



**HOMES TO GROW**  
A brighter future  
for abandoned children  
Established 2009

# St Francis Outreach Trust

IT1631/2009 – PBO930031283 – NPO 080387

General Manager: Michelle Daly - [petedaly@mweb.co.za](mailto:petedaly@mweb.co.za)  
Treasurer: Dennis Clark - [sfotoffice@gmail.com](mailto:sfotoffice@gmail.com)

August 2020

## Midyear Trust Report January - June 2020

Dear friends of the children of 'Homes to Grow',

It seems much longer than a few months that we began this year 2020. Managing 2 homes with children and their foster mothers is a demanding job in normal times, but Covid-19 has shown us that we underestimated our capabilities and when necessary can achieve incredible things.

In our case it was mostly our General Manager who made things possible through her vision and untiring pre-planning abilities. We are all very grateful to her, that things are functioning as they do.

January started very normal with the usual informative parent/teacher meetings in all 6 schools and the scheduling of school programs while the children were settling into their new classes and getting to know their teachers. Transport logistics were explored and time tables established. Medical appointments were followed. Michelle checked up on the career planning of our girls in skill schools.



In February 2 of our children left us. One returned to live with her mother and the other joined a different home not too far from us. Our oldest boy transferred to DeGrendel School where he studied during the week and only returned home on weekends. Extra mural started again with gym classes and soccer practise at a township club. Through school support and private connections one of our older girl's natural talent of playing golf was discovered and she went for a few training sessions ...

... and then came March and the Covid-19 scare

### **Protection measures regarding Covid-19:**

. We were able to arrange flu injections for children and mothers as precaution, just before stage 5 lockdown. Since the official state of disaster was declared by President Ramaphosa on March 15, our mothers were instructed in very thorough precaution measures regarding infection, wearing of masks, social distancing and immunity support. Our children received the same training and with lockdown beginning on March 27, they objected to admitting anybody to the house, who did not belong to the "family". During these challenging times, Home from Home, our Child Protection Agency, was very supportive in our efforts for protection by involving a company, which came to fumigate our 2 houses. Our mothers also received regular grocery packages during stage 5 and visits by Boniswa, one of Home from Home's social workers who counselled mothers and children.



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In June our friends of the Love Quilt Project, USA, kindly sent us through special transport connections beautiful colourful face masks for our children and mothers. Our children responded with a personal thank you note.

So far they are all in good health.

### **School attendance efforts**

With school closure in March another problem occurred: providing our children with the Internet connection needed to communicate with their teachers. Our children attended 6 different schools at the day of lockdown. 6 schools each different in their approach and vehicle of teaching, via Zoom, WhatsApp, Google Meet, even landline. Methods and schedules frequently changed due to all parties trying to establish their most efficient way of using internet teaching. We only had internet access in our classroom where the children would meet daily with their home teachers after school. Now that they had to stay in their individual homes, there were also not enough laptops for all of them. Michelle's appeal to our supporters resulted in the generous provision of several new laptops and a printer. Martin Pantling, our IT specialist, helped us to establish a temporary internet connection



During the lockdown we were not able to visit the moms and the children in person. We kept in contact with them via WhatsApp calls, photos and videos. Our home teachers started working soon with individual children on their assignments and homework using the Internet. The hands-on computer work was guided for mothers and children by Sphelo our driver, turned IT teacher. He became the link between our children and home teachers.

### **Fundraising:**

Plans for an active fundraising program were soon abandoned, but Dr Judy Whittaker had planned a breakfast for the Ferrari Club in February and invited the children to this event. Our boys were very excited –and the girls too - especially when they were allowed to sit inside the cars. To cheer the visitors our children performed 2 songs and they were kindly rewarded with generous donations. In the same month our appeals letter went out “#GivingTuesdays” and had an amazing result from only a few supporters but with large contributions.

For Madiba's Birthday another call was posted on Facebook.

One of the ways you can help us in small measure is using a “My School Card” for your purchases at Woolworth (available only in South Africa). A small percentage of your payment is deviated to the charity of your choice (St Francis Outreach Trust). If you do not own a card yet, ask me for the application form.



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In response to our appeal for donations in a circular letter in April/May, we received generous support from faithful friends locally and around the world which brought us the help we needed in the current situation.

Suze Duby our talented artist has almost completed our 2021 calendar. This is the fourth calendar she created for us which will be ready in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of August. We shall be printing less calendars this year, so make sure you get yours before they are sold out!

### **Therapeutic interventions:**

Due to Covid-19 and the lockdown the needed therapy interventions had to stop. Although these therapies are a heavy financial responsibility, we know that they are very important for the children and to be successful need to happen in younger years.

### **Extra Murals:**

So important for our children - especially for those who struggle academically! Before lockdown some of them had just started their fun activities again at the Moya Gym and on the football field in the township. One of our boys was supposed to return to the dance studio once a week.

One of our older girls had the chance through her school and private connections to exercise her golf swing in one of our local clubs but that was also interrupted by the lockdown. With the closure of the schools, all normal school sports activities also fell away. It is reassuring that both our houses have each a jungle gym and some exercise equipment to keep the children physically busy.

### **Financial Report**

Besides a small monthly social grant for each child the St Francis Outreach Trust is mostly dependent on donations and financial support from our supporters with some active fundraising by the trustees and the sale of our legendary calendar of scenes from the Cape Peninsula (10<sup>th</sup> year) which will be ready for sale in mid August 2020. Covid-19 has not changed anything about our monthly expenses. Schools, although not receiving our children in person, are working on-line with them, and fees need to be paid. The same is reality for our foster mothers, teachers, and our driver/-on hand IT instructor, they are still working, the telephone is used, electricity is needed, and our children need to be fed.



### **Visitors:**

In January our dear friends from the Ibhongo Trust, Netherlands came on their annual visit to S.A. They were received with the usual enthusiasm by the children, who always look forward to the special times of learning and play (counselling) with Germa and Con. Not only the children but also we adults enjoy their friendship and professional support.

In February Heather and Barry Nelson renewed our connection with St Paul's Episcopal Church in Cleveland, Ohio when they returned for the second time to S.A. St Paul's was of great help to us when we began to establish our foster home project in 2010.



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## Other ways to support our kids are to:

### ★ **Sponsor individual children**

for a certain period with R 500 = \$30 = € 25= £ 22  
with a monthly contribution, which will help us to cover some of the expenses  
to raise a child.  
Bi-annual reports would give you an update of the child's development.

### ★ **Partake in a sporting event**

for our children's benefit

### ★ **Pledge your birthday celebration**

Use your celebration to bring awareness to our work  
and improve the lives of vulnerable children  
and raise funds instead of accepting gifts

### ★ **Use the My School Card in S.A.**

with St Francis Outreach Trust as a beneficiary without any expense to you when you shop  
at Woolworth (ask me for the application form)

### ★ **Become a volunteer**

... the most rewarding way to get involved

### ★ **Provide us with a financial donation**

which will enable us to provide the needed therapeutic intervention, educational assistance  
and extra mural activities – essential building blocks for a successful future of our  
children

#### ***Our bank details:***

#### **St Francis Outreach Trust**

Standard Bank: **036009**

Acc.: **271 907 185**

Swift: **SB ZAZA JJ**



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Please, follow our children's development on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/homestogrow](http://www.facebook.com/homestogrow)

**Thank you for continuing to be partners and supporters of our project and  
helping us to open doors for our children  
they would have never been able to open without you!**

Monika du Sautoy