



St. Nicholas Children's Centre Kemondo (NCCCK)
Bukoba Catholic Diocese
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*"If anyone wishes to be first, must be the very last, and the servant of all.
Taking a child, he placed it in their midst,
And putting his arms around it, he said to them:
Whoever welcomes this child as this in my name, welcomes me;
And whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me but the One who sent me." Mk 9: 35-37*

September 25, 2018

Dear Friends and Supporters of St. Nicholas Children's Center!

A lot has happened in our house since my last newsletter at Easter time. We received several new children.



Derick joined our family on Holy Thursday. He was found at a bus station of a neighboring town, about 30 mi away from us. People took him to the police station, the police handed him over to social services and social services brought him to us. In the beginning, it appeared that Derick just got lost at the bus station and we were expecting his parents to show up anytime. But it has been five months now and no one has come to claim him. We think that Derick is about 4 years old. He is well developed, has no illnesses or disabilities. When we got him he showed no signs of being neglected or malnourished. He told us his name and he also knew the

first name of his mother but so far we could not find his family. Derick cried a lot and had nightmares but now he has adjusted to his big St. Nicholas family. He attends kindergarten and he is a happy child.



Arnold (6 years) came to live with us shortly after Easter. He is the brother of Ellieth, Erick and Alicia, who have been with us since January. The mother of the children died in October last year and three children first went to live with their grandmother while Arnold was sent to live with a relative in another town that is a 9-hour bus ride away from us. Therefore, Arnold was far away when we received his brother and sisters in January.

In April

Arnold was sent back to his grandmother who then asked us to also take him. It is very common that children are divided up between their relatives after their parents die and many times they do not hit it off well. Arnold has adjusted and attends kindergarten. He will start first grade in January.



Alicia, Arnold, Erick, Ellieth

Our youngest child is Tumaini. His name means "hope" in Swahili. Tumaini's father brought him to us in Mid-August. The child's mother died at birth. The father wanted to take



Tumaini to an orphanage for babies. However, there the relatives have to pay a monthly contribution which he was unable to do so. Therefore, Tumaini remained with his father and grandmother. When the father came to ask us for help, Tumaini weighed barely 11 lbs. at the age of one year and eight months. He had blondish hair and a puffy face, signs of severe malnutrition. Tumaini was also born with club feet that need treatment. Developmentally he resembles a 6-months old baby. Since he has been with us, he has developed a good appetite and is starting to gain weight. Tumaini is not the first child that we have received in such a poor condition. We are hopeful that he will make good progress in his development soon. The treatment of

the club feet will take several years. His feet will be put in casts for a few months in order to bring them into the proper position. Afterwards he will have to wear

special shoes. He is fussing a lot about the casts – who wouldn't?! However, the sooner we begin the treatment, the better for him. His baby feet are still soft and now it is still easy to correct them.



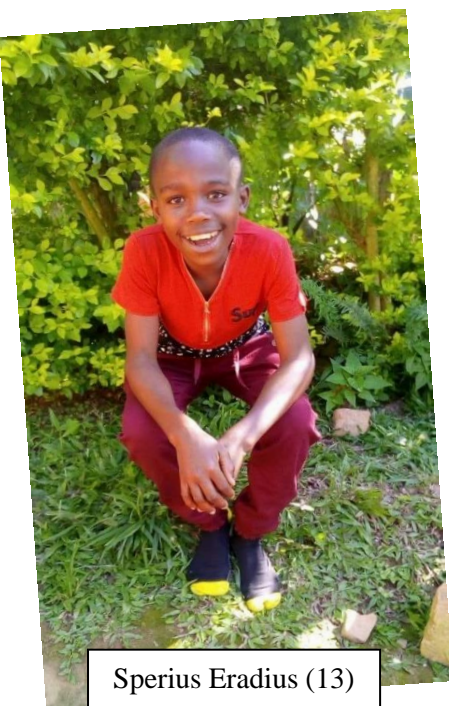


Rest in Peace Bishop Nestor Timanywa

Born: 7th May 1937
 Priest: 11th December 1966
 Bishop of Bukoba: 24 February 1974
 Resigned: 07 April 2013
 Died: 28 August 2018

Our Bishop Emeritus, of the Bukoba Catholic Diocese, Rt. Rev. Nestor Timanywa died on August 28th at the age of 81. He was Bishop for 44 years and until five years ago he was still active in office. He will be greatly missed in the Diocese. A large funeral was held at the cathedral of Bukoba which more than 20 bishops, priests, sisters and hundreds of people attended.

Recently Tanzania made international news because of the ferry capsizing in Lake Victoria with more than 200 people dying. This is only one out of a number of tragic ferry accidents with a great number of dead due to carelessness, negligence and overcrowding the boats that are too old to operate. It has been two years now that we do not have a ferry anymore here in Bukoba because our ferry is out of commission and the country has no money to buy a new one. But what personally upsets me much more is the violence that is done unto children every day.



Sperius Eradius (13)

In August, a teacher beat a student to death at a primary school in Bukoba. No one intervened. Many times the use of corporal punishment in schools leads to bruises, injuries, fractures, etc. But even if those injuries have to be treated in the hospital, the violence is covered up. The abuse children have to suffer in Tanzania (and in many other countries as well!) is unbelievable and it is still permissible by Tanzanian law. For years I have tried my best to appeal to the school principals and teachers to abolish the use of corporal punishment at the schools of my children, just to be ridiculed by them. "If a child is not beaten, it cannot become a proper adult," is a common belief in this country. Will people ever reflect on what they are doing to the next generation? At least the tragic death of the student has made international news and has rekindled a discussion on corporal punishment. The teacher is in jail and is awaiting trial. If you want to read more on this subject, check out the following links:

<https://www.ippmedia.com/en/news/new-student-death-puts-corporal-punishment-debate-back-focus>

<http://www.africanews.com/amp/2018/08/31/tanzanians-debate-corporal-punishment-after-pupil-was-beaten-to-death/>

In August I traveled to Rwanda with our two blind children Atugonza (5) and Hadija (9). Prior to this trip I had found out about an excellent school for the blind and vision impaired that is run by Franciscan Sisters from Poland. The school offers primary and secondary education as well as vocational training.



is 400 mi away and it will be a challenge to transport the children back and forth to school during their school breaks.

However, I believe that this school is worth the effort. Right now, Hadija attends at public primary school that has a special class for the blind and vision impaired. But whenever Hadija comes home from

this boarding school, she is skin and bones and she wets herself. Therefore, I am happy to have finally found a good school for her and Atugonza. The school for the blind is in the village of Kibeho, the only place in all of Africa where Marian apparitions took place from 1981 until 1989. Web link: <http://kibeho-sanctuary.com/index.php/en>



The building of the Multi-Purpose-Hall was completed just in time for the upcoming rain season. Now the children have enough space to run around during the heavy down pours. I had feared our living room to explode with the energy of 42 children going crazy on a rainy day! The kids can run around freely inside the hall, they can play basketball and they may make as much noise as they please.



We have a soccer field on the backside of the hall which our big boys just love!



Purpose-Hall as well as the 7-year anniversary of our St. Nicholas family will take place in November when the head of our German fund raising support group will come to visit us.

A section of the hall is partitioned with a big gate and serves as a chapel. On September 9th we celebrated Holy Mass for the first time there. Now we no longer have to go to the parish for Sunday Mass, instead, the parish priest and the parishioners are coming to us!

The official opening of the chapel and of the Multi-



On September 12th we celebrated the school graduation of Joseph and Nazalius. We are so proud of them! Starting January they will join Secondary School (grades 8-11).



Our children are growing up fast now but we do not have to worry about filling our house with little ones!



However, joy and sorrow lie close together, especially when living together with so many people. The same day we celebrated the graduation of Joseph and Nazalius our little Rosie became seriously ill within hours. I took her to the doctor and she was treated for Malaria at once. However, in the early morning hours of September 13th, she passed away. She was only 23 months old. In September 2017, her mother had come to our Saturday clinic for counseling. Unfortunately, she came only once. In December, she abandoned Rosie in the bush to die. But Rosie was found in time, was taken to the hospital and we got her after that. Rosie had severe seizures that were difficult to control. She also had cerebral palsy and she was blind.

Children with multiple disabilities easily get infections that can become fatal. Rosie did not respond to the treatment and there was nothing left we could do for her. May her soul rest in peace and may she play in heaven free from any disability and illness. After she had died, she looked like the little healthy girl she was meant to be. Her funeral was simple, dignified and very, very sad. Our parish priest held a beautiful prayer service for her. Our children cried a lot. Most of our children have buried their parents and the funeral brought up memories and feelings. Also our children carried Rosie around a lot, helped feed her, and loved her. But I believe that crying is emotionally healthy and cleansing. In Africa, death is near and imminent. Nobody expects to live to 80 years. To see ones children grow up and to even meet ones grandchildren is a gift that is not being taken for granted.



Thank you so much for your faithful support. We could not have our St. Nicholas family without you and you are a big part of our family!

Stefanie Köster, children and caregivers

