under her wing readily, with a smile, and some of us literally under her roof as and when circumstances demanded. This helped sustain the strong sense of belonging, arguably the single most prized trait we all experienced at Okyeso, the family home in Kumasi.

Several of the cousins speak glowingly of the love, kindness and inner strength they felt in relating with their beloved Auntie Aba. My own first interactions with her were as a teenager. She exhibited what I felt was unimaginable strength and feistiness as, whenever she felt unjustly treated or picked on, she would stand up to our grandfather Paapa, who loomed as an outsized figure in our eyes. To me, this was no small feat, because this relatively small young lady was capable of provoking an towering figure to anger and frustration and, in a way, made him look human!

050

Even though she mellowed with time, these same attributes of inner strength and feistiness served her well later in life and helped her earn universal admiration as First Lady.

Dear Auntie Aba, we are grateful for the beautiful sense of family, belonging, love and dignity you modelled for and shared with us. We will continue to feel this till the very end.

Even in her frail state during these last few months, during occasional visits, whenever she would recognise a voice, her wonderful smile and the faint gleam in her eye would impart such warmth and love, with reassurance.

Auntie Aba, we are grateful for your life, which enriched ours. May you journey gently to the other side to join your dear sisters, brothers and parents. I suspect the company is just a tad livelier. Rest in perfect peace.

Damirifa due. Damirifa due. Sleep well.

Dr Clement Osei Yaw Osei, on behalf of the Okyeso nieces and nephews

APAGYAFIE NIECES AND NEPHEWS

TO OUR EXTRA SPECIAL AUNT



*W*e the nephews and nieces from Apagyafie are stricken with grief and full of sadness as we say farewell to our beloved Auntie Aba – so sad to know we will not see her in this life again, but so glad that she was part of it.

Through our life journeys, our exceptionally caring aunt was always there for us. She was never really at the centre of things as we navigated the challenges that confronted us, but rather – and true to her personality – she was always silent, in the shadows. Yet when she spoke her voice and advice resonated loudly as we digested the words of encouragement and caution she always had for us.

Auntie Aba was warm and caring, always willing to give us the benefit of her kindness whenever we visited her in the days when she and her family lived in Nhyiaeso in Kumasi, or Dzorwulu in Accra. A visit to her house, whether just for the afternoon or for a longer stay, was always enjoyable. She made us feel at home with her hospitality.

Nothing changed when she became the First Lady of Ghana – despite her hectic schedule she still had all the time in the world to smile at us, to chat at length about everything and anything. She was a goldmine of information, advice and stories, all of which shaped our views on life.

051

Auntie is no longer with us but we will remember her as someone who helped bring all of us together and has kept us united as one happy band of nephews and nieces.

Adieu, dear auntie.

For and on behalf of:

Sister Gloria

Nana Kwame

Boakye

Gyebi

Oteng

Bema

Amampene

Nii Amoo

Nii Ansa

Nana Yaw

Val

Evan

Wendy

Nana Sekyere

Kojo Agyekum

Nana Ama

Nana Yaw

Sandra

Kwaku Dua

Marian

Georgette

Nana Poku

Akyaa

Nana Owusu Afriyie

Kweku (JR)



FAMILY













058





EDINA AND TAKORADI FAMILIES



With profound sadness, we pay tribute and bid farewell to a daughter of our family, a mother of many sons and daughters in our family and the nation as a whole. Aunt Aba, as we called her, was a very committed member of our family, a devoted Catholic whose life, to a large extent, was dictated by her faith and belief in the scriptures and her decent upbringing. She was very disciplined, humble, respectful, thoughtful and kind to everyone she encountered. This was her nature and she grew up with it. We were not surprised that, as a compassionate person, she chose nurse/midwife as her profession and decided to help deliver babies safely into the world.

Aunt Aba loved to serve and devoted her life to the service of mankind and society. She was a very good family member who kept excellent and close relationships with all, without discrimination. She made it her responsibility always to be part of the annual family gathering during Edina Bronya whenever she was able. Even on occasions when she was unable to be present, she sent drinks and gifts through our sons Joe Baidoe-Ansah and Ato Hamilton or others.

She always made a great effort to bring the family in Awua-Domase, Kumasi, Takoradi and Edina closer together. In Accra, she welcomed everyone to her home with open arms and an open door, delicious home-cooked meals and endless generosity. A great vacuum has been created by her passing and she will be fondly remembered for her exceptional service and dedication to our family, her profession and Ghana.

060

We are very sad she is no longer with us. However, we console ourselves by recalling her well-lived and fulfilled life on Earth. Hers was to serve humanity and she chose a wider path to serve, through mothers and children. That really was serving the whole of humanity! Even in retirement, the non-profit organisation that she founded, the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation, was dedicated to her chosen cause in life.

We are very proud to be associated with her. Even as a first lady, Aunt Aba never changed her character or common traits. She was always at her serviceable best and she did it with diplomacy, dignity, integrity and honesty. She was never loud in her actions and achievements, which allowed them to speak for themselves.

The lives she touched are her testimony. She has departed physically but her footprints remain on Earth.

She will be greatly missed. May the good Lord continue to watch and protect her soul.

Da yie, Aunt Aba.

Nyame mfa wo nsie.

Ebusuapanyin Nana Samuel Sagoe-Pyne, on behalf of the Hamiltons and Mensabs of Edina and Takoradi

JOE BAIDOE-ANSAH



Don't recollect the first time we met, but I grew up knowing she was always there for me. It was such a privilege having her as a member of our family. She was more than a grandmother to me. I called her "Mum" and "Aunt". Aunt Aba was precious, a gift from God with so much beauty, grace, love, patience and compassion. She always made space to help others.

Whenever she was available, Aunt Aba made it a duty to be part of family celebrations in Elmina during Edina Bronya. Even if it was impossible for her to be present, she would send me or Ato Hamilton or others to deliver her drinks, assorted gifts and goodwill message to the elders and the rest of the family. She made it her mission to create unity between the branches of the family.

She could not be there for my marriage but she called and sent kind words of encouragement to me in London through Uncle JH and Uncle Peter. However, it was a pleasant surprise when she came, together with Chief, to the christening of my first child, Ewurabena, in faraway London in 1996.

Aunt Aba was an unwavering support for us and, more importantly, a role model to my wife, also a professional nurse who bore the names Theresa and Aba. Beyond her compassion, infectious smile and generosity, Aunt Aba was a pillar of strength and always available to deliver, with patience and gentle words of wisdom. She had an attentive ear and was ever ready to lend a shoulder and offer guidance. My son Kojo and his friends still remember that surprise birthday party she held for him and his Class One schoolmates on 4 March 2008.

061

I believe that, as the life partner of an astute politician, she had those rare gifts of understanding, in moments good and bad, that successful politicians need from close family, particularly spouses. She rightly saw politics as an opportunity to serve and uplift society. An ardent activist in the Kufuor campaign team, I admired her extraordinary calm and the low-key demeanour with which she supported her husband's presidential bids.

Aunt Aba was no pushover in her natural style of doing things. Educated at the Catholic convent Our Lady of Apostles in Keta, she spoke fluent Ewe but resisted every pressure to leverage her proficiency in campaigns as a sweetener. When finally she did so at a penultimate rally in December 2000 in Ho, speaking first in English and translating her remarks into Ewe, she won the admiration of the audience.

Her service to mothers and children, exhibited in her chosen profession as a nurse/midwife, also reflected in the non-governmental organisation she set up – the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation. She advertised her commitment and worked for the full implementation of UNESCO's Free Compulsory Basic Education programme for kindergarten children.

Aunt Aba devoted her life to working for the welfare of women and children. Such was her lasting influence on many people as the veritable Mother of the Nation that her memory will linger on.

We will all miss you.

Grandma, da yie . . . Nantsew yie, Aunt Aba. Nyame mfa wo nsie.

Joe Baidoe-Ansab was the MP for Effia-Kwesimintsim (2001-2013) and Kwesimintsim (2013-17)



DESCENDANTS OF GRACE QUIST-ARCTON



Auntie Aba, our beloved second mother and grandma, has left this Earth for a better place. She loved us and we loved her back. No words can express the gratitude we feel in our hearts. She nurtured us, advised us, encouraged us, joked and laughed with us. She showed us her inner strength, beauty, courage and kindness by example throughout her life. We will endeavour to do likewise.

062

We are bereaved but we thank the Almighty for her life.

May she now rest in perfect peace.

Auntie Aba, farewell.

Adobea, Ofeibea, Sakibea and Bérénice

CHILDREN OF HUBERT MENSAH SNR



We would like to pay tribute to a woman who played a pivotal role in our lives during our high school education. Auntie Aba was quick to spearhead our education fund and made the first donation to it after the demise of our dad, Hubert Kobina Badu Mensah (her younger brother). She always ensured we had enough provisions and were comfortable at school.

We are where we are today because of her motherly love and unflinching support. Her commitment to our education was profound, phenomenal, unprecedented and unmatched. Auntie Aba made an indelible mark on our academic and our personal growth.

Auntie Aba, we will pay forward the love you showed us.

You were our hero. Your impact cannot be measured.

God bless you.

Rest in perfect peace.

Hubert, Grace, Dorothy and Sandra

HER EXCELLENCY MRS REBECCA AKUFO-ADDO



*H*er Excellency Mrs Theresa Kufuor was a woman of quiet dignity, whose voice was not loud, but whose work spoke volumes of her dedication to the cause of Ghanaian women and children.

Her work with her Mother and Child Community Development Foundation (MCCDF) will stand as a memorial to Her Excellency Theresa Kufuor, who exemplified all that is admirable in a first lady of our great nation.

Being First Lady carries with it the tag of Mother of the Nation. Her Excellency Theresa Kufuor lived that role, touching the lives of many Ghanaians. She was the embodiment of compassion, love and calm efficiency.

She will be sorely missed and fondly remembered by Ghanaians. May dear Auntie Theresa's soul rest in perfect peace.

Her Excellency Mrs Rebecca Akufo-Addo is the First Lady of the Republic of Ghana

RIGHT HONOURABLE ALBAN SUMANA KINGSFORD BAGBIN
SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT



*For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus,
God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep.
For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the
coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.
For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel,
and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds
to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

1 Thessalonians: 14-17

Join many Ghanaians and sympathisers around the globe to express my deepest sympathy to the former President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, on the sad occasion of the passing of his beloved wife and former First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, Mrs Theresa Kufuor. My sympathies also go to the Kufuor and Mensah families on this solemn occasion.

