



**SUITCASES for AFRICA**

**News Letter**

*Fall 2012*



## Changing Their Stories.... Changing Their Lives!

### Table of Contents

Page 2-4

.....Update on the new  
Medical Clinic!

Page 5-6

.... Kevin's Story

Page 7

....Educational  
Sponsorship  
Program

Page 8-10

..... Carolyne's Story

Page 11-12

... .Emalindi Orphan  
Hostel

Page 13-19

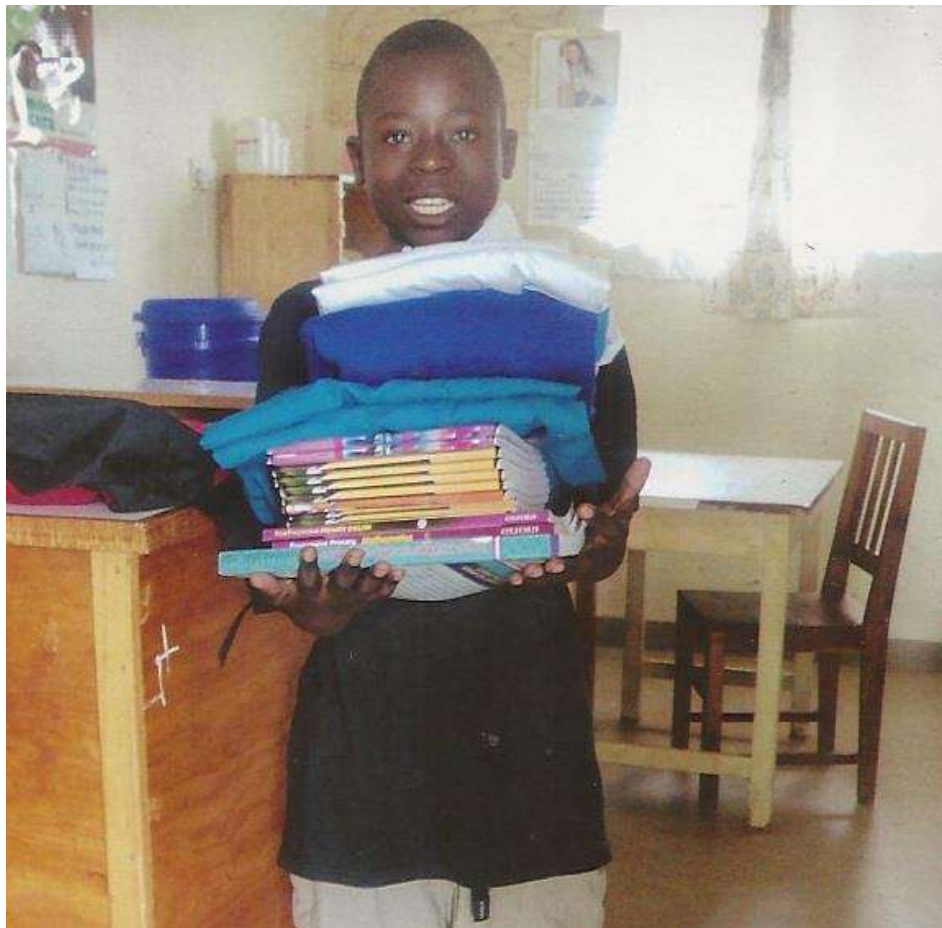
..... How Canadians  
are Helping

Page 20- 22

... Upcoming  
Fundraiser Events

Page 23

... HOW YOU CAN  
HELP



**In this newsletter edition we would like to introduce you to some of the people whose lives are changing thanks to you!**

## The First Baby born at the Beraldo Family Medical Clinic!

"Good News! Today (Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>) at 4pm the Beraldo Family Medical Clinic had its first born child delivered with the assistance of Dominic the nurse. I am extremely overwhelmed and happy. Unfortunately the mother is HIV/AIDS positive. For the first time Sr. Salome is going to nurse her overnight and I am

going to provide the necessary provision for the comfort of the mother for the next 24hrs before being discharged. Thank you for your presence in the health center. **Thanks A LOT!**"

**Fr. Paul Nasadaganwa**



**It's a Girl!**



# Update on the Beraldo Family Clinic

By David Eshihuula, Administrator

"The story of the Beraldo Family Clinic and Resource Centre is a story of love and compassion. It is a story about the difference you can make in peoples' lives. Commissioned 5 months ago, it now serves the poor rural community of Emalindi. I undertook this work with SFA knowing that the lives of these people will never be the same."

