

6-8
Grades

It's OUR World

HCA Mission News  Focus: Kenya  Advent / Christmas 2011

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'I Will Not Leave You Orphans...' Children Find Hope and "Home" in Kenya

Found among the large factories and poorest areas of Limuru, Kenya, is an oasis of peace and hope – St. Anthony's Parish. Run by Franciscan missionary priests, with help from local Sisters, the parish has served the working poor for some 20 years. For half of those years, that service has included a safe and loving home for children.

The children at St. Anthony's are there for different reasons. Some were found sleeping in or near the parish church; others were living alone in crude plastic shelters; some, found dying from malnutrition or living with the HIV virus. No matter what led them to this place, these children no longer feel alone or abandoned, but joyful in knowing of God's great love, experienced through the compassionate care of the priests and Sisters.

With your gifts to the Holy Childhood Association, St. Anthony's Home received help to provide food and medicine for all the children who live there. *Thank you!*

East Africa in Crisis

Since mid-July, a severe drought and famine has affected all of East Africa, including Kenya. In fact, Kenya is now home to one of the world's largest refugee camps – Dadaab. Here, thousands – mostly from Somalia – have come



LEFT The children perform a Nativity play during their annual Christmas celebration.

RIGHT Without the presence of the local church and missionaries, many of these children would not have the chance to enjoy a healthy meal.

in search of food and water. Reaching out with God's love during this crisis, and working to try to keep peace among all at this time, are HCA Coordinators, along with local priests and Sisters. They are supported in their efforts by your prayers and donations to HCA. You can read some of their stories inside this issue of *It's Our World*, or you can visit us online at www.OneFamilyInMission.org.

 **FIND US ON FACEBOOK:**

The Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States



LEFT During his homily, Archbishop Carlson asked students what it means to be a missionary and discussed the importance of prayer in the missionary life of the Church.



BELOW Eighth graders perform *Bonse Abba*.

HCA Kids

St. Louis, Missouri

Archbishop Robert J. Carlson of St. Louis celebrated the sixth annual Archdiocesan Holy Childhood Association Mass on October 3. Some 1,000 students, principals, mission moderators, and parents came together at Holy Infant Parish in Ballwin, Missouri to celebrate HCA and the missionary witness of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, whose feast day was two days earlier. (St. Thérèse is co-patron of the Missions and missionaries along with St. Francis Xavier.)

Honored at this celebration: St. Louis' five HCA Christmas Artwork Contest winners from this past year, and a local mission moderator for her support of HCA. The joyous celebration also featured a special tribute to Africa entitled, *Bonse Abba*, with song and dance performed by the eighth grade students of Holy Infant School. The term *Bonse Abba* is a Zambian expression which means: *All who sing have the right to be called the children of God.*

Did You Know?

The first people to settle in Kenya were indigenous African communities who migrated from various parts of the continent. Other visitors included traders and explorers from various parts of the world, including Portugal, India, and Greece, as well as Ancient Arabia and the Roman Empire. In the first century A.D., they visited mainly along the coast of East Africa. While the majority of these travelers journeyed home to their countries, some did settle and intermarry with the local population, giving rise to a new culture, called Swahili.

Getting To Know... Kenya

Kenya is located in the center of East Africa, with its coastline on the Indian Ocean. Its terrain rises from a low coastal plain along that ocean to mountains and plateaus at its center. It is crossed by the equator and shares its borders with Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania.

Most Kenyans live in the highlands, where Nairobi, the capital, sits at an altitude of 5,500 feet. West of Nairobi, the land descends to the Great Rift Valley, a 4,000-mile tear in the earth's crust.

Mount Kenya is a volcano that gave the country its modern name. It is situated in the central part of Kenya, to the south of the equator. It is the second highest mountain in Africa after Kilimanjaro, which is located some 200 miles to the south.

Kenya's location – between the Indian Ocean and Lake Victoria – means that people from all over Africa and the Middle East have traveled and traded across it for centuries. This has created a diverse culture with many ethnic groups and languages.

Scientists call Kenya the "cradle of humanity," because the earliest human remains were found there. Kenya is also the heart of the African safari, where the most diverse collection of wild animals on the continent live. In fact, the word "safari" came from Swahili, the official language of Kenya, and means "journey."

Kenya Word Search



AFRICA KILIMANJARO SWAHILI TANZANIA GREAT RIFT VALLEY ETHIOPIA NAIROBI KENYA
EQUATOR DROUGHT SAFARI SOMALIA UGANDA LAKE VICTORIA FAMINE

A T T I N I E Q U A T O R R T M H I O I R C O I N F
A I N L L C A O S O O F L U L H I R S D N A K M S S
I R I I I M T M S M Q A D B Y V A T I N T M E O J U
L K T H C A A T C I U R I D N J D O I A S D A F I I
K U C A R N I I Y C A A V A N A R M T R A A M E P A
A S T W A I N F G E E R R A O L I L N G I I C C A M
O O A S I R A I Y C L T M H I P O S U A L M H A I A
T N I I L Y Z V E K N I A O A A R A I K E N Y A I A
I R V A A L N J G T L A L F E T N M N I R E I H I D
A I T L M D A I A I A L G N I F I O L I A F L O Y J
A M Z O O S T A K I A Q I Y T R T F I A W I A R A I
W I I D S G E I T Q U E H U A C M T L T T A R W K V
N G Y N Q S R R Y O U O I H T E A R L A A A U F L W
O I I E I Q V A R E E F I N U O F H A M L L S B T O I
T I A K R I B D A L A K E V I C T O R I L I H A O I
T I U T L H H I G O E E N I M A F A A L I A D R A A
A R E A H A T I I G A A A L A D I T I N U O L L R I
U R I D O G K A T A N Z A N R A H H O H L A Y N A S
S J E D I I U E A R I O Q A E O A F U T G J A I I A
M U R T N Y Y O V R R R P Y S I W A A O A A C A D A I
N E G O A R L A R I G G A I S S A A A P A I O R J E
V N N A C S L E L D C U G T R A J N A M I L I K K U
R C G I N I I I A I N T R T Z K O A N S I E D N A C
O I A A A D R S E R Y I O N R I S O A A T L C A F F
E A I G R F A K A I Y U A R A U A T A F A I O N R L
I F O K K A E L B O A I I A I I I A C A T A N A C F
H L M I I R R S I G F R N R P A S I A R T Q T I R U
P L S I I T I I O A N L D O I R I H F I C N A R A K
F A R E G A K I A E L T I O I I S N L M R R N O F I
I T U I T W A A L I R H L A I O E T U M N R V A N H
N V M K R D C G T S T N L A L O M I S R O I I F R T
Z M I I N T O N A E N R O V T N O A R E R T A E H I
Z P O A I U I A K H I B O R I A N A L E Q U A T O U
L H G R R T F K A S O M A L I O O A I T A G E Y A H
A U A A A I L L A N I N E Z A D A F R I C A S R R
Y E L L A V T F I R T A E R G T N M M L I A T C A O
I N U R L N R R R D A L L O I I I A G Y K O I V A L
R R Q T M A I T A I M O A L A R F E H T A T Z J A A

Calling All Artists!

Your brothers and sisters in East Africa and Kenya need your help! Please use this page to design a flyer to teach people about what is going on in East Africa – the drought and related famine. Visit our website, www.OneFamilyInMission.org, watch the news or read your daily newspaper to find out more. Ask your teacher, principal or pastor if you can display your work in school or in your parish church. Send a copy of your flyer to our national office, and we'll put it on our website! Our address: HCA, Attention: East Africa Flyer, 70 West 36th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

A large white rectangular area with a dashed black border, intended for designing a flyer.

www.GiveToTheMissions.org





Church personnel distribute emergency food relief.



Close Up:

The Diocese of Lodwar is located in the Turkana District of Kenya bordering Sudan and Uganda. The climate here is hot and dusty year round and droughts are commonplace. Catholic missionaries established a presence in this area some 50 years ago to share the Good News of Jesus and to help improve living conditions for the semi-nomadic people who call this region home.

Thanks to the grassroots efforts of local priests, religious Sisters and Brothers and lay catechists working in 26 parishes and 300 mission outstations, the Church is the primary provider of health and education services in the region. In fact, the first hospital built in this area was the Mission Hospital of Kakuma; it is still in operation today.

As current drought conditions worsen in East Africa, additional resources are needed to help support an already over-burdened diocese.

“Perhaps the hardest hit by the drought and famine is the Turkana region in northwestern Kenya,” said Father Celestino Bundi, National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Kenya. “The Diocese of Lodwar has had much experience in responding to such situations. In fact,

Catholic missionaries were invited there in 1961 to run famine camps.”

“We’re here to fill in the gap,” Bishop Dominic Kimengich wrote in a plan detailing his diocese’s strategy to serve those in need during this crisis. “We’re trying to help families whose names don’t make the list for food distribution.”

Sister Rose Macharia, RSM is just one of many Holy Childhood Association Coordinators in Kenya who has turned her attention to saving lives, focusing on immediate help to those at greatest risk – children and the elderly.



HCA Kids Make a Difference in Kenya...

Last year, 25 dioceses in Kenya received support from the Holy Childhood Association. *Your sacrifices* – combined with contributions from children all over the world – helped children throughout that African country, including those in the Diocese of Lodwar. For example, a contribution of \$6,000 from HCA will support a Church-run nutrition program for 1,200 infants and toddlers. For just \$5 then, you can provide the food that is lovingly offered by priests and Sisters to a hungry child! Here are just a couple of examples of what else your prayers and support have accomplished:

- Fifty students with vision and hearing problems at St. Michael's School in the Diocese of Kitui, Kenya, were cared for – so they could learn! The cost per child, about \$120.
- Two new classrooms were built at the Little Angels Nursery School in the Diocese of Kitale, Kenya.

What Can You Do Right Now?

Your prayers in solidarity with those who hunger and suffer in East Africa are vitally needed – so are your generous sacrifices. Gather a group of friends and / or classmates and encourage them to prepare lunch at home. Send the money that you would have spent buying your lunch to the Holy Childhood Association. Consider also volunteering your time at your parish food pantry or soup kitchen to help those who are hungry in your own community!

A Christmas Prayer for Children in the Missions

Dear God,
As we celebrate the joy of Jesus' birth, we pray for children who are poor and hungry, who feel alone or abandoned. May they experience Christ's love and peace through the compassionate witness of missionaries. We remember especially the children of Kenya and East Africa who now suffer from drought and famine, as we pray also for those who reach out to help them. May they all find strength and encouragement in the "Good News" of Your Son Jesus! Amen.

Don't Forget!

The deadline for entering the 2011-2012 Christmas Artwork Contest is January 31, 2012! Please be sure to use the official entry form found on the Holy Childhood Association section of our website, www.HCAKids.org.