Madam Theresa, as many people affectionately called her, was a great woman, a devout Catholic and mother who served this country with dignity and integrity in her capacity as First Lady. It is difficult to have a first lady who stirs no controversy, but Madam Theresa walked that path with distinction. She used her position to champion causes that were of critical importance to all, especially in education and health, using her non-governmental organisation, the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation, as the vehicle.

065

Throughout her life, she dedicated herself to improving the health and, by extension, the lives of many, first as a nurse/midwife and then as a social worker. Her deep compassion and generosity were felt by many, and will continue to serve as an inspiration for hosts of Ghanaians.

She was a towering and compassionate motherly figure whose calm demeanour and poise, even as First Lady, perfectly complemented that of her husband, popularly referred to as the Gentle Giant.

As the Minority Leader of the Parliament of Ghana during the eight-year rule of President Kufuor, I recall how Mother Theresa served as an important and dependable bridge, linking me to her husband, the President, on many official occasions. Her love for Ghana and Ghanaians was exemplary.

As we mourn with the former President and his family over the loss of this great asset of our generation, we will remember Mama Theresa in our prayers, fully conscious that the purity of her life on Earth has assured her of a rightful place in the hereafter.

May the memory of Mrs Theresa Kufuor remain a blessing to many; and may her impact be felt continuously, even in her absence.

Rest in perfect peace, Madam Theresa!

MOST REVEREND PETER KWASI SARPONG



Likewise, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.
1 Peter 3:1-2, 5-6

These words of St Peter apply in the literal meaning to pious women in relation to their husbands but in their wider sense they apply to women who have some sort of power, authority and influence over others.

In this sense, if they apply to anybody I know, it is to Dame Mrs Theresa Kufuor.

066

We all owe her a debt of gratitude in one way or another we can never pay. In her we find a woman who exhibits true humanity.

We thank her for the example of firm unshakable Catholic faith she has endowed us with.

Her life as a Christian woman is worthy of praise and emulation. She has given us a model of Christian wifeliness. She is simply to be remembered as a perfect wife. As the Asante dirge says, “*Ɔnim okunu akorɔkorɔ*”.

She was a trustworthy friend who told the truth, whether it hurt or not. Her life was characterised by that motherliness which helped her husband to give a perfect Christian formation, education and upbringing to their five children.

I join Chief in saluting you, Mother.
I am with Nana Ama in hailing you.
Nana Saah blesses you.
Agyekum acclaims you.
Kofi proclaims your greatness.

Condolences to your grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, in-laws and all. None of them will ever forget “*Ɛna Ama ni Ama ba*”. And will always remember you for the pillar of love you were in their life.

The Catholic Church has no words adequate enough to exult you and to raise you up for her children to see and imitate. May your proverbial humility catapult you into the heavenly choir of saints and angels.

You were a member of Christ the King Choir. You have now joined the celestial group of singers who glorify the Most Holy Trinity.

Thanks for the extraordinary example. Your Christ-like philanthropy was exceptional. You were a mother to both the stranger and acquaintance. Who will take over the plight of the indigent children now that you are no longer with us? You were like a big tree under which both carnivorous and herbivorous game lived in pacific harmony.

The greatest unsurpassable legacy which you have left us is the summary of all tributes. I, your brother, unhesitatingly highlight your HOLINESS.

Like your patron saint Theresa, you tried to live a life of impeccable spiritual cleanliness, in accordance with the command God asked Moses to give to his people.

*Tell my people to be Holy,
For I, your God, I am Holy.*

Holiness means complete sinlessness, absolute stainlessness. This is what makes a saint. One cannot be a saint if one has a speck of sin on one's soul.

Holiness means saintliness. The Dame Mrs Theresa Kufuor I knew was holy and a true saint. Therefore, with His Excellency, Chief, Nana Ama, Nana Saah, Agyekum and Kofi, I join the company of angels and saints and with one voice, declare:

“Thank you, DAME, for leaving us the LEGACY of righteousness for which His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI honoured you and your WELL-DESERVING CONSORT with an award which no Ghanaian has ever had, and which is possessed by about only 30 people in the whole world: THE PAPAL ORDER OF PIUS IV, third in the rank of papal awards, coming only after the Order of Christ and the Order of the Golden Cross.”

Dame, da yie.

We shall meet in God's time.
Meanwhile, sleep in perfect peace.

Most Reverend Peter Kwasi Sarpong is the Emeritus Archbishop of Kumasi

GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE



On Sunday 1 October 2023, we the members of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference were informed of the sudden departure of our beloved daughter in Christ, the former First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, the late Mrs Theresa Kufuor.

With hearts full of grief but confident in the risen Lord who has told us not to grieve like people without hope, we commiserated with the family members, especially our brother, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, the former President of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. In glowing tribute, we now recall her rare qualities.

The late former First Lady Mrs Theresa Kufuor was a devout Catholic – a practising Catholic to the core; a true daughter of the Universal Church, who did not allow the aura of celebrity to sway her away from her rootedness in Christ and His service.

While the late Theresa Kufuor played her role as the First Lady of Ghana for eight years (between 2001 and 2009), she still maintained her dedicated service to God as a chorister, to the point of attending choir practice regularly in her parish, Christ the King Catholic Church, Cantonments, Accra – an uncommon act among the celebrities of our time.

068

The late Mrs Theresa Kufuor was a woman of substance; a consummate professional whose life and services as a qualified and state-certified nurse and midwife affected many for good. She turned her caring and nurturing personality into advocacy for policy changes in the government white paper on education reforms. This eventually paved the way for her founding of the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation, operating here in Ghana and in Canada.

She was a woman of empathy, warmth and courteous consideration of what needed to be done, who went ahead and did it.

On the family front, the late Mrs Kufuor was a blessed mother and a dedicated wife whose dedication to the service of God and humanity affected all positively, especially her husband and her dynamic children.

May the good Lord grant her gentle soul eternal rest. Amen.

MONSIGNOR STEPHEN ADU-KWANING

They alternated in songs of praise and thanksgiving to the LORD, "for He is good, for His love for Israel endures for ever; and all the people raised a great shout of joy, praising the LORD..."

Ezra 3:11

On the first Sunday of Lent in 1995, I, as the then parish priest of Christ the King Church, Accra, called for choir volunteers. Forty parishioners, including the late Mrs Theresa Aba Kufuor, responded generously and formed the Marian Choir. The choir grew with the help of the late Mr James Arthur on the organ and Mr Gilbert Tengey as the first president.

Mrs Kufuor served as the first vice-president of the Marian Choir and was instrumental in its growth. When her husband became President of Ghana, she transitioned from vice-president to patron of the choir and remained actively involved. Singing was Mrs Kufuor's passion, and she contributed her time and talents to the glory of the Lord and the growth of the Marian Choir.

Despite her duties as First Lady, she continued to support the choir during Masses and contributed significantly to its growth. Even when she could no longer attend the regular choir practice, she sat behind the choir any time she attended Mass and gave it moral support during the liturgical celebrations. Her active participation was limited only by her medical condition.

Auntie Aba was a great Marian chorister and a beloved parishioner of Christ the King. She was a beautiful soul who loved to sing praises to God. She was a faithful and dedicated member of our church choir for nearly three decades. She had a sweet and gentle voice that touched the heart of everyone who heard her. She was a shining example of Christ's love and compassion, a joy to be around, and a blessing to our parish family.

069

While we will miss her dearly, our faith assures us that Mrs Kufuor is now in the presence of her Saviour, singing with the angels in heaven. We thank God for the gift of her life and the privilege of knowing her. We pray that God will comfort her family with His peace and grace as we mourn her passing. And we look forward to seeing her again when we join her in the heavenly choir.

Mrs Theresa Aba Kufuor, may the heavenly choir welcome you into their midst to sing praises for ever around the heavenly Father's throne. May your soul and those of all our departed choristers rest in perfect peace. Amen!

Monsignor Stephen Adu-Kwaning was the parish priest of Christ the King Catholic Church in Cantonments, Accra from 1994 to 2006

MARIAN CHOIR OF CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC CHURCH CANTONMENTS, ACCRA



“Then I heard a voice from heaven say, blessed are those who from now die in the service of the Lord. Yes indeed, answered the spirit, they will enjoy rest from their hard work because the result of their service goes with them.”

Revelations 14:13

Marian – sing to her glory!

The announcement of the eternal departure of our beloved mother, Mama Theresa Kufuor, appeared on the sacred platform of the choir’s WhatsApp group and at once stirred memories of profound significance.

Mama Theresa graced the nascent years of our choir in 1995, her passion as an alto singer resounding with grace. Serene, gentle and filled with joy, she would often grace our gatherings, fostering unity amongst choristers and patrons alike. In 1997 she ascended to the esteemed position of the choir’s vice-president, executing her duties with utmost dedication.

As her husband, President J A Kufuor, ascended to the throne as the leader of the Republic of Ghana, her role as the First Lady bestowed upon her added commitments and responsibilities towards God and the country. Yet, amidst all of this, she never abandoned her cherished choir. For countless years, she would grace our rehearsals with her presence, and every Sunday she would sit among us, lending her voice to our melodic offerings. Alas, as time wore on, her visits grew less frequent, for Mama’s health had begun to wane.

The choir and its patrons journeyed to her side, offering prayers and solace to her family. But alas, fate had charted a different course.

We bid farewell to a mother figure and confidante of unparalleled greatness. Oh, how we shall miss you, dear Mummy, for your boundless generosity, your radiant warmth, your infectious smile, and the spirit of camaraderie that enveloped us in your presence. Yet our steadfast faith in the promise of resurrection sustains us. One day, in the celestial realms, we shall gather once more, our voices soaring to the heavens in unison.

May your path to eternity be paved with serenity.
May the gentle winds for ever guide you from behind.
May the radiant sun’s warmth grace your countenance.
May the soft raindrops caress your earthly domain.
May the benevolent Lord embrace you within His loving embrace.
Our prayers shall for ever hold you in remembrance.

Farewell, dear Mummy, until the Last Day of the Resurrection, when we shall all meet again. Amen!

MATERNAL FAMILY OF ODUMASE AND FIAPRE



To us, she was a dear relative whom we simply called Auntie Aba. First of all we thank the Almighty God for your life – one of simplicity and equanimity worthy of emulation – which was a blessing to the entire family.

Notwithstanding that by virtue of your marriage to J A Kufuor and your work you lived the greater part of your life in Accra, while most of us live in Odumase and Fiapre, you touched the lives of a good number of us by your (on the quiet) financial contributions and moral support.

You have left us a legacy of honouring all our celebratory activities – weddings, birthdays and so on – during which your gregarious nature was in full display. And at these local events and even at family funerals across the country, your personable nature did not fail to rub off on everyone present. We have fond memories of the smile dancing at the corners of your mouth, which gave anyone in an encounter with you a sense of belonging, a feeling of togetherness.

We recall with much appreciation the fulfilment without much fanfare of your promise to the chiefs and people of Odumase and Fiapre, made on the campaign trail of the then presidential candidate J A Kufuor in 2000, that you “will not forget” if they voted for your husband and our in-law to attain the highest office of the land.

071

True to your word, in the first term of President Kufuor, you executed two projects in the Sunyani West Municipality through your NGO, the Mother and Child Foundation, which have further endeared our family to the citizenry (following the contributions to development in Brong-Ahafo by our uncle D J Buahin and our brother J H Mensah).

The Mother and Child centres you established metamorphosed into model schools. At present, the Odumase Model School has been integrated successfully into Odumaseman Senior High School. In Fiapre the model school has been moved to become part of Notre Dame Senior High School and the original structure turned into a CHPS compound. Part of the grounds has become a venue for social activities and is called the Theresa Kufuor Recreational Centre.

We thank the Lord that four years of ill-health failed to break your cheerful spirit and that you remained lucid, even dictating what colours should be used at “the end”.

Even though we grieve, we are consoled by our shared faith that you have preceded us to the heavenly realms above where the good Lord has prepared a place for all of us to meet one day.

Fare thee well, dear Auntie Aba.



GRACE POKU

TO MY SISTER AND VERY DEAR FRIEND – A SPECIAL LADY



This is a very sad time, not only for me but also for my entire family. I never imagined that I would one day write a eulogy to my sister and dearest friend, with whom I shared a deep bond from childhood; the few times I was able to visit recently, nothing showed that you would leave us this soon.

My dear sister Theresa was simply special. Her even temperament, quiet personality and affable nature endeared her to all who came to know her. She had a gift for making everyone feel unique.

She was a naturally caring individual, and every year-end saw a delivery of specially baked cakes for my household. It was the same whenever I had a special occasion: my sister would send food to support my preparations. This continued well into our elderly years.

One special memory was when, on my 70th birthday in 2004, despite her busy schedule as the then First Lady, my sister Theresa graciously joined me to mark the occasion.

073

Along with my family, I mourn the loss of a cherished sister and dear friend – but the nation, too, has lost a selfless person and the family a much-loved mother.

My dear sister Theresa, until we meet again, yours is a legacy of love.

God grant you eternal rest.

Due!

Grace Poku is one of Theresa Kufuor's longest-standing friends

FLORA APPIAH



It was in the latter part of 1989, when I relocated with my family from the UK and moved to our house in the Airport Residential Area, that we met. One morning, as I was getting ready for work, I heard the doorbell ring. I was surprised because we were new to the area and did not know many people.

I opened the gate and there stood a beautiful lady with an infectious smile who introduced herself as Mrs Kufuor, the wife of J A Kufuor. I knew that Mr Kufuor's uncle hailed from Nkawie and had been Nkawiehene, so I told her that we were sisters because my mother, Adwoa Kyem, was also from there and I was the daughter of the previous Nkawie Omanhene.

I was also a Catholic, and so she invited me to her church, Christ the King. Every Sunday, she would pick me up in her blue Volvo and after church we would sometimes visit her brother Uncle JH and her nephew Uncle DK, or even go to the market.

She invited me to work with her when she became the First Lady. I travelled with her locally and to the UK and America.

074

We were always laughing. She would often say, "Thank you, God, for laughter."

I called her *Me na Aba*, which means "My mother Aba", because she was just like a second mother to me.

She was humble and embraced people regardless of their social, economic, religious or ethnic background. She was kind and encouraging and we had each other's back. Her faith meant a lot to her and she would attend Mass regardless of which city or country she was visiting.

Me na Aba, God grant you eternal rest until we meet again.

Me na Aba, damirifa due!

Due ne amane hunu!

AUGUSTINA A A ASAFU-ADJAYE

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SISTER ABA



Write this with a very heavy heart, especially as I'm so far away and can't be close enough to pay my final respects and celebrate the extraordinary life of Sister Aba, a remarkable woman who touched the lives of many and left an indelible mark on the life of everyone she encountered.

I am mourning not only the loss of an elder sister, but also a true mentor who guided and inspired me in our shared journey in the noble field of nursing. Her life was a testament to dedication, compassion and an unyielding spirit of service.

We met in August 1973 on the sixth floor of Cocoa House. That was where both Cocoa Clinic and our great sisterhood were born. We clicked immediately as if we had known each other for years, even more so after she discovered that I shared a birth date with her first-born child.

Sister Aba was a beacon of wisdom and strength. Her passion for nursing was ignited at an early age, and together we embarked on a journey that would define our lives. We were the pioneers of Cocoa Clinic. The arduous hours we spent setting up the clinic, which was Colonel Takyi's brainchild.

075

The countless patients we cared for and the tireless efforts we made laid the foundation for the exceptional care that Cocoa Clinic continues to provide to this day.

Among my happiest memories are how she would pick me up in her Citroën every morning to work, and we recapped on the work to be done that day. I also remember when we used to act as foremen supervising the construction of her house in Airport West.

It was no surprise that when Sister Aba decided to retire, I, as her deputy, succeeded her as the matron of Cocoa Clinic. She had prepared me well, nurturing my growth not only as a nurse but as a leader. Her selflessness and dedication to the well-being of others served as the blueprint for my own journey in health care.

As First Lady, Sister Aba visited me at home often. It made me proud: after all, how many people had that privilege? I am so grateful for the love she showed when my mother passed. Sister Aba came all the way to Asante Mampong with an entourage to mourn with us.

Sister Aba's legacy extended far beyond the walls of Cocoa Clinic after her retirement. She initiated the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation, an initiative to support maternal health, with interventions throughout Ghana and beyond.

Though I am saying my final goodbye, I also celebrate a life well lived, a journey well travelled, and a love that will remain for ever in our hearts. Sister Aba may be gone but her spirit lives on in the lives she touched, the work to which she dedicated herself and the love she shared with us all.

Rest in eternal peace, dear sister, mentor and pioneer. You will be missed deeply, but your memory will never fade. Thank you for the privilege of sharing this journey with you.

The team from the onset of Cocoa Clinic was made up of Dr Paul Nyame, Mrs Theresa Kufuor and myself; later we were joined by Mrs Eniton Gavu (pharmacist), Mrs Zenatu Abu (nurse), Dr Kwadwo Owusu (surgeon; may he rest in peace), Dr Abbey (physician; may he rest in peace), Mr Ofori (administrator) and many more. Together we all say: *Nante yie, Sister Aba, nante yie!*

Augustina Asafu-Adjaye was the matron of Cocoa Clinic, Accra



ANNA DANSO-DAPAAH AND FAMILY



“For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one” – Khalil Gibran

Aba, I am writing to you from afar, but I am closer than anyone could ever imagine.

Aba, also known by me as “Her Excellency”, and I first met in 1967 in Kumasi, at the time my husband of blessed memory, Dr Joseph Danso-Dapaah, was the medical officer in charge of public health and His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, whom I address as “Kofi”, was the town clerk and chief legal officer of Kumasi City Council, which we now know as the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly.

When the two families met, I knew I had found a gem. Our priorities, values and interests aligned with each other’s. Aba was very family-oriented, focused and caring and an engaging mother. I knew that I had found my mentor, friend and sister.

Both our spouses entered political life early in our child-rearing years. They became founding members of the Progress Party, led by Dr Kofi Abrefa Busia, later known as the Popular Front Party (PFP) and now the New Patriotic Party (NPP). While building their political careers, both men were elected by their constituencies to draft the Second Republican constitution after the 1966 coup d’état. We took foreign language classes together to support our spouses’ political aspirations.

077

Aba showed me that no matter how hard life can be, we must all learn from it every day and embrace every moment of it, because we never know how or when it is going to end. In 1967 she joined me and four other colleagues to spearhead the national family planning programme through the Kumasi branch of the then Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG). With our backgrounds in health care and our matching priorities, the programme was seamless and productive. Aba was still working full-time as a nurse-midwife at the KNUST Hospital in Kumasi, but this girl could multitask like none other, a talent that shone through all her endeavours.

You will be greatly missed, my friend. Your life was one of selfless love. You will always be remembered. Your courage and strength were an example to all. Your legacy will live on in our hearts.

When she shared the vision for her Mother and Child Foundation with me during her term in office from 2001-2009, the cause moved me. I supported her whenever the programme came to Kumasi.

“Her Excellency” – you were an inspiration, a role model to women and an advocate for healthy families and families in need. Your services to our nation and to mankind will never be forgotten.

We had much more time on our hands after her husband’s second term in office. So, we checked on each other frequently, and reminisced about her time in politics and how life had brought us this far.

Aba was a staunch Catholic, born and raised in the faith, and one who lived by faith. Never did she leave home without her rosary. She never missed going to church and she lived by The Word. Your dedication and commitment to your faith and to others will always be remembered. You were a light in our lives, and we will always be grateful for the memories we shared.

There comes a time in one's life when one needs to account for one's health. I was back and forth with my health and so was she. This created a bit of a gap between the two of us, but still we kept in touch as much as time and space allowed, by phone and through personal visits. This year I made a covenant to pay her a visit during Lent, and my wish was granted. We said Mass, recited the rosary, prayed the Divine Mercy over Aba, and finally, I left her with holy water and hung the rosary with which we had prayed around her neck. This is a moment that I will for ever hold close to my heart.

Aba, my beloved friend, you may have left us, but your loving presence will endure for ever in our hearts and souls.

You consoled me when my husband passed. You consoled the children that you would be there for them whenever they might need you. I say the same to Chief, Nana Ama, Nana Saah, Agyekum and Owusu Afriyie: I am here to support you in the same way.

Finally – Her Excellency, your spirit and passion will live for ever in our minds and in our souls.

“When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure.” – Anonymous

Goodbyes are not forever

Why?

Goodbyes are not the end

Why?

Hence

They simply mean I'll miss you

Until we meet again

Palitha Ariyaratna

“My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.” – Psalm 73:26

Her Excellency, da yie.

Aba my friend, da yie.

VICTORIA OTOO

TO A DEAR FRIEND

*The radiant morn hath passed away
and spent too soon her golden store;
the shadows of departing day
creep on once more.*

MHB 940

The news of the passing of my dear friend and sister Her Excellency Theresa Aba Kufuor came as a shock to me. It was so unexpected. There can be no words to express the depth of sadness I feel at the loss of such a special human being.

I first met “Auntie”, as my children lovingly came to call her, when we moved into the West Airport neighbourhood two years before she became the country’s First Lady. As a good neighbour, she came to our house to introduce herself to us and welcome us.

Interestingly, she happened to know my auntie who was a very good friend of her elder sister in Kumasi. From then on she became my sister, and we were constantly at each other’s home. I have many fond memories of the conversations we had about everything under the sun. Even when we moved away, we always kept in touch.

079

“Lost and found” is the phrase we used to greet each other whenever we met and we’d both break out in peals of laughter that would draw people around to watch us.

Mrs Kufuor was soft spoken, a jovial, loving and adorable person, ready to accommodate and go to any length to put smiles on people’s faces. She had a unique way of making everyone who met her feel at ease, no matter their station.

Many people in her new position as First Lady would look down on old friends and acquaintances, but not Auntie Aba. Instead, our friendship grew stronger, and she even asked me to assist her son and his wife to cut their wedding cake. What an honour that was to me!

I will miss our conversations, swapping stories about family and the good old days, sharing recipes and meals. I will especially miss the delight on your face every Christmas when you received our hamper of special *atsɔmɔ* and cakes.

Dear Sister, it is my hope and prayer that we will meet again on the day when the mighty trumpets of the Lord shall sound. There we will say to one another again: “Lost and found!”

Until then, dear Auntie Aba, Your Excellency, fare thee well and rest in perfect peace.

A TRUE MOTHER TO A NATION



Most of us elder ones in the Pianim family have known Her Excellency Mrs Theresa Aba Kufuor since we were children in Kumasi Central Market. Aba's late mother, Maame Ahenfie, had her store next to our Mummy's. We looked upon each other as family. And this was long before I met my mentor and Aba's senior brother J H Mensah in the United Nations system. When my Mummy passed away, Aba, in spite of her heavy schedule as First Lady of the nation, came home to sit and mourn with us. She was of course graciously accompanied by her husband, His Excellency President John Agyekum Kufuor.

Since childhood our paths have crisscrossed both socially and professionally but always as family. Aba was quintessentially a gracious and caring lady. In her passing Ghana has lost a first lady who was genuine mother to all of us, to the nation. She always had a smile and was welcoming to all. On one occasion, after an unhinged individual had tried to crash his car into the President's motorcade at the junction of Independence Avenue and Silver Star Towers, I was waiting on the verandah to commiserate with President Kufuor. Aba saw me and waved me inside with her usual warm welcoming smile, "Kwame, come and have a seat and wait for your brother."

080

Our paths crossed professionally when I became chief executive of Ghana COCOBOD and Aba was the matron and head of the nurses. They were helping Professor Paul Nyame, who had conceptualised, planned and built the Cocoa Clinics, to make them operational.

Aba, Professor Nyame and his colleague Dr Kwadwo Owusu had one thing in common that helped make the clinics popular with the public, especially farmers: their linguistic skills. Aba spoke fluent Ewe, Bono, Twi, Fante and Ga and some Hausa. Paul was at home with Ga, Twi and Fante and so was Kwadwo. This made the farmers feel at home.

I recall a young lady leading her elderly mother to the consultation room and telling her not to be shy and tell the doctors and nurses about all her pains and aches, especially the ones in her waist. The old lady whispered back, "Enye me sisi. Eje me jonku." I stopped in my tracks. I could not recollect or find the English word for "jonku". I turned to the lady and told her to speak to the doctor and nurses in whatever language in which she felt most at ease and they would understand.

Aba used to visit and she knew our kids and saw them grow. She loved children to be orderly and proper. My wife Cornelia loves to bake and is pleased when people enjoy her pastries. On one occasion, Kofi, Aba's youngest boy, was really dipping in and enjoying himself. Aba kept winking at him to slow down. I kept nudging him to continue. His siblings apparently teased Kofi with this for some time.

It did not come to us as a complete surprise, therefore, when we heard the story from the state visit of President Kufuor to the United Kingdom. At the formal dinner at Buckingham Palace, Aba was

sitting with Sir Alan Reid, the Keeper of the Privy Purse and treasurer to Her Majesty the Queen. In the course of the dinner, Sir Alan asked Aba if she by chance knew of a young Ghanaian gentleman living in London called Elkin. “You mean Elkin Pianim?” Aba asked. “Yes, indeed! Do you know him?” Sir Alan said. Aba, always the gracious and kind mother, replied: “Elkin is like my own son.” Sir Alan Reid was then Elkin’s landlord.

Aba is gone and with her is disappearing some of the graciousness, humility, simplicity and duty of care that characterised her tenure as First Lady and Mother of the Nation.

Aba, greet Maame Ahenfie for us, she whose love and command for languages you inherited!

Aba, give a hug to your siblings gone before you and a big one to JH for his 95th birthday!

Aba, give our love to our irrepressible nephew Albert, and tell him we miss his quick wit and little annoyances!

Our heartfelt condolences to the widower, President John Agyekum Kufuor. We cannot imagine the pain of your irreparable loss, but we hope you will be warmed by the courageous and unshakeable love you shared for decades; and the knowledge that she is in a better place and free of all pain.

To the grieving children and your spouses and your loved ones, our sympathies. We know no matter how old you are and how old your Mum gets, when she passes away, you will cry and so do cry. But more importantly, wrap each other in a warm, loving embrace. For this is what Aba will love you to do in remembrance of the good times you all shared.

081

To the extended family, thank you for sharing your loved one with us and giving her to us as a mother to a grateful nation.

Mrs Theresa Aba Kufuor, Former First Lady, *damirifa due!*

Mrs Theresa Aba Kufuor, humble and caring mother to a nation, *damirifa due!*

Aba, our sister, symbol of simplicity and human kindness, DAMIRIFA DUE, DUE, DUE: DUE NE AMANEHUNU!

And may the Good Lord whom you knew and served welcome you home. And may the soil lie lightly on your gentle soul.

Kwame Pianim

Accra, 31 October 2023

CECILIA DAPAAH



*M*y dear Maa: it is with great pain and loss that I pen these few words on your demise. I do not think mere words can describe adequately the relationship that existed between us. You were my mum, confidante, special friend and mentor.

You were the epitome of gentility and calmness. You had a peaceful nature. Our bond, which endured for close to four decades, is one that I will for ever cherish for its warmth and pure love.

It was with great delight and humility that I accepted the proposal from you to become one of the directors of the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation, the great organisation that you set up.

The Foundation flourished under your exemplary leadership as the chair and life patron.

Maa, one of the most remarkable things you did at that time was to visit an HIV/Aids patient. You embraced her and had a chat with her. The lady had expressed the wish to meet you before passing on. You readily accepted and travelled to the hospital to meet her. Incidentally, her name was also Theresa.

082

The lady managed a smile to show her appreciation. She passed away a few weeks later. This was at a time when no one wanted to touch patients suffering from HIV/Aids. What an angel you were.

During your pastoral visits, you also engaged with medical staff and patients in Amasaman affected by buruli ulcer. For some of us it was our first encounter with the disease.

Maa, you knew how to touch people's hearts. You carried on working with such dignity and humility, not only in Ghana but also other parts of Africa. You were a founding member of the Organization of African First Ladies Against HIV/Aids (OAFLA) and served as its inaugural vice-president.

I learned a lot at your feet and absorbed your mantra: "God never makes a mistake."

Your legacy is etched in the sands of time.

Maa, Mrs K – fare thee well as you rest in the bosom of our Maker. My family will sorely miss you.

Rest, rest, rest, Maa – until we meet again at the Resurrection.

Due, due. Damirifa due.

Honourable Cecilia Abena Dapaah is a former MP for Bantama and minister of state

CHILDREN OF JUSTINA OSEI-BONSU



For as long as we can remember, Auntie Aba has been an integral part of all our lives. But to Mummy, she was “My Aba”. They were sisters in life and at heart and their closeness naturally filtered down to all of us children.

They were both public health nurses who had trained in the UK and were founding members of the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana. As far as they were concerned, they were siblings, and they treated each other’s children as their own. When we got into trouble one could often be heard playfully chastising the other and taking the other’s children’s side. It was either “*Aba, wo reba me ba no*” or “*Abena, fa me ba no ma me*”.

We all grew up together and remember the days following the 1972 coup d’état, when our maternal grandfather would pick up all eight of us (Kwasi, Wofa, Chief, Nana Amoako, Nana Ama, Saah, Mimi and Agyekum) and drive us to Christ the King School. How we all managed to fit into his Peugeot 404 and never got stopped by the police, we will never know.

Auntie’s love for us grew even more after Mummy passed. She shared our despair and seamlessly took over the role of mother – and later grandmother, when our children were born. Mimi and Nana Ama fondly remember her visiting each of them when they were in labour and joyously coming to their homes to bathe the newborns. We knew how much she missed Mummy, because in each grandchild she managed to point out a unique quality of her “dearest Abena”.

Our children were precious to her and she loved them all very much, from the eldest, whom both she and Uncle Kofi referred to as Abena (much to the child’s confusion), to the youngest, whom she called “*Maraa ma’Adoma*”. The grandchildren all remember the sign of the cross she made on them each time we took them to visit her.

To the nation, she became Her Excellency Mrs Theresa Kufuor, First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, a role she carried off with natural dignity. However, to us, she remained our Auntie Aba, a beautiful, warm and gentle soul who was always smiling, her favourite phrase being: “How nice.”

Her passing has left a void, but we are comforted by the fact that she has gone to be with the Lord who loves her more. We imagine Auntie and Mummy chatting and laughing away, with so much to catch up on.

Rest in perfect peace, Auntie Aba.

Kwasi, Wofa, Nana Amoako, Mimi and Nana Ama

REVEREND DR LAWRENCE TETTEH

*My faith has found a resting place,
Not in device nor creed;
I trust the Ever-living One,
His wounds for me shall plead.*

*I need no other argument,
I need no other plea;
It is enough that Jesus died
And that He died for me.*

*M*y tribute to the former first lady whom we called “Mama Theresa” begins with this hymn. It was composed in 1891 by Eliza Edmunds Hewitt, a teacher in a school for indigent children in New England. She could not have had any idea then how profound the hymn would still be, all these years later.

The words of this hymn and the story to it speak volumes about the life of the late Theresa Kufuor.

