Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

Matthew 16:24-25
Lenten Observance to Deepen Faith and Save Lives

What we’re doing:
Cross Catholic Outreach is giving U.S. Catholic parishes free tools to invigorate their Lenten observances and inspire parishioners with a tangible project to demonstrate mercy and compassion to the poor.

Who will be helped:
Your support of the St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center will be a blessing for 153 displaced Turkana children who work on the streets rather than go to school; children who live in camps on the edge of Kitale, Kenya — a region that has seen political and religious violence in the past.

Our partner:
The St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center is a ministry of the Diocese of Kitale in the northern region of Kenya’s Great Rift Valley. The center rescues and rehabilitates Kitale’s most vulnerable street children, providing food, education, medical care, safe shelter and the love of Christ.

Why your help is urgently needed:
Displaced Turkana children live in slum camps on the edge of the town of Kitale. Without intervention, they may fall prey to addictions, malnutrition, dysfunctional family living and illiteracy.

What your parish project will accomplish:
By joining parishes across the U.S. in the Carry the Cross initiative, you will provide food, education, Catholic spiritual formation, life skills training, counseling and a safe haven for orphans and vulnerable children through the St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center.

How you can get involved:
You can make a difference in the lives of the poor by raising funds for street children in Kenya. Engage your parishioners in a fundraising effort to meet the goal while challenging them to apply the three pillars of Lent — prayer, fasting and almsgiving — to deepen their faith and serve others.

Participating U.S. Parishes Will Receive:
• Activity Guide for children
• Bulletin Insert (Spanish version available upon request)
• Poster
• The enclosed detailed Project Proposal
• Project Update with stories and photos

This Lenten season, we urge you and your parish to “carry the cross” of street children in Kenya!
You Can Carry Their Cross!

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it” (Matthew 16:24-25). On Easter, Jesus sacrificed his life, paying the penalty for our sin and conquering death through his resurrection. Just as he laid down his life for us, he calls us to lay down our lives for one another.

By joining Cross Catholic Outreach’s *Carry the Cross* Lenten outreach, you can minister to Kenya’s vulnerable street children. Will you join us?

*You can carry the cross of children in Kitale’s most desperate slums.*
The Street Children of Kitale, Kenya

In western Kenya, the edge of Kitale is lined with slums. These dangerous camps are filled with disease and are no place for children to grow up. Sadly, the boys and girls living there have no other option in life, and without help, they are destined to remain in slums, trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty.

One Child’s Story
One of these children is Michael. He is a member of the Turkana tribe, a people group of traditional animal herders who were hit especially hard by the drought and famine that recently devastated northern Kenya. Forced to migrate into the slums to survive, Michael is now uncertain about his future. His father had abandoned the family when he was a toddler, so he has only his mother to provide for him; however, she became seriously ill and was unable to get a job. There was no money to buy food or pay school fees for Michael to attend classes, so he did the only thing he could — begged in the streets in order to survive. Constantly dirty and exposed to the germs in the streets, his feet became infested with parasites and he suffered from a terrible case of ringworm.

Rescued for a Future
God saw Michael’s need and used the St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center to change the trajectory of his story. The center welcomed him in as a boarder, ensuring that he received the proper nutrition and medical attention. He also began receiving informal education at the center in order to catch up with his peers. Soon he’ll be ready to enroll in a regular school, where he can obtain the skills he needs to pursue a future free from poverty.

You Can Make a Difference
This is the power of St. John Bosco’s ministry. The center rescues children like Michael, rehabilitates them through nutrition, education and spiritual formation, and then reintegrates them into their families and society.

There are more children like Michael still waiting to be rescued on Kitale’s streets. We need your help to turn their impoverished circumstances into hope for the future!

Risks for Children Living on the Streets
- Increased likelihood of drug or alcohol abuse
- Higher risk of contracting HIV or AIDS
- Increased risk of parasites and other illnesses
- Malnutrition
- Higher rates of illiteracy
- Weakened family structure
- Vulnerable to abusers and predators
Kenya’s Displaced People: The Turkana Tribe

The Turkana people live in a desertlike section of north Kenya. The terrain is arid and inhospitable, so the tribe has had to learn to survive by herding goats and camels. In recent years, they have faced unprecedented challenges — a historically bad drought and famine. This natural disaster brought many families to the brink of starvation, and as their livestock died from lack of food and water, many found they had to take radical actions or face death too. A large number of these Turkana families moved to Kitale, in western Kenya.

Even though they had escaped great hardships, this relocation produced serious problems of its own. Most of the men and women were only familiar with raising livestock and lacked traditional education or vocational training. As a result, they struggled to get basic necessities and feed themselves or their children. Their slum communities were plagued by poor sanitation, drug and alcohol abuse, and chronic illnesses such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. These families were forced to live in small huts made from anything they could find: sticks, mud, tarps and scraps of trash.

The Three R’s

The program at St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center follows three R’s when helping Kitale’s street children:

• **Rescue:** First, children are rescued from poverty and a harsh life on the streets. The team believes that early intervention is the key to future success.

• **Rehabilitation:** Children are rehabilitated from life on the streets. They go to an informal school at the center to catch up with their peers, live in a safe environment, and receive proper nutrition and Catholic spiritual formation.

• **Reintegration:** Each child is reintegrated into his or her family, or with a guardian, on weekends and school holidays when they are placed in formal schools.
St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center

St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center’s mission is to serve Kitale’s street children with the love and compassion of Christ. On a regular basis, social workers from the center go into the slums to identify children who are most at risk. For optimal success, the workers try to start children in the program before they reach the age of 8, since early intervention is the most effective approach. Once children are identified, they are brought to the center where they’re provided with nutritious food and shelter; then the rehabilitation process begins.

Education
Since most rescued children arrive at the center behind in school, they start informal education from in-house teachers at St. John Bosco. This helps them catch up to their peers and prepares them for enrollment at a formal school. After about two years with the in-house teachers, children continue to live on-site while attending a day school, boarding school or vocational school.

Boarding
During the week, children stay at the beautiful 5-acre residential facility; on the weekends and during school breaks, they stay with their parents or guardian. This is an important step in St. John Bosco’s process; they want children to be reintegrated with their families. By the time these children graduate from school, they are living full time with their parents or closest family member, and the center’s social workers continue to work with them and monitor their progress.

Life Skills Training
After completing primary school, St. John Bosco children are placed in vocational training programs or college preparatory schools based on their God-given talents. The guidance counselors at the center match students’ abilities and skills with a suitable career path. Graduates of the program have gone on to teacher training colleges, medical careers, or professions including auto mechanics, electronics, cooking, sewing and hairstyling.

Spiritual Formation
At St. John Bosco, the staff hopes to plant seeds of faith into the heart of each child who walks through the doors. Children attend Mass regularly and participate in a weekly devotion where they sing worship songs, pray and learn Bible stories. Twice a school year, a seminarian or catechist visits the center to conduct Christian Religious Education. Because of the emphasis on spiritual formation, many children choose to receive the sacraments of baptism, First Communion and confirmation.

“To recognize the dignity and worth of each child as a human being created through Jesus Christ in God’s image.”

~ The Mission of St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center ~
Catherine’s New Hope

Just a few years ago, the missionaries at St. John Bosco found 9-year-old Catherine scavenging for food in Kitale’s city streets. Catherine told the missionaries that her mother had passed away and that she was living in a slum camp with her older sister. Catherine also suffered from a club foot, giving her limited mobility.

The staff at St. John Bosco immediately enrolled the young girl in the center’s informal school. At first she was behind in her studies, but as she caught up with the other students, Catherine discovered her God-given intelligence. She now attends a private Catholic boarding school — and she’s the top student in her class!

Catherine received the surgery she desperately needed for her foot — giving her physical freedom that she’s never known. After years of waiting, she will soon be able to play soccer with her friends. She’s also grown in her faith through the spiritual formation programs at the center, going to Mass and receiving daily Catholic instruction at school. God has great plans for Catherine’s future — and we can’t wait to see where life takes her!

Peter’s Rescue

At just 7 years of age, Peter had already experienced enough heartbreak for a full lifetime. When Peter’s family fled the violence and extreme poverty in northern Kenya, they built a small, one-room mud and stick hut on the outskirts of Kitale. Because it was too expensive for him to enroll in school, he began roaming the streets to beg for food.

But God was looking out for Peter, and he sent his servants at the St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center to rescue the precious child. Now Peter lives at the shelter during the week, and visits his aunt and grandmother on the weekends. He receives healthy food and medical care, goes to school, and has a clean bed of his own. And thanks to the Catholic spiritual formation he’s received at the center, Peter knows that God created him to fulfill a unique and special purpose.

Through the Diocese of Kitale’s mission of mercy to street children, both Catherine and Peter have been given a safe place to heal from their past and follow their dreams. Your parish can help other children follow their dreams and start a new life!
How You Can Help

Your parish’s support will make it possible for the Diocese of Kitale to bless Turkana street children with the love and compassion of Christ. **With your parish’s support this Lenten season, we can provide 153 children** with:

- **Safe Shelter** — Many of these children have never lived in a stable home environment. The St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center gives them a stable place to stay as they rehabilitate.

- **Food** — For the first time in their lives, children have regular, nutritious daily meals.

- **Medical Care** — Like Michael, many children have numerous health issues when they arrive at the center. Children are given the treatment they need to regain their health.

- **Education** — To break the cycle of poverty in adulthood, children need access to a quality education. The center helps children catch up with their peers through informal education, then integrates them into a local school.

- **Life Skills Training** — It’s not enough to provide formal education, children also need to know basic life skills to help them achieve success.

- **Counseling** — These kids have experienced more trauma in their short lives than most of us can imagine, and counseling is an important part of their rehabilitation process.

- **Catholic Spiritual Formation** — The Diocese of Kitale knows that a strong spiritual foundation is the key to success, and children are taught the Catechism, participate in regular Mass, pray in the center’s prayer garden, and are given the opportunity to receive the sacraments.
Tools for Clergy

To help you communicate the great need of Kenya’s orphans to your parishioners during the Carry the Cross campaign, Cross Catholic Outreach provides the following free promotional tools upon request:

• **Activity Guide for Children**
  The guide helps teachers and parents lead children through the spiritual journey of the Lenten season while ministering to orphans along the way. It is tailored specifically for Catholic schools and spiritual formation programs and is based on the readings of the liturgical calendar.

• **Bulletin Insert**
  Use this insert to educate and involve congregants. It briefly explains the program and shows how individuals and families can get involved. This piece is designed to fit in your weekly parish bulletin.

• **Poster**
  This compelling poster is an excellent tool for communicating your mission within your parish and it can also be used to advertise your activities to the surrounding community, further increasing participation and sharing your vision with neighborhoods in your area.

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**Activity Guide**

This Lenten season, our parish is helping orphans and vulnerable children in Kenya. Through the three pillars of Lent — praying, fasting and almsgiving — you can change lives!

**PRAY**

For children who are orphaned, abandoned and in dire poverty.

**FAST**

From something meaningful for 40 days so you can sacrifice for street children.

**GIVE**

Financial support to these precious children. Through giving and sacrifice, you will experience the full blessing of the Lenten season.

*Please — carry the cross of precious children this Lenten season!*

“If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

Matthew 10:24-25

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**Bulletin Insert**

Bless Orphans and Vulnerable Children Through This Year’s Lenten Outreach

This Lenten season, orphans and vulnerable children in Kenya need your help. We are working to support them and to help them feel loved and valued.

**GRACE**

For the opportunity to minister to the needs of orphans.

**FAST**

To provide financial support to these precious children. Through giving and sacrifice, you can be a part of their journey towards a better future.

**GIVE**

For the chance to make a difference in the lives of orphans.

*Please — carry the cross of precious children this Lenten season!*

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**Poster**

Bless Orphans and Vulnerable Children Through This Year’s Lenten Outreach

This Lenten season, orphans and vulnerable children in Kenya need your help. We are working to support them and to help them feel loved and valued.

**GRACE**

For the opportunity to minister to the needs of orphans.

**FAST**

To provide financial support to these precious children. Through giving and sacrifice, you can be a part of their journey towards a better future.

**GIVE**

For the chance to make a difference in the lives of orphans.

*Please — carry the cross of precious children this Lenten season!*
Campaign Goal: $55,000

Giving Levels

$55,000
The Lenten Challenge Sponsor

If your parish is ready for a Lenten challenge, you can fully fund the St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center in 2020. Your parish can also be a blessing by participating at the following giving levels:

- $5,000 Cross Bearer Sponsor
- $2,500 Legacy of Love Sponsor
- $1,500 Soul Nourisher Sponsor
- $500 Hope Giver Sponsor
- $250 Co-Laborer Sponsor
Carry the Cross for Kitale’s Street Children

Following the traditional three pillars of Lent — praying, fasting and almsgiving — we encourage you and your parish, schools and the catechists to reach out to Kenya’s street children in the following ways:

**PRAY** — Encourage your parishioners to pray for the children orphaned, abandoned and living in dire poverty around the world. Specifically, pray for the children at the St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center, that the love of Christ would heal their hearts, and that he would provide for all of their needs.

**FAST** — Just as God the Father sacrificed his own Son to save our souls, we should make sacrifices so we can give more to others. Lent gives us 40 days to make small sacrifices. Choose something to fast from for 40 days so you can give to the children and focus your heart in prayer.

**GIVE** — Give much-needed financial support to provide food and education to these precious children. When you give your parishioners the opportunity to support St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center through Cross Catholic Outreach, they will experience in a deeply personal and fulfilling way the full blessing of the Lenten season.

*St. John Bosco Rehabilitation Center has a history of leading Kitale’s children out of poverty, but they need your financial support to rescue more children. Will you carry the cross of these precious street children? Your obedience to Christ’s command to care for the vulnerable will raise a generation of Catholics with dignity and hope for the future!*

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

Matthew 16:24-25
Our Mission
We mobilize the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ.

How We Serve
Rather than create new institutions to distribute aid, we support existing ministries and churches already serving the poor. In addition to being the most cost-effective way of helping the poor, empowering these ministries allows us to support the Church’s spiritual mission and its important position of leadership in poor communities.

Good Stewardship
We consider every gift we receive as a precious resource from God. We direct every donation to its intended project, provide honest and accurate reports to our donors, and keep overhead costs to an industry low. We handle funds with utmost integrity and hold our ministry partners in the field to the same high standards by asking them to document costs and the impact of their outreach. These detailed accountability measures have earned us ongoing accreditation by the following organizations:

The Chronicle of Philanthropy
The nonprofit world’s No. 1 news source

Proceeds from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2020, the close of our ministry’s fiscal year. In the event that more funds are raised than needed to fully fund the project, the excess funds, if any, will be used to meet the most urgent needs of the ministry.