



Via CARITAS

Through God's Love

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Our Children and COVID-19

By Arnold Lezcano

In early March, COVID-19 was spreading around the world but no cases had yet been found in the countries where we serve. We felt very blessed and **asked our children to increase their prayers for their sponsors and all supporters of CARITAS.**

It was the most beautiful sight- all our children gathered in each location to pray for us. We were so moved and wanted everyone to know that a legion of Caritas-children were praying for all the members of our global family. These pictures and [prayer video](#) have been a good reminder to not live in fear because God always listens to the cry of the poor.

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By the middle of March, suddenly everything had turned upside down! The governments shut down schools in many countries and while some of our children were safely quarantined in Boarding School, others were **forced to go home even if they didn't have a home.** The toughest cases were in Haiti and Uganda, where our children have been obliged to remain "home" for 30 days. Then it was our turn to pray for them.

Unfortunately, this tight lockdown leaves the people on their own to fend for their needs until the curfews are lifted. We know that our indigenous ministry partners simply don't have the resources to share with those in need, at least not any wide-ranging kind of temporary support. **Therefore, we are trying our best to fill in for some feeding help.**

We quickly realized that our **top priorities were the homeless children and those whose families could not afford to feed them for the 30-day shutdown.** Since then, we have been in constant communication with our ministry supporters on the ground determining our next steps.

Overall, we are very blessed to be working with Catholic Religious brothers, sisters, and faithful lay people who all responded very quickly to the changes, were ready to help, and took on the extra workload whenever needed.

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From our end, **we launched a temporary COVID-19 Feeding Initiative** (part of our Special Feeding Support) to meet this need. The funds raised **help children and even their family members who are in most need of food.** The beneficiaries include, but are not limited to, the children in our regular Sponsorship Programs. This program is a different way we can help our poor brothers and sisters, specifically with common food shortage issues, and also in emergency situations.

Throughout the weeks, we have received pictures of families living in huts, one room homes, or even just makeshift shelters; all smiling as they **received bags of food through our ministry.** Seeing these pictures brings us great joy, but also reminds us of how dire the need is: **for many of our children, this is a life or death situation.**

In Uganda, things became even more difficult as a nationwide travel ban was issued. This means that nobody is allowed to walk on the streets in groups larger than three people, driving a private car is completely prohibited, public transportation has stopped, and there are limits on who is allowed to ride around on boda bodas (motorcycles).

This next level of lockdown **made it illegal for our ministry team on the ground to drive** our Caritas vehicle to visit our families and bring them food. (con'd pg. 4)



Again, we are blessed to have great people on our team who came up with a clever solution. **Alon decided that he would become a registered boda boda taxi driver** so that he could still bring food to the poor children and families. Although it is much more dangerous, and more time consuming, it was the only way to move forward, and he was willing to do it. He also invited another teacher to get involved in the effort. **Let us pray for their safety during their ministry travels.**

In Haiti, Felix began by teaching our families how to be safe during the lockdown. We then were able to get resources in bulk and he **gave out masks and food to 30 families.** Violence has increased during the last few weeks in Haiti and we had to stop this way of support. **Felix will now be going directly to the families to keep our children and families safe from violence.**

Since we are all members of the Mystical Body of Christ, we know that your prayers are very effective. We ask you to **please pray for us, our ministry team, the children, and their families.**

To learn more about our Special Feeding Program, encompassing the common reality of general food shortage, and also our COVID-19 Initiative, **please click on the button below.** We thank everyone in advance who supports this program within our ministry.



 [**Special Feeding Program**](#)

Welcome Genevieve (and Saint Katharina)

by Arnold Lezcano

The newest member of our Caritas Family is the eldest of 6, Connecticut raised, homeschooled through high school, and recent alumna of Thomas Aquinas College in Southern California. After graduating in 2017, Genevieve Morlino worked in development for Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, where **she was motivated to learn fundraising for Non-Profits.**



She met her fiancé Phil in College, whose family hails from Milwaukee, which brings Gen here to begin their married life together in August! **Gen feels especially drawn to CARITAS for Children because of “the intimate bond created between child and sponsor, and being able to assist in a mission that combines the corporal works of mercy with the spiritual.”** She is looking forward to helping CARITAS as a new member of our Mission and Development team.

An amazing fact about Gen is that **her great-grandmother’s great-great-aunt is a Saint!**

Her whole family was present for the canonization of St. Maria Katharina Kasper in Rome in October, 2018. **It’s not every day you meet a person with a Saint in their ancestry!** When we found this out, we welcomed Saint Katharina along with Gen to our Caritas family, knowing that she will be praying for us and our mission.

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Although not yet a well known saint, Katharina Kasper founded the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ with four other women in Germany during the 1850's. Their mission was and still is to minister to the sick and needy, especially children, and they are known for their love of simplicity.



The love of Jesus in the poor and the ill, the care of children, and the close connection with Gen, will surely make St. Katharina a patron saint of CARITAS for Children.

We ask St. Katharina to pray for our sponsors and children, and we thank Gen for her desire to continue in the footsteps of her saintly relative in serving the poor children of the world.



Want to see what our kids are up to?

CLICK TO FOLLOW US!



The Nettesheim Family: Spreading Caritas One Child at a Time

by Genevieve Morlino



It was around the year 2000 when Chris, our founder, approached Joel about putting his financial skills to work in the service of needy children. **Joel and Donna Nettesheim** have always been drawn toward causes that support child education, so getting on board with CARITAS for Children was an obvious choice.

Twenty years later, Joel and Donna are sponsoring the education of seven Ugandan children. Joel has now served as the board treasurer for two decades, and he and Donna both assist CARITAS with numerous accounting and financial services.

Two of their CARITAS-children are now attending university, while the others are in day and boarding school. **They've sponsored one of their university students since 2nd grade.** "It's very rewarding to watch her become an adult," says Donna, "become a person who will be able to make a difference in her society. It's like watching one of your own children grow up!"



For the Nettesheims, **supporting an educational ministry for children that also provides religious instruction and evangelization opportunities carries a lot of weight.** "It's a re-awakening of a spiritual commitment, especially to helping others. In the local church, this work is making people more aware of evangelization and God's work." Joel and Donna both view sponsorship as the **perfect chance to fulfill our Christian duty to help others in need, answering Jesus' call to "love one another" (Jn 13:34).**

"We're witnessing God's work actually happening, and what a lot of people don't know is what being involved with this does for themselves in addition to helping the children. **It's very rewarding!**" **They want others to understand that it may only be one child at a time, "but it really does help!"**

The Spotlight

Shedding light on the stories of children who need a sponsor.

Sign up to receive the bi-weekly "Feature Friday" e-mails, which contain more stories of children in need of sponsorship, by [Clicking Here](#). Also find them on social media!

Sandra, 17

Sandra is a 17-year-old student from Nkokonjeru, Uganda.

Her father abandoned the family when Sandra was young, and her mother lacked the income to support her, leaving her in the care of a local Sister and educator.

In 2010, Sandra was sponsored through CARITAS, which allowed her to attend a local Catholic Boarding School.

Sandra has two years left of Secondary School (similar to American high school), but now needs a new sponsor to continue her education. She is a highly academic student with dreams of saving lives in her community. In Sandra's own words, "CARITAS has taught me to have zeal and love for education," and **her commitment shows in her class evaluations.**

We would all love her to finish high school and maybe one day enter into a profession that helps her save lives in Uganda. You can be the next person to make an impact on her life, demonstrating the power of *caritas* (God's Love) shared between His children.

To become Sandra's sponsor, [Click Here](#).

For we are not truly alive when we are separated from those who need us.



CLICK HERE!



SANDRA VIDEO