084

Mama Theresa’s life was sanctified to noblest ends, and was defined by service, prayer, meditation and love for humanity. Both President Kufuor and Mama Theresa loved this hymn. Every time I visited them, even if she was on her sickbed, we would sing together and pray before I left. Mama Theresa never lost the key to any hymn ...

I believe she will sing this hymn as she walks across a line of angels into the welcoming embrace of our Lord and Maker. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!! Hallelujah!!!!

My relationship with President Kufuor and his family dates back many years, to long before he became the leader of our nation. My fondest memory of Mama Theresa was when she accompanied President Kufuor as the special guest of honour to the first ever Methodist Crusade in 2002 at the Independence Square. During the sermon, I bellowed out this hymn and I noticed that she sang along with gusto.

Lo and behold, her faith indeed has found a resting place.

Mama Theresa was a woman of faith and had a great love for the things of God. She was calm but had a commanding presence.

She was a woman of extraordinary vitality and charm. She had an exceptional gift for service and an insatiable desire to serve the Lord. Her instinct for the general welfare of people was firm and

sound. She possessed a strong personality and was a good manager of people and situations. She had the gift of turning things around, especially when they looked hopeless. Her strong disposition often drew her to people, as did the aura she carried of solid judgement.

She loved the things of God and loved people genuinely. She was always grateful when I prayed and sang along with her.

On behalf of Lawrence Tetteh Ministries, my wife, Barbara, the entire Tetteh family and on my own behalf, I wish Mama Theresa a peaceful rest in the bosom of the Lord.

Sleep well, Mama Theresa. Till we meet again to sing your favourite hymns, you will be in our memory.

To God be the glory.

Reverend Dr Lawrence Tetteh is the president of Worldwide Miracle Outreach

SARPONG ADU ACHEAMPONG



*Now the labourer's task is o'er;
Now the battle day is past;
Now upon the farther shore
Lands the voyager at last.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping,
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.*

MHB 976

Admired Mrs Kufuor with utmost respect from afar before I had the privilege of getting into a position of close proximity to her when the state assigned me in 2001 to serve His Excellency John Kufuor, following his election in 2000 as the President of the Republic of Ghana and commander-in-chief of the Ghana Armed Forces.

My admiration towards and for Mrs Kufuor deepened further primarily because of her exceptional virtue, epitomised by her radiance of an inherent spirit of humility, simplicity and humanity. Her apparently laid-back posture, even as the First Lady of Ghana, was striking. However, behind the scenes, she was firm and resolute in her support and commitment to the vision of her husband and the paradigm-shifting policies that he championed.

Her compassion, especially in caring for mothers and children, which also manifested through her work as the founder of the Mother and Child Foundation, is one from which many across our nation are still benefiting, even in these most trying times.

Her Excellency Mrs Kufuor was a kind-hearted mother who embraced everybody who came her way, including household staff. Visitors to the house could hardly differentiate between her real children and non-biological children. The welfare of the household staff was her concern, and she always ensured that our needs were catered for satisfactorily. She was indeed a beautiful woman with an authentically beautiful spirit and a selfless heart.

One peculiar aspect of Mrs Kufuor worth mentioning was her deep understanding of marriage. Given the busy schedule of her politician husband, for which reason he hardly stayed at home, she remained resolute. She managed the affairs of the family and household while her husband was away, embarking on national, continental and global assignments.

Even when her husband was at home, the house was mostly inundated with visitors. In all that, the late former First Lady remained calm and patient. Even when it was time to have lunch with her husband, she waited patiently until the last visitor had left, by which time the meal meant for lunch would be taken around 8pm.

It was no wonder that President Kufuor loved, respected and adored her.

Her Excellency Mrs Kufuor was a pillar to her husband, epitomising the axiom that every successful man has a great woman behind him, just as every successful woman also has a gentleman behind her. She embodied the very best of a virtuous woman and mother.

Her contribution to the success story of the Kufuor administration is a phenomenal testimony that will remain memorialised in the history of Ghana's Fourth Republic. Her love gave us a peace-loving, gentle giant of a president. Her angelic love was the bedrock of a genius of a man who enjoyed the warmth of a loving wife, as he fought, through the daily grind of his presidency, to ideate and work for the motherland.

A great matriarch has taken her leave from the Earth and has given her sacrificial devotion and love for humanity. I know our Creator has received her into His Glory. I pray the good Lord to comfort her widower and our father, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, their five unassuming children and the whole of the bereaved family.

Rest well, Auntie Aba. Rest well, Obaapanyin! You were splendour and grandeur personified.

Sarpong Adu Acheampong is a special aide to the former President John Agyekum Kufuor

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL



*My flesh and my heart may fail
But God is the strength of my heart
And my portion for ever . . .
Psalm 73:26*

We mourn the loss of a remarkable woman. As First Lady, Mrs Theresa Kufuor, a qualified nurse/midwife, was not only a symbol of strength and grace but also a dedicated advocate for the improvement of health care in our country.

Mrs Kufuor was a pillar of strength and a campaigner for the welfare of Ghanaians. Her commitment to improving health-care services, particularly in the field of nursing and midwifery, has left an indelible mark on our professions. As the wife of the former President of Ghana His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, she supported his endeavours tirelessly and played an instrumental role in shaping the nation's health-care policies.

Mrs Kufuor became the first chief matron of Cocoa Clinic in 1973. Her dedication to improving the quality of health care in Ghana has led to significant advancements in our professions. She firmly believed that nurses and midwives form the backbone of any health-care system and championed their cause by ensuring they receive the recognition and support they deserve.

She advocated for person-centred care, emphasising the importance of empathy, dignity and respect in every medical interaction. Her passion for ensuring that each person received the highest standard of care was truly inspiring.

Mrs Kufuor's commitment to the advancement of health care extended beyond our borders. She founded the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation, a non-governmental organisation operating in Ghana and Canada which supports work preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV and Aids. She actively engaged in initiatives aimed at reducing maternal and child mortality rates across Africa.

Recognising the critical role of midwives in ensuring safe pregnancies and deliveries, she championed policies and programmes that empowered midwives and provided them with the necessary resources to deliver optimal care. Her dedication to championing health-care delivery made the West African Postgraduate College of Nurses and Midwives honour her by inducting her into the college as an honorary fellow in 2008.

Mrs Kufuor was known for her kindness, compassion and concern for others. She touched the lives of many through her philanthropic work, supporting community projects and organisations dedicated to improving the lives of those less fortunate. Her benevolent spirit serves as an inspiration

to all of us, reminding us of the importance of giving back to our communities and showing compassion to those in need.

We remember Mrs Theresa Kufuor as a woman of integrity, grace and determination. Her legacy will for ever be etched in the annals of Ghana's health-care history. As we mourn her loss, let us also celebrate the life she lived and the positive impact she had on the nursing and midwifery professions.

To the families of Mrs Kufuor, we offer our support and sincerest condolences during this trying time. May you find solace in the memories you shared with Mrs Kufuor and may her spirit continue to guide and inspire us all.

THE FORMER FIRST LADY'S NURSES



To the family: accept our heartfelt condolences. The legacy of kindness and dedication left by your adored wife, mother and grandmother will always be remembered and will live on through the impressions she made and the affection she bestowed on us.

May her spirit find everlasting serenity and may her family take solace in knowing that her influence endures in our lives, on which she made such an impact.

Today, we realise we are not only professional nurses who cared for her, but part of a community touched by the life of Mrs Theresa Kufuor. To us she was more than just a patient: she was a woman who made an indelible impression on our hearts.

She brought grace and warmth to all who had the privilege of knowing her. Her strength and resilience in the face of illness were an inspiration to all of us. She faced her health challenges with dignity and courage and, in her presence, we were witnesses to the power of the human spirit.

As her caregivers, we saw her unwavering love, her kindness and her love for her family. Her charm never faded, not even in times of pain and struggle. Her smile was a beacon in our daily interactions. We had our petty fights, yes. But your voice – that sweet, gentle voice: any time you said, “Thank you” and “God bless you” with that voice, it gave us so much joy and the strength to work harder.

090

We pay homage to the former First Lady of Ghana. Her legacy is marked by dedication to education, health care, social justice and equal rights. She served as a model of grace and resilience, a powerful example of the profound effect that an individual can have when he or she is determined to shape a more compassionate nation.

We discovered that Mama Theresa was a strikingly compassionate woman whose life was defined by boundless love. She was open and ready to embrace everyone with warmth. We have so many beautiful memories of her that we treasure.

Our hearts ache so much from not being able to hold hands with you again.

Mummy was the epitome of the wholesome life: a beacon of light, hope and love, a library of the prayerfulness that was a permanent ingredient of her well-lived life.

We celebrate you for the example you have left behind. You were an ambassador of grace. You desired to live in a country whose builder and maker is God; now, you have arrived there safely with your good deeds on Earth following you, for which you will receive eternal reward.

The privilege of serving you brought us so much fulfilment. It was an honour to know you. We will cherish the time we spent with you, Mummy, and look back on it and smile.

Rest in the bosom of the Lord in perfect peace.

Mariam Anthonia Koomson

Rachael Rachael

Emefa Aileen Agorbia

Elizabeth Akaina

Fuseina Musab

Nancy Anuab

Louisa (UGMC)

JOYCE, PATRICIA AND KWARTENG



We are here to say thank you to our mother who is now in heaven resting in the bosom of her Maker. Mom, we thank you for always loving us and guiding us during our duty tour as policemen and women who provided much-needed security for you.

The relationship between Mummy and us was more family than official. She had our interests at heart, always encouraging us to go the extra mile in our academic pursuits. Mummy loved classical music and hymns.

She also had a close bond with God, to the extent that whenever we landed in any foreign country she would tell you to locate the nearest Catholic church. We could not stay anywhere without going to church on Sunday. Golders Green was our favourite Catholic church in the UK.

She was time conscious, so much so, that she sometimes arrived at venues even before the organisers, which made them embarrassed. But Mummy, with her soft-spoken ways and British accent, would say: "That's okay."

Humility and respect are things we all learned from you. Any time we travelled with Daddy, Mummy would signal you to enter a room quietly because Daddy was resting. She was peaceful in nature and we know she is resting peacefully with her Maker.

092

We remember the window shopping on Edgware Road and Liverpool Street. If we bought anything, Mummy would quickly tell us to keep the receipt for it carefully, because we might come back and change the item. Through you, we can boast of having experienced extensive travel within Ghana and abroad.

Mummy's favourite phrase was "How nice". She shared in the success of all that came her way. She gave golden rings to all our kids during our stay with her.

She was a first lady so down to earth that she did not want sirens. In her view, she was disturbing other road users. We would then explain to her the security implications, to which she would grudgingly say, with a smile: "*Yoo, m'ate.*" And we would all smile.

Mummy Kande, as you affectionately called Joyce, Ayefro (Pat) and Mr Kwarteng say: rest in the bosom of the Lord.

As you are no longer with us, Mom, we cannot help but cry. A forgiving and loving mother to all, a star so bright, who kept making the lives of people around her so bright. A true FIRST lady, whose heart we believe was moulded from pure gold. The world changes from year to year, we know, and our lives from day to day, but the love and memory of you shall never pass away.

Even though you are no longer here with us, we can still feel your love guiding us. You are always in our hearts. We love you and miss you dearly.

Joyce, Patricia and Kwarteng were members of Theresa Kufuor's security detail



BARBARA AND ANTHONY



*O*ur dearly beloved auntie left this world with all her loved ones around her. Her face looked beautiful as she transitioned, with the sun shining through her bedroom window on her face as God's divinity and mercy and love in those last precious moments of our aunt's life.

093

We thank and praise God for all the precious years He blessed her with and all the beautiful and cherished memories we shared with her as a family. We thank God for the gift of having her as an earthly protector and provider.

We thank God for the gift of life and the promise of His Kingdom to come. See you in eternity, Auntie Aba. We know that you will rest in power and perfect peace. We love you and we will always appreciate all that you have done for the family.

God is our perfect guide in life. His grace fills our emptiness.

You will always be in our hearts.

Damirifa due. Due ne amanebunu.

GHANA AIDS COMMISSION



It is with profound sadness that the Ghana Aids Commission pays tribute to a remarkable soul who touched the lives of Ghanaians in ways words can scarcely capture. We are eternally grateful to **Mrs Theresa Kufuor** for the pioneering role she played as an advocate on HIV and Aids issues during her tenure as Ghana's First Lady from 2001 to 2009.

HIV, as we know it now, was not how it was known then. In those days, HIV was referred to and known as a "killer disease" and it was causing havoc in families and communities. HIV stigma was rife and even access to testing and treatment was not widespread and faced challenges. Yet this did not deter Mrs Kufuor in her advocacy role to make HIV a national as well as a continental issue.

In her quiet and dignified manner, Mrs Kufuor, as a founding member of the Organization of African First Ladies against Aids, worked as an advocate for various aspects of HIV management. She seized the opportunity at every session to urge her counterparts and colleagues across Africa to increase their commitment in assisting their various governments to respond to HIV and Aids, working towards ambitious national targets on HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

It is with great pride that we acknowledge her role as the co-chair of the Fifth General Assembly of African First Ladies against HIV/Aids in Accra in July 2007. Her role as a high-level HIV advocate set the standard for subsequent first ladies of the Republic of Ghana to follow.

As First Lady, she encouraged women to be strong to hold their families together, and particularly to educate and protect children from HIV. She was also the patron of the **Mother and Child Community Development Foundation**, through which she encouraged HIV-positive pregnant women to seek access to services assisting prevention of mother-to-child transmission of the virus.

With her "No New Infections Awareness Campaign", launched in 2005, Mrs Kufuor encouraged young people, especially girls, to keep their virginity. Her messages also promoted HIV testing while advocating for resources to make HIV prevention services more widely accessible to the general public. She was passionate about care and support for the infected and affected while encouraging a positive societal attitude towards people living with HIV.

Mrs Theresa Kufuor very much served as a mother figure for the Ghana Aids Commission by campaigning passionately on HIV issues at the highest levels in this country and beyond. As a commission, we owe her a debt of gratitude for the seeds she sowed, which are still bearing fruit in the national HIV response.

We pray that her soul will find eternal rest in the bosom of the Lord.

Rest well! Damirifa due!

MOTHER AND CHILD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION



The Mother and Child Community Development Foundation (MCCDF) is a charitable non-profit organisation established by Her Excellency Mrs Theresa Kufuor to develop programmes to assist and support deprived mothers and children. The Foundation boosts community development by equipping young and disadvantaged mothers with skills to enable them to take care of their children in deprived communities.

The Foundation works to improve the quality of life for people living with HIV/Aids by providing antiretroviral medication and by raising awareness through campaigns and programmes to reduce stigmatisation. In this regard, the Foundation worked closely with the Ghana Aids Commission.

The overall objectives of the Foundation are poverty reduction and implementing measures that will support women and put children in schools to reduce their social vulnerability.

The Foundation uses an integrated approach to respond to the needs of these targeted groups:

TEENAGE MOTHERS

To be equipped through vocational training with skills

095

CHILDREN

Provision of facilities for pre-school education

Intensification of the government's health-care programmes by the institution of regular eye and dental care checks

The Foundation established a "meal a day" programme for children attending its nurseries or pre-schools in:

« Kotobabi

« Amasaman

« Nyanyano

« Odumase, Sunyani

The Foundation provided furniture and textbooks, paid teacher's salaries and fed the children daily in all of the Foundation's nurseries. It worth noting that currently all these schools have developed up to at least junior high school level, with some moving up to senior high school status.

Under the leadership of Her Excellency Mrs Theresa Kufuor, the Foundation provided funding and equipment for shea butter production by women, mainly in communities in Northern Ghana.

An industrial bakery was set up at Nsawam in the Eastern Region which has the capacity to train 1,000 women at a time.

The Foundation equipped women with soap-making skills through training programmes and provided them with soap-making equipment.

Women were also given training in weaving, with the cost of all the looms and threads/yarn borne by the MCCDF.

Training in basket weaving was also provided and resourced by the Foundation.

At all these programmes, Her Excellency, as the chief patron, was present to oversee the delivery of facilities and training.

The MCCDF took particular interest in orphanages, children's hospitals and special schools in Ghana, visiting and providing them with assistance in cash and kind.

The Foundation solicited for equipment and other medical supplies, subsequently donating these to hospitals and clinics around the country. Notable was equipment such as a mammogram machine, donated to Sunyani General Hospital. Other items such as hospital beds, wheelchairs and walking aides were donated to medical facilities around Ghana.

The Foundation set up regional call centres through which HIV/Aids patients could receive information on accessing antiretroviral drugs and, where necessary, seek advice.

096

A scholarship programme was initiated with the patron's seed money; this attracted funding from individuals, some of whom generously took up the responsibility of fully funding certain students. It is worth noting that so far, three students have attained first-class degrees at the University of Ghana, Legon.

The MCCDF is eternally grateful to embassies, charitable organisations both at home and abroad as well as individuals who shared in and supported its vision.

Mother and Child Community Development Foundation
P O Box 16390
KLA, Accra
Ghana



COMMUNITY WORK







0100



FROM OUR LADY OF APOSTLES (OLA) ROMAN CATHOLIC CONVENT GIRLS' BASIC SCHOOL, KETA



*And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me: Write: Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord
From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works do follow them.
Revelations 14:13 (Douay-Rheims)*

Mrs Kufuor, it is not a tribute that the OLA Convent Girls' School would have wished to write for you. It should have been an appellation, a praise song, which you yourself would have enjoyed. We were actually planning a homecoming for Old Girls of OLA during which we would honour you; but God's ways are not ours.

Ever since you visited your alma mater, your name has remained on the lips of all of us in the school. Knowing that a past girl had become First Lady of the Republic of Ghana has been an inspiration for many girls at the school. You have been our pride and we have talked boastfully about you wherever we find ourselves.

You were a little seed planted in Keta OLA Convent which grew to become a big tree under which many people found shelter. Though you preferred to be behind the scenes and not put yourself forward, you were a light on a lampstand which could not be hidden. The tremendous work you did for the nation as First Lady of the Republic can never be forgotten.

0101

Grandmum, Mrs Theresa Kufuor, you were a gem. Even though you are gone, you will always be part of our history and your name will live on for ever. May Mary, Our Lady of Apostles, intercede for you and may God, the maker of Heaven and Earth, whom you served reverently, keep you safe in the bosom of Father Abraham.

Our grandmum, *Dzudzo le nutifafa me*. Rest in peace. Amen.

GLOBAL ASSOCIATION OF PAST OLA GIRLS



On that fateful day – 1 October 2023 – we rose to the sound of birdsong but all the songs grew faint. Grasshoppers dragged along and stirred the morning laboriously. Loss is part of life, but knowing this does not make it any easier. Oh, the calls: the persistent telephone calls, all bearing the same news – that death had snatched yet another hard-working, loving and soft-spoken Gem of OLA. The news of your death spread like wildfire and threw everyone into disarray. The phone calls from confused Old Girls kept criss-crossing each other throughout the week.

Once upon a time in the 1940s, one Mr Joseph Henry Mensah, a staunch Catholic, wanted to give his precious daughter a good Catholic education. He contacted his friend Torgbui Lucas Tamakloe, a merchant and native of Keta, to seek admission for little Theresa at the Keta Girls' Convent, linked to the Our Lady of Apostles (OLA) secondary school in Ho – today known as OLA Girls' Senior High School. The convent school at that time attracted young girls from Accra, Elmina, Kumasi, Takoradi and other big towns. Theresa was one of them.

Mama Theresa was a member of the 1950 Year Group. Among her Gem classmates were Alice Quarcoopome, Comfort Sackiefio, Odelia Blavo, Evelyn Tamakloe and Gladys Quist, all of blessed memory.

0102

Mama Theresa upheld the values of her Catholic faith and her alma mater. She was a brave woman with strong Christian principles, a woman with a ready smile for everyone. She was a virtuous woman. She had integrity. She was diligent, persistent and full of compassion. Her classmates were not surprised that Mama Theresa became a nurse, because caring for the suffering and the needy was second nature to her.

Although she came under the spotlight when her husband became President of Ghana, she stayed her usual, private person. We past and present girls of OLA were proud of her achievements and never failed to brag about her to sister schools. How sad that death has snatched our role model from us!

One of her surviving classmates, Madam Theresa Akuvi Grunitzky, recalls Mama Theresa's jovial, mischievous temperament. Reminiscing about their Keta convent days, she says that whenever a teacher was absent or late for class, the young Theresa would stand in front of the class, mimic the teacher and make her classmates laugh. This always landed the whole class in trouble with the Reverend Sisters, but her classmates loved her to bits!

Because OLA Keta was one of only two schools in Ghana Mama Theresa attended before leaving to pursue nurses' training in the UK, she was passionate about her alma mater and its secondary school, OLA Ho. It became a school of choice for her extended family and some of her nephews taught at the Ho school.