## Relief Arrives for Many as the Emalindi Community Receives Both Eye and Dental Care

"The entire Emalindi community heaved a sigh of relief when an outreach program for eye and dental care came to the Clinic. I was really touched and



impressed with the heart of sister Lillian of Kisumu Diocese who laid down most logistics. I met Sister Lillian in Maseno with her team of dental and eye doctors. She readily accepted to carry out the outreach program. I fueled the van full of medical equipment and we arrived at the clinic at 11am. We were shocked and at the same time touched by the crowd that had come for

treatment and medical care. Many people in this community had stayed in excruciating pain with toothaches just because they could not afford treatment. Mary Opondo came with all her molars and premolars worn out and in deep pain. The crowd was so big that we could not finish attending to all the people. We promised to come again for this medical outreach program."

by David Eshihuula ( edited by SFA)

The following page shows photos from the Dental and Eye Clinics and also the Mother and Child Healthcare days when there is a beehive of activity. No mother or child is turned back because she cannot pay for medical care.



## The Visiting Medical Specialists Hold Day long Clinics. This is Life Changing Access to Care.



## Kevin's Story...

How a young boy's life has been changed by sponsorship.  
Told in the words of our administrator Susan Nanjala aka  
"Mama Susan"

"When Kevin was chosen to be sponsored by SFA he was able to be withdrawn from the care of his step grandmother in March 2012. He had suffered mistreatment there. He had stopped speaking and could only nod yes or no.

**He never smiled.**

With him is Julia a member of the Khayega Women's sewing group who accepted to take up Kevin as his new care giver. That was the beginning of a new life for Kevin. In the bag in the photo are maize and beans that were given to them from our office to support them with food. Under the care of Julia, he joined Julia's youngest son by name Zakayo. He then had somebody to play with though Zakayo is a little bit older than Kevin."



"Julia became a rescue mother to Kevin. A new child and a new mother. No smile yet."

**And how is Kevin doing now?  
Please read on.....**



## A Happy Joyful Boy!



"One afternoon, we went to distribute school bags and shoes to the sponsored children. The activity was very successful. The education sponsored children were very, very, happy. I have never seen them so happy as they were that day.

They sang and danced and made all sorts of fun. The person who surprised me most was Kevin. He was unbelievably active, singing and dancing with the others. I saw his teeth out throughout our stay there (i.e. smiling). The boy has changed and he looks relaxed. I am attaching the pictures of the event. See for

yourself the happiness on the face of the boy. He was a boy who could never smile or respond to any communication.

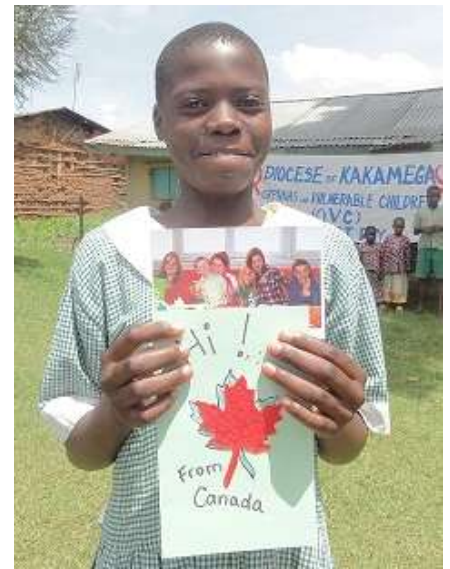
*Kevin and Trizar are the youngest in the educational sponsorship group and they are both in the same grade (grade 2). Both have an amazing performance and it is quite encouraging to us. As seen in the picture.....*

**The smile on Kevin's face tells it all!"**

**by Susan Nanjala (Edited by SFA)**

## The Educational Sponsorship Program to Expand

We are very excited about the ongoing success of the Educational Sponsorship Program. Susan Nanjala developed the program for 30 children and administers it for us. Each child receives a school uniform, and school supplies. All school fees and exam fees are paid and every child receives a hot nourishing meal each school day. In May 2012 Wendy and Charlotte enjoyed time with them, bringing letters and photos from their Canadian sponsors. The children were happy to receive them and to write back. We have just added 10 more children to the program for 2013.



**Wycliffe is happy now!**

Although some of the children may not yet have high marks academically they are all passing and doing their best. In many cases they must fetch water and firewood and do many chores each night. It is a long hard day for them with little chance to study.

One child Wycliffe was not allowed to go to school because he had to work for the family. He would sneak away to school because he wanted to go so much even if it meant a beating. He has now been sponsored in our program and is happily attending. It is hard for us to even imagine what that was like for him. His future depends on this. Even just attaining a grade 8 level of education makes a huge difference in holding a job other than manual labour for \$1.00 a day. **Life Changing!**



## A STORY OF HOPE AND INSