



*Supporting orphans and vulnerable children*

August 2020

Dear Friends,

Normally, we send you a one-page newsletter twice per year — once before our visit to South Africa and once when we return. But this is not a normal year. None of us could have predicted the effect of COVID-19 on the children supported by Bakhita Charities. Many people have asked us about these children, so we're sending you this brief update.

South Africa implemented a very strict country-wide lockdown in April at the onset of the pandemic. Consequently, the number of people infected — particularly in the rural areas where we operate — remains at a low level. Elementary-aged children receive two meals each day at school and the closing of schools created a real crisis for many of our young children. However, our Bakhita Outreach team in South Africa jumped into action and began regular deliveries of food to the affected families.

When it became clear that schools would not be reopening quickly, the Outreach Team of Sr. Amaka and Dinah Chabalala began making frequent visits to the children, toting a whiteboard and markers helping them with school lessons. Along with reading and writing, these dedicated ladies have been demonstrating proper hand washing, mask-wearing and the need for social-distancing. They are the best.



At St. Brendan's, there are about 100 seniors who returned to classes in July and are living in the dormitories. Soon after the return, a few students and one administrator became ill and the school was closed again for sanitizing. They have now reopened and this month the other grades will be returning. We hope that, as they try to get back to normal, they can stay healthy and safe.



Our annual visit to Africa each January is uncertain at this time. But, it is so important for us to spend time with all the girls, their caregivers, teachers and our partners, the Sacred Heart Sisters. We'll see how things are going in our country and theirs late this year and make our decision based on safety first.

Thanks so much to all of you who support Bakhita Charities and please keep these precious children, who are trying so hard, in your thoughts and prayers. And check out our Website and Facebook page anytime.

Blessings,

*Maggie & John*