As the guest of honour at OLA's Golden Jubilee in 2004, she noticed that the school lacked an assembly hall. She took up the task immediately and facilitated the construction and furnishing of the current assembly hall, the envy of sister schools to date. For OLA's 65th anniversary, even though Mama Theresa could not be present, she made sure that her daughter Nana Ama represented her. There is a natural time for all of life's adventures to come to an end. Mama Theresa, we can say with joy and tears that you spent time to discover the best in others and you left the world better than you found it. Because of you, many people have lived better lives.

All OLA girls, past and present, say fare thee well. We plead that God Almighty, whom you served devotedly, keep you safe in His bosom.
Adieu.

Xedenyui! Na dzudzor le nutifafa me!
God be with you till we meet again.



JOHN KOKI LARBI



It was 2001 when providence led me to the seat of government at Christiansborg Castle, Osu, to serve as one of the presidential security guards of His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor. I was immediately posted to the Office of the Former First Lady, Her Excellency Mrs Theresa Kufuor. I was with her from then on until her demise on 1 October 2023.

The very day I first met her, I realised what a remarkable mother and wife she was. Her love for all the workers, including the police officers, was nothing short of extraordinary. She balanced the roles of a first lady and a wife to perfection. Her support for us created a secure haven. Her ability to listen with an open heart, offer solace in times of sorrow, was a testament to her deep emotional intelligence. She embodied the true family woman, heart overflowing with affection and devotion to her loved ones.

Wherever we went for official functions, she was ready to offer assistance to others, especially the vulnerable. On these occasions, if I offered any money for that purpose, she would say, “Mr Larbi, today your money will triple.” Such was the First Lady I worked with.

She had an extraordinary presence as a grandmother. She radiated warmth, wisdom and boundless love towards her grandchildren, who will miss her.

0104

Rarely did you see a flicker of anger in her eyes. She had mastered the art of tranquillity, embracing the virtues of patience and understanding. She tackled every task diligently, leaving no stone unturned in her pursuit of excellence.

At this moment, I find myself struggling to accept the poignant fact that you have departed. I am standing at the crossroads of emotions, where a bittersweet symphony of joy and pain forms a synergy. I acknowledge the pleasure of having known you: at the same time, I am grappling with the pain of bidding you goodbye.

From the moment I saw you, it was clear that you had an indomitable spirit. Your determination and resilience shone through, making an indelible impression on those fortunate enough to come into contact with you.

I will try to find solace in the profound words of the scriptures, which say that one day we shall meet again to celebrate the union we had.

I humbly acknowledge that the love bestowed upon you by your Maker surpasses all earthly affection. Gracefully, you have embraced the darkness of the night. May you embark on your journey in utmost safety and serenity. May every step you take be filled with the joy and fulfilment God has promised for this new journey.

Mama Theresa, sleep well. Rest in the bosom of Our Lord Jesus Christ until our paths cross again.
Damirifa due, due ne amanebunu.

Chief Inspector John Koki Larbi was a personal bodyguard to Her Excellency Theresa Kufuor

FRANCINE



La mort! La mort! Un exercice incontournable dans la vie de tout un chacun un.

Séchons nos larmes et regardons tous la croix.

Seul le silence est indiqué en face de la mort.

Dieu s'en charge.

Maman! Maman! Adieu et repos éternel.

Votre fille

Francine

Death! O death! An unavoidable turn in everyone's life.

Let us dry our tears and all look at the cross.

In the face of death, the only appropriate response is silence.

God is in control.

Mama! Mama! Farewell and may God give you eternal rest.

Your daughter

Francine



Le Président de la République de Côte d'Ivoire

Abidjan, le 04 octobre 2023

Monsieur le Président, *My dear brother,*

C'est avec une profonde tristesse que j'ai appris le décès, à l'âge de 87 ans, de votre épouse, Madame Theresa KUFUOR, ancienne Première Dame de la République du Ghana, survenu le dimanche 1^{er} octobre 2023.

En cette circonstance particulièrement douloureuse, je voudrais, au nom du peuple et du Gouvernement ivoiriens, de mon épouse, ainsi qu'en mon nom propre, vous adresser mes condoléances les plus émues.

Nous gardons tous en mémoire l'exemplarité et le fort engagement de Madame KUFUOR dans les domaines de la santé et de l'éducation. En effet, de par son dévouement et son humanisme, votre épouse a contribué à l'émancipation des femmes, à la promotion de l'éducation des petites filles ainsi qu'à l'amélioration de la santé maternelle et infantile au Ghana.

Tout en vous réitérant mes sincères condoléances et vous exprimant ma profonde compassion de même que ma solidarité dans cette épreuve,

Je vous prie d'agréer, **Monsieur le Président**, l'assurance de ma haute considération.

Alassane Ouattara
Alassane OUATTARA

Son Excellence
Monsieur JOHN AGYEKUM KUFUOR
Ancien Président de la République du Ghana
ACCRA



Office of the Ambassador

Embassy of the
United States of America
Accra, Ghana

Accra, Ghana

October 5, 2023


Dear H.E. Kufuor:

I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of your wife, Madam Theresa Aba Kufuor. On behalf of the staff of the U.S. Mission in Ghana, I extend our most heartfelt condolences to you and the entire family.

Madam Theresa Kufuor's extraordinary leadership in establishing Mother and Child Community Development Foundation is a legacy. I hope her memory will be a source of comfort and inspiration. Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and the family during this time of bereavement. May she rest in eternal and perfect peace.

0107

Sincerely,



Virginia E. Palmer
Ambassador

His Excellency,
John Agyekum Kufuor
Former President of the Republic of Ghana
Office of the Former President

H.E. Gabriel Nguema Lima & Mrs. Esther Maye Mba
Ministry of planning and economic diversification
Malabo , Bioko Norte
Equatorial Guinea

H.E. John Agyekum Kufuor
Airport Residential Area
Accra, Ghana

2nd October, 2023

Dear Sir.

LETTER OF CONDOLENCE

We write to express our heartfelt sympathy to you and your family on the passing of Mrs. Theresa Kufuor.

We are saddened by this loss and celebrate her life with you. She was a woman of honor!

We hold fond memories of the former first lady and she will be greatly missed as one of the gentle first ladies of Ghana who focused on the wellbeing of children and mothers.

Please accept our sincere condolences as we join you to mourn at his sorrowful time. May her memories help you find peace and comfort.

Sincerely,

Excellency Gabriel Nguema Lima and Mrs. Esther Maye Mba

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Daisaku Ikeda
President



Soka Gakkai International
32 Shinano-machi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-8583, Japan

October 5, 2023

His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor
P.O. BOX 16390
Kotoka International Airport
Accra, Ghana

Your Excellency,

Having just learned of the passing of former First Lady Theresa Kufuor, Kaneko and I would like to express our heartfelt condolences to you and your family. Together with my fellow members of Soka Gakkai-Ghana, I wish to say that, having deeply admired the late former First Lady, we will miss her dearly and we pray for her peaceful repose.

Kaneko and I feel privileged to forge a friendship with Your Excellency and the former First Lady, one we shall cherish for a lifetime. We will always look back with great fondness when we met both of you in Tokyo on October 24, 2002. While our time together then was but a moment out of your demanding itinerary, I recall the occasion vividly, a gilded memory that warms and delights my heart to this very day.

Together with Your Excellency, Mrs. Kufuor strove selflessly for the flourishing of the esteemed Republic of Ghana and for the happiness of its people, advancing the cause of education throughout her life. Her accomplishments and her legacy shall forever shine in the annals of your Republic, living on in the hearts of her beloved family and in all Ghanaians—of this I remain thoroughly convinced.

We hereby offer deep prayers for former First Lady Theresa Kufuor in honor of a life she led in sublime dignity. Please accept our deepest sympathies and condolences to Your Excellency and your family once again.

Handwritten signature of Daisaku Ikeda in black ink.

Daisaku Ikeda

Handwritten signature of Kaneko Ikeda in black ink.

Kaneko Ikeda

Dear Grandpa,

It was after your seventy-ninth birthday
this Saturday December 9th 2017. It was on this
day that you came our way and brightened our
dreams. You wiped away our tears of pain and
charged us to push on with our academics. Your
words still resonate in our hearts: "You should be
your brother's keeper." You encouraged us to take one step
at a time. Your words made us stronger and confident to
face tomorrow. We would have wished to be telling you all
about the impact your gift of love have had upon us and
where some of us
but we were
departure of
deeply mourn with
Grandpa, we



Today it's our turn
Grandma Theresa
into glory but has
because, her impactful
registered in our thoughts and hearts.

We of SOS Children's Village in Asakawa hope that all the
wonderful memories of the times you spent together with
Grandma Theresa will help to comfort you in the coming
weeks, months and years bearing in mind that although
no other person can fill Grandma's space we will
Pursue your counsel to continue her legacy of
love and greatness.



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
GHANA



11th October 2023

To
His Excellency President John Agyekum Kufuor

From
SOS Children's Villages in Ghana
National Office
P. O. Box 16657, Accra North
T: +233 (0)302 222867/233089
www.sosghana.org

His Excellency President John Agyekum Kufuor,


The Board, Management, Staff and Children of SOS Children's Villages in Ghana wish to express their heartfelt condolences on the occasion of the passing of your dear wife and Ghana's beloved former First Lady, Mrs. Theresa Kufuor.

Mr. President, we came into close contact with your late wife on the number of occasions that children and staff from Asiakwa and Tema programme locations and our National Office in Accra came to your homely residence to participate in the celebration of your birthdays – starting with your 79th birthday. In that space of time and interaction, Mrs. Theresa Kufuor left an indelible mark on all present. She was overwhelmingly admired and respected by the children, accompanying staff and the entire SOS fraternity as a personality who was caring, loving, quiet, elegant and graceful; and who embodied the values of humility, compassion and service.

In our considered view, Mrs. Kufuor in her own unique way transcended the ceremonial role of First Lady by quietly touching the lives of children and their families. Tapping into her training as a nurse and midwife, she demonstrated that her sole focus was social matters affecting children, young people, women and the needy in society. For instance, Mrs. Kufuor was a strong advocate for the implementation of the Ghana's Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme for kindergarten children, as part of the government's educational reforms in 2007. Earlier in 2002, Mrs. Kufuor founded the Mother and Child Community Development Foundation (MCCDF), an NGO operating in Ghana and Canada that supports work in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/Aids and mother-and-child separation. In recognition of her unwavering commitment to the plight of needy children and their mothers, Pope Benedict XVI conferred on her the Papal Award Dame of St. Gregory the Great in 2007.

