



# **St. Francis, St. Clare and St. Philomena Homes for Vulnerable Children**

— Meru County, Kenya —



“Let the little children come to me;  
do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.”

MARK 10:14



## **We are a Catholic ministry**

that mobilizes the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ.

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.

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.

We invite you to join with us as we seek to transform the lives of the poor materially and spiritually — ways that please the Father and glorify him in Heaven and on earth.



# Project Synopsis

## Description

This project will provide food, a quality education and agricultural training for the 830 orphans, vulnerable children and young adults enrolled at St. Francis Boys' Home and St. Clare Girls' Center. It will also benefit the 120 HIV-positive children enrolled at St. Philomena Home of Hope.

## Purpose

To rescue children from poverty and equip them with the tools to achieve a brighter future.

## Location

These homes are part of the Nchiru Children's Village, which is located in Meru County in central Kenya.

## Our Partner

Father Francis is an Tanzanian priest who spent many years serving among Kenya's seminomadic tribes before founding St. Francis, St. Clare and St. Philomena. This ministry began in 1999 with a handful of children and now provides shelter and education to 830 boys, girls and young adults.



## Cost

**\$36,000** is needed to pay thirteen teacher salaries for one school year.

## Highlights

- Fr. Francis's journey began in 1999, when he was reassigned to a new parish in Meru, where he rescued nine starving street children and took them to the parish. From that act of mercy, the Children's Village was born.
- The three children's homes are true safe havens away from the streets — places where vulnerable children can receive nutritious meals and a Catholic education while being treated with love and dignity.
- In addition to going to school, the children participate in the compound's farming program, where they learn life-enhancing agricultural techniques that will sustain them year-round.
- Fr. Francis bases his entire program on four pillars — Prayer, Study, Work, and Sports and Physical Fitness. Through this simple model of living, the children develop intellectually, physically and spiritually.
- Education is a top priority. Some children have pursued advanced teacher training or have moved on to university-level studies. Others have chosen technical training, an effective road to rapid employment and prosperity.
- Your gift will help cover salaries for 13 school teachers.
- Cross Catholic Outreach is committed to helping these at-risk children successfully finish their education — **but we need your help!**

**“For I was hungry and you gave me food, thirsty and you gave me drink,  
a stranger and you took me in.”**

MATTHEW 25:35



## Saved From the Streets

With his gray beard and broad smile, Fr. Francis, the founder and director of the Nchiru Children's Village, has the welcoming appearance of a Tanzanian Santa Claus. He exudes enthusiasm and warmth too — but unlike the mythical red-suited patron of children, this priest is very real and is dedicated daily to the children he serves.

Fr. Francis's journey began in 1999, when he was appointed to begin a parish in Nchiru, Kenya. Working in the city of Meru, he was appalled by the hundreds of children living and begging in the streets.

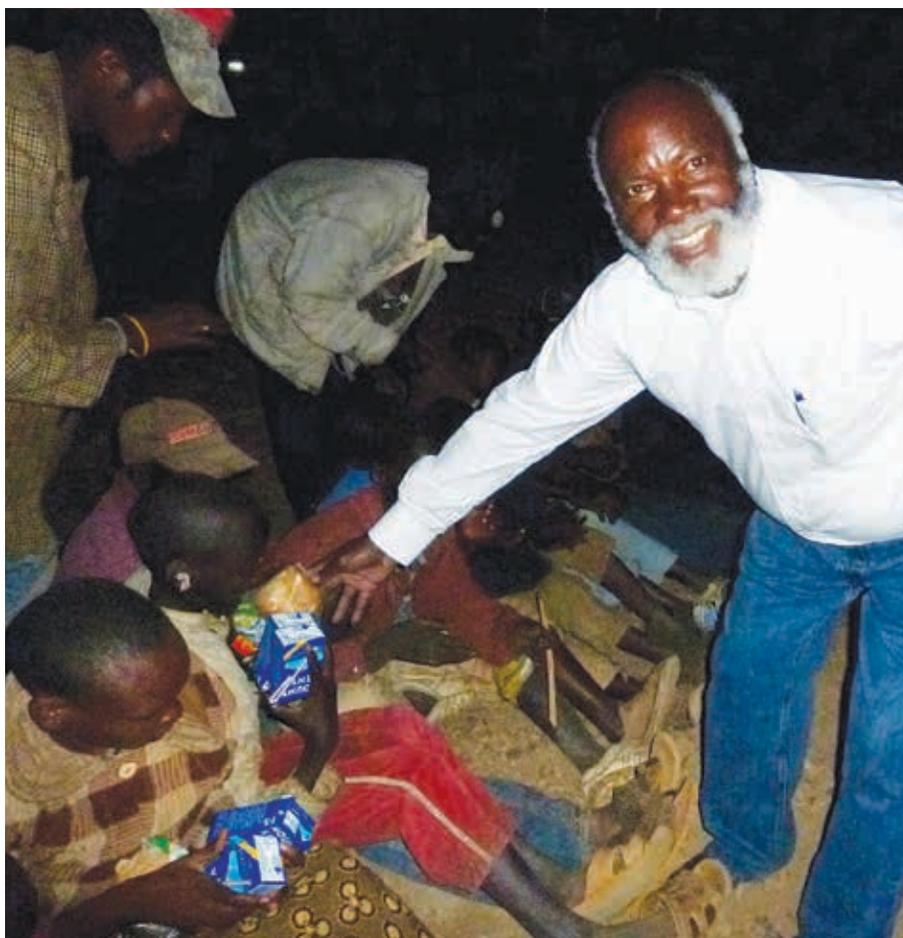
"How can you ignore them?" he said, explaining his reaction to the scene. "They are not hardy enough to survive this harsh treatment."

Sadly, the priest also noticed how young boys would sniff glue and gasoline to deaden their hunger pangs. One night, he rescued nine of the thin, suffering children and took them to the parish. From that first act of mercy, the Children's Village was born.

"People laughed at me when I rescued the first group of children," said Fr. Francis. "They told me the children were like animals for they had lived on the streets and could not be rehabilitated. Now they are my greatest supporters because the children have proven them wrong by their academic excellence."

The boys and girls at St. Francis, St. Clare and St. Philomena are living proof of Matthew 19:26 — "with God, all things are possible" — and their success is also a testimony to the power of combined Catholic charity. ***It is only through the contributions of Catholic friends like you that the mission can succeed and grow!***

Your prayers and support are needed now. While Fr. Francis has made wonderful progress in recent years, there are still more desperate but hopeful children who can benefit from the mission and its care. Please, help today by providing the resources needed to bless these precious children with a new life — one free from the dangers of the streets they left behind.



*Whenever Fr. Francis finds children on the street, the first thing he does is distribute milk as an act of Christian charity.*



## The Program

### Nutritious Daily Meals

Many of the children are malnourished when they first arrive at St. Francis, St. Clare and St. Philomena. That's why the project's feeding program is so crucial to its success. **All children receive three hearty meals a day.** In addition to using locally purchased food, the homes are able to mill their own flour and incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables from the Children's Village farm.



*Fr. Francis' students have just one textbook through which they learn English — the Bible. His students are memorizing the word of God and discovering its power in their lives.*

Fr. Francis' students have just one textbook through which they learn English — the Bible. The scarcity of classroom resources is a challenge, but Fr. Francis focuses on the positive: His students are memorizing the word of God and discovering its power in their lives. What's more, rather than lagging behind their peers at other schools in the region, **his students outperform them!**

