

St. Nicholas Children's Centre Kemondo (NCKK)
Bukoba Catholic Diocese



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“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.”

Isaiah 9:6

First of Advent 2024

Dear Friends and Supporters of St. Nicholas!

The children have grown by the size of another year. I always notice this whenever I visit St. Nicholas. Already the year 2024 is coming to an end. At present, we care for 45 children and youngsters at St. Nicholas. 17 children are ages 2 to 11 years, 21 teenagers between 12 and 17 years and 7 young adults above 18 years. 24 children have disabilities, 21 children are without impairments. The children are being cared for by 40 staff members who work as caregivers, cooks, housekeepers, ground keepers as well as the leadership team consisting of four people.

In 2023, we divided the children in two houses – one for girls and one for boys. This change was well perceived. The children and caregivers enjoy having more space in the two buildings. During the day the children play together as they roam around freely on the entire compound.



In January 2024, we started building a new house for the young adults above 18 years who have disabilities. Those young people will need life-long care and therefore they will continue to live at St. Nicholas.



Now the time has come to provide for them their own house, separate from the children. The new building is almost complete. We want to officially open the house in December when I will be visiting St. Nicholas. The new house offers space for five residents and a caregiver.



This year we received two new children: James and Lukas. Both children were brought to us by social services. We do not know anything about them. We think that James might be about 12 years old and Lukas 2. James has a mental disability. He only speaks a few words. Lukas has Down Syndrome.



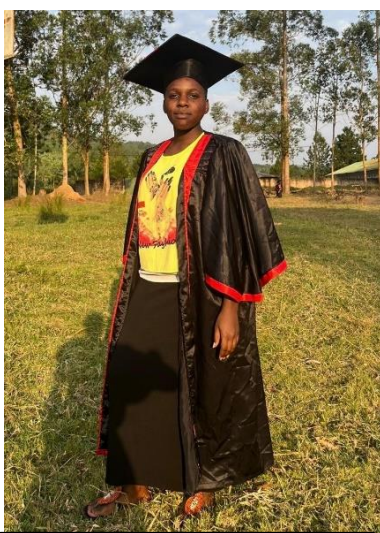
Lukas, James, Kevin, Pelagia and Elisabeth would be happy to have sponsors! Please visit our website where we introduce the children with their pictures and updated reports on them:

<https://www.nikolaushaus.com/die-kinder/>

Five youngsters graduated from school this year.



Witi, Kalokola and Menrad graduated from Standard 7 of Primary School!



Magdalena graduated from Form 6 of High School!



Dotto graduated from Form 4 of Secondary School!



In 2024, we enjoyed having many visitors, volunteers and former volunteers who returned to see the children as well as sponsors who came to meet their sponsored child. Several members of our German board came to visit as well.



At the end of April, we had a terrible car accident. A bus crashed into our vehicle on a downhill road. Luckily no one died and no one was badly injured. There were no children in our vehicle. The bus driver had caused the accident. Our vehicle, a Toyota Landcruiser with 13 seats that was only 8 years old was beyond repair. That is a very big loss for us. We are left with one more vehicle of the same size and one very old pick-up truck that cannot travel far anymore.

Thanks to a very generous donation that we received in September, we are now able to purchase another vehicle soon.

At our clinic on Saturdays we provide free services such as advice, physical therapy and medicine for



families who have a child with a disability. We started this clinic in 2011. Until now we have seen more than 350 children with disabilities. The parents desperately need a place where they are counseled and advised about caring for their child with a disability. There are simply not enough clinics in Tanzania that offer this kind of service. We run our clinic together with a physical therapist. He examines the children and counsels the parents. We mostly see children who have suffered a lack of oxygen to their brains and as a

result of this have cerebral palsy and epilepsy. At our clinic, the children receive physical therapy and medication to control the seizures. We also help the parents to pay for the bus fare in case they cannot afford the bus ticket. People travel as far as 50 miles in order to come to our clinic. In addition, we provide a special nutritious porridge for the children who due to their disabilities have problems swallowing food and who are malnourished because of this.

Many of you will remember Sr. Anne Carlino. Sr. Anne passed away on September 4, 2024 at the age of 88. In July 1999, Sr. Anne and I had gone to Tanzania together and we had established San Damiano Mission in Kemondo. When I founded St. Nicholas in 2011, Sr. Anne always supported my efforts in so many ways. In May 2017, Sr. Anne returned to the USA and



Sr. Anne with Stefanie, Aisha and Anita in 2017

San Damiano Mission was closed. We from Sr. Nicholas and the people of Kemondo and from the Diocese of Bukoba remember Sr. Anne full of love and gratitude.

The living expenses have gone up dramatically in Tanzania. Our daily expenses have risen. The more grateful are we that we can continue to provide a home for the children at St. Nicholas – this is because of your generous support! Thank you so much! Without you, we would not be able to care for the children.



As every year, we have printed a calendar that portrays our children. Please let me know if you would like to have a calendar and I will send you one.

We are wishing you a blessed and peace-filled Advent and Christmas Season,
God's abundant blessings and good health for the New Year 2025,

Stefanie Köster, the leadership team, caregivers and children