In view of the foregoing observations, the SOS Children's Villages in Ghana, whilst sharing in your sorrow by the passing of your dear wife, Mrs. Theresa Kufuor, also join in the celebration of her life as a mother-figure par excellence who spread her wings of love, care and compassion to cover children, women and all humanity. Though she may no longer be with us, her memory lives on in the stories of hope she helped create, in the smiles of the children she inspired, and in the lives she transformed. She has left an indelible mark on the world, and her spirit will continue to inspire us to strive for a more compassionate and caring society.

May her soul rest in perfect peace.


Alexander Mar Kekula
National Director



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

THE PRESIDENT

October 13, 2023

His Excellency Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor
Former President of the Republic of Ghana
Accra, Ghana

My Dear Brother:

I present my compliments, and wish to inform that I have received with deep sorrow, news of the unfortunate passing of your wife, Her Excellency Madam Theresa Kufuor, Former First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, which sad event occurred on Sunday, October 1, 2023.


On this mournful occasion, I extend to you, and through Your Excellency, to your Children and Family, His Excellency Mr. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana and the Government and People of Ghana, our profound condolences on behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Liberia, and in my own name, for the irreparable loss of this valuable asset of your Family, Ghana and Africa, yea the World.

A retired diligent nurse and midwife, Her Excellency Madam Theresa Kufuor dedicated her work and life to the cause of humanity. She was a true patriot, a devoted family woman and a Champion of educational reform for the cause of children and the less fortunate. She will truly be missed and remembered in our sub-region.

It is our fervent prayer and hope that you and your family and the Government and People of Ghana will take solace in God The Almighty and the cherished memories and excellent services she rendered her country and People. May her soul be received by our maker as she rests in eternal peace. It is also our hope that God will grant Your Excellency, her Children and Family and the Government and People of Ghana the fortitude to go through this difficult period of mourning.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration and esteem.

Sincerely,



George Manneh Weah, Sr.



WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION

Ngozi OKONJO-IWEALA
Director-General



31 October 2023

Excellency,

It is with great sadness that I write to extend my deepest condolences to you and the government and people of the Republic of Ghana on the passing away of your dear wife, Mrs. Theresa Kufuor, former First Lady.

Mrs. Kufuor's work and leadership to promote the inclusive development of all Ghanaians was truly remarkable. Her devotion and passion for children, education, and women's empowerment will continue to have a strong legacy, especially as the *Mother and Child Community Development Foundation* continues to support disadvantaged mothers and children.

Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the state funeral due to pre-existing commitments, but my special thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this time of grief.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Former President John Kufuor
Republic of Ghana

Cc

H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Kwame Asiedu ANTWI
Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the WTO
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Ghana to the UNOG
Allee David-Morse 12
1202 Geneva





STATE VISITS



0114





0115





0116







CHURCH





0120







POLITICS &
GALLERY





0124



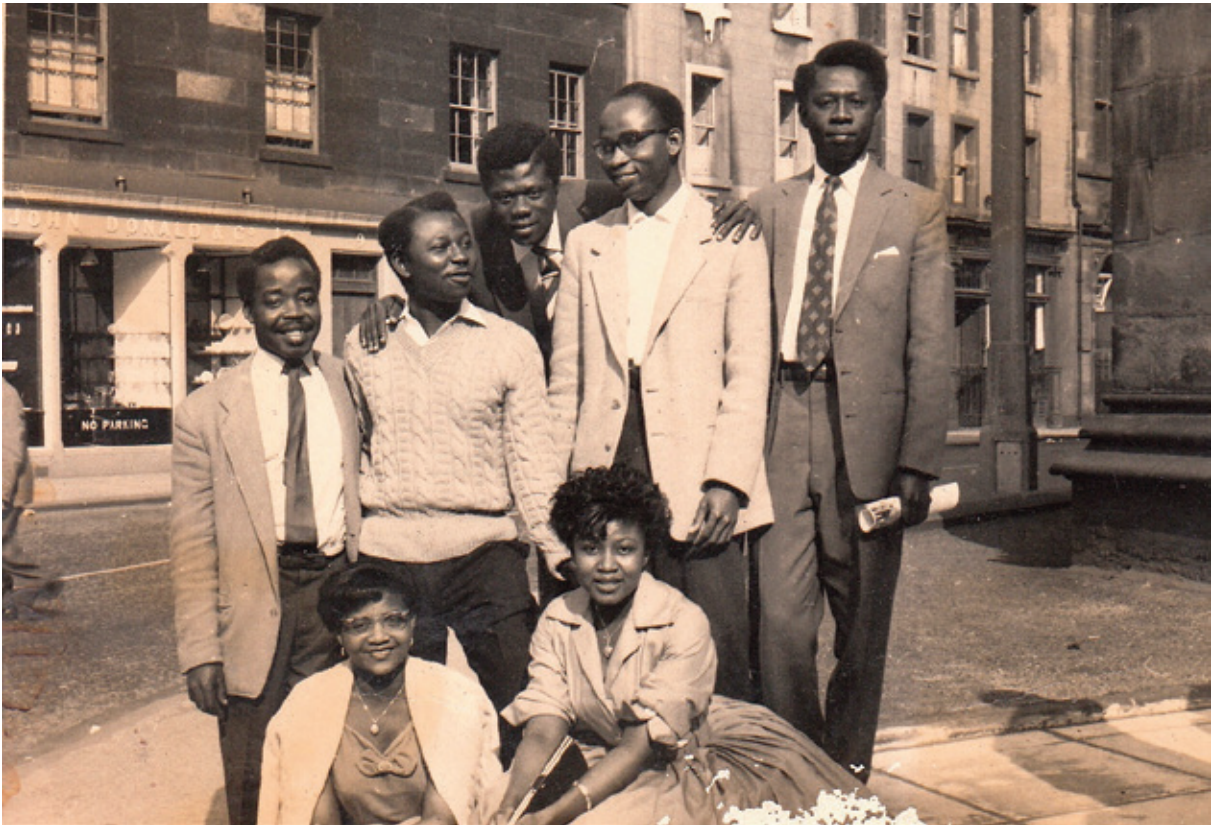




0126







0128











0132







0134







HYMNS

CH 309

1. Angel voices, ever singing,
Round your throne of light,
Angel harps, for ever ringing,
Rest not day nor night;
Thousands only live to bless you,
And confess you Lord of might.
2. You who are beyond the farthest
Mortal eye can scan,
Can it be that you regard us,
Sons of sinful man?
Can we know that you are near us,
And will hear us? Yea, we can.
3. Yea, we know that you rejoice still
O'er your work sublime;
You made ears, and hands, and voices
For your praise design;
Craftsman's art and music's measure,
For your pleasure, all combine.
4. In your house, great God, we offer,
Of your own to you,
And for your acceptance proffer,
All unworthily,
Hearts, and minds, and hands, and voices
In our choicest psalmody.
5. Honour, glory, might, and merit,
Yours shall ever be,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Blessed Trinity.
Of the best that you have given,
Earth and heaven, render you.
Amen



CH 162

Antiphon: Yes, I shall arise and return to my father!

1. To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
In you, O my God, I place all my trust.
(Psalm 25:1-2)
2. Look down on me, have mercy, O Lord;
Forgive me my sins, behold all my grief.
(Psalm 25:18)
3. My heart and soul shall yearn for your face;
Be gracious to me and answer my plea.
(Psalms 7-8)
4. Do not withhold your goodness from me;
O Lord, may your love be deep in my soul.
(Psalm 40:12)
5. To you I pray; have pity on me;
My God, I have sinned against your great love.
(Psalm 41:15)
6. Mercy, I cry, O Lord, wash me clean;
And whiter than snow my spirit shall be.
(Psalm 51:3)
7. Give me again the joy of your help;
Now open my lips, your praise I will sing.
(Psalm 51:14,17)
8. Happy is he, forgiven by God;
His sins blotted out, his guilt is no more.
(Psalm 32:1)



CH 106

1. The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want,
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green; he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.
2. My Spirit he restores again,
My life he does reclaim,
He guides me into righteousness
To glorify his name.
3. Although I walk in death's dark vale
Yet I will fear no ill;
For you are with me, and your rod
And staff my comfort still.
4. My table you have well prepared
In presence of my foes;
My head you do with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

*Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me;
And in God's house for ever more.
My dwelling-place shall be.*



CH 374

1. Through all the changing scenes of life,
In trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still,
My heart and tongue employ.
2. Of His deliverance I will boast,
Till all that are distressed
From my example comfort take,
And charm their griefs to rest.
3. O magnify the Lord with me,
With me exalt His name;
When in distress to Him I called,
He to my rescue came.
4. The hosts of God encamp around,
The dwellings of the just;
Deliverance He affords to all,
Who on His succour trust.
5. Oh, make but trial of His love;
Experience will decide,
How blest they are, and only they,
Who in His truth confide.
6. Fear Him, you saints and you will then,
Have nothing else to fear;
Make you His service your delight,
He'll make your wants His care.



CH 364

1. Now the Labourer's task is o'er,
Now the battle day is past,
Now upon the farther shore,
Lands the voyager at last,

Chorus

*Father, in your gracious keeping
Leave we now your servant sleeping.*

2. There the tears of earth are dried,
There its hidden things are clear,
There the work of life is tried,
By a juster Judge than here.
3. Earth to earth, and dust to dust,
Calmly now the words we say,
Left behind we wait in trust,
For the resurrection day.



Where is our God?

*Where is our God? (2x)
Where is our God in whom we trust?*

Renew our faith in Thee O Lord.
Help us Thy way, Thy deeds and words,
To accept always,
Even when we understand not mortal men.
We know there must be a purpose
for all thy deeds so mysterious.
Teach us Thy ways, lest ask we must.

Where is our God in Whom we trust?

Hear our prayer

Hear our prayer, O Lord,
Hear us, as we pray.
Hear our prayer, O Lord, as we pray.
Hear our prayer, O Lord.







ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

THE FAMILIES OF
**HER EXCELLENCY THERESA
ABA KUFUOR**

EXTEND HEARTFELT THANKS TO THE
FRIENDS, RELATIONS, SYMPATHISERS AND ASSOCIATES
WHO ARE HELPING US LAY HER TO REST.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR
REGARD, CONTRIBUTIONS AND INPUT
WHICH ARE HELPING US TO BID HER FAREWELL.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF GHANA
FOR ASSISTANCE WITH THE PUBLIC PROGRAMME
FOR THE FORMER FIRST LADY'S FUNERAL.

MAY GOD RICHLY REPAY YOUR KINDNESS.



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