### A Quality Catholic Education

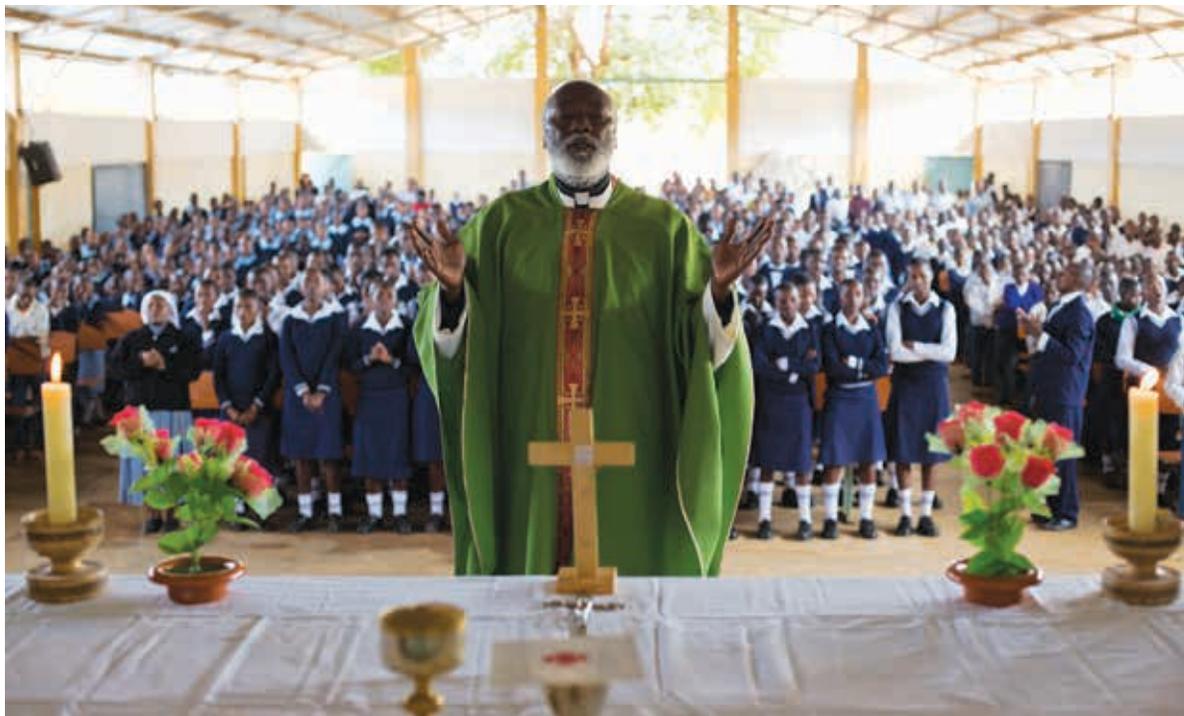
Many of the newly-arrived children also have little to no education, and many cannot speak either English or Swahili, Kenya's official languages. **By contributing to salaries for 13 teachers, your compassion will guarantee that students who are behind in their studies will be able to receive the help they need to catch up with their peers.**

Through the project's accelerated learning program, teachers work closely with struggling students to monitor their progress and provide focused attention in areas of difficulty. In most cases, after just one year of intensive study, students who are academically behind will be able to gain an effective command of the English language.

### The Four Pillars

Fr. Francis bases his entire program on four pillars. Through this simple model of living, the children develop intellectually, physically and spiritually.

- **PRAYER:** As the first pillar, prayer is the foundation for all of the homes' activities. Every day, children pray and meditate on the rosary, vespers and complines.
- **STUDY:** With individualized support, children who have never attended school receive the opportunity to build a better life through education. Students claim awards for high test scores in their region.
- **WORK:** Fr. Francis equips his children to become contributing members of society by facilitating hands-on learning opportunities that grow their skills and confidence. In addition to completing daily chores, children make rosaries, assist on the farm and learn to make their own clothing.
- **SPORTS AND PHYSICAL FITNESS:** Sports help the children develop a sense of camaraderie and achievement. This year, students participated in various fitness activities, including a group hike and two cross-country events.



## Help Now!

Today, we celebrate the compassion and sacrifice of a dedicated priest in Kenya, and his rescue of hundreds of suffering orphaned and abandoned children. We marvel at the ways these boys and girls have been able to escape the destructive behaviors so many of them had learned on the streets. It's a truly remarkable sign of God's grace.

It is also a day for us to rally to Fr. Francis' side and to support his vital work. This brave shepherd of souls needs our help because the children he is serving have increasing needs. Our help will allow them to better themselves and escape the poverty that has plagued their families for generations.

Please — come to his aid today. Help him reap the fruits of his labor and plant new seeds of hope in the lives of some of Kenya's poorest children.

As Catholics, we have a special calling to minister to orphaned and abandoned children wherever they are found. It is a calling as relevant today as it was when Jesus walked the earth. By helping us meet this financial goal, you can become God's instrument of mercy and help equip these children with the tools they need to build a brighter future. Your gift through Cross Catholic Outreach will support Fr. Francis as he lifts up the 830 orphans, vulnerable children and young adults enrolled at St. Francis Boys' Home and St. Clare Girls' Center, as well as the 120 HIV+ children enrolled at St. Philomena Home of Hope.

Join us, and bear witness to Christ's love through these tangible deeds of compassion!

---

### Our Promise to You!

Donations from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2022, 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.

2700 N. Military Trail • Suite 300 • PO Box 273908 • Boca Raton, Florida 33427-3908

**800-914-2420 • CrossCatholic.org**

@CrossCatholic @CrossCatholic @CrossCatholic /CrossCatholic Blog.CrossCatholic.org