



St. Nicholas Children's Centre Kemondo (NCKK)
Bukoba Catholic Diocese
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Kemondo, November 29, 2015

First Sunday of Advent



Christmas Play 2014

*The shepherds went in haste and found Mary and Joseph,
and the infant lying in the manger.*

Luke 2:16

Dear Friends of St. Nicholas Children's Center,

Another year has passed. We are looking forward to Advent, to the feast day of our patron St. Nicholas, the school holidays, Christmas and the New Year. Lately, our children have asked repeatedly when we are going to start the Advent Calendar (a piece of hard candy or chocolate inside a homemade calendar every day from December 1st-24th) – a German tradition that I started and that the children love just as much as birthday parties.

This year, we received six new children – more than any other year before. We now total 27 children in our house and we are almost full. Soon I will have to find another home for adult people with disabilities for our oldest children who are 19 and 16 years old now.



Our eight oldest children have become teenagers overnight. The little kids are not so little anymore and are ready to start school this January. At least we have three little ones left, so besides the music from the radios of our teenagers (I never told them that kids in other countries have smart phones) we also hear some baby cries in our house.

However, more children growing rapidly and make big piles of food disappear means rising costs for food and clothes, higher school fees and the need to employ more caregivers.

The Franciscan Sisters working at St. Nicholas Children`s Center now have their own house. Until now, they have lived with us at St. Nicholas. Instead of two, we will have four Sisters working at St. Nicholas starting January 2016. Unfortunately, the individual Sister stays only for a certain time until she receives a new assignment by her community. So saying good-bye is hard. We are especially sad that Sr. Carmen returned to her home country Brazil after being with us for two years. However, many of our care-giving lay staff have been with us for a long time and are mothers to our children.

In my general letter last September, I wrote about Mwolokozi. He weighed only 12 lbs when he came to live with us at the age of 2 years and 3 months. He was not crawling, not walking, not talking. For days, he would pass intestinal worms and had pussy skin infections. Now, three months later, he made leaps and bounds in his development. His favorite spot is at the table in front of a full dish of food and he has gained 7 lbs! He is crawling, he is walking and he is talking. He knows each one of us by name which is quite an accomplishment considering that there are more than 40 people in our family.

In October, the arrival of Mwolokozi was followed by the arrival of Boniface. Boniface has two siblings who have been living with us at St.Nicholaus since January 2015. At that time, their mother died in an accident.



We took Ashraf (6) and Irene (3) in while Boniface went to another orphanage that is specialized in caring for infants. On his first birthday this past October, Boniface joined us. He is a healthy, happy little boy who is in crawling competition with Mwolokozi. Our two babies enjoy the attention from so many big sisters and brothers and Mamas.



Finally, I would like to mention the completion of new the building behind our house. The building has three simple bedrooms and an outside latrine with a shower. We now have enough space to welcome disabled women in crisis situations or mothers of a disabled children until the crisis is over and a new solution has been found.

The Preview for 2016: 5 children who will start kindergarten/school, 13 school children who will (hopefully!) all move up one grade, 6 children who we are home schooling because of their disabilities, 3 toddlers at home ... and perhaps our oldest child will move out this coming year.



We wish you a blessed and peace-filled Christmas and everything good for the New Year 2016, especially in light of the many people fleeing their home countries and terror striking at any place of the world.

Stefanie Köster, the children and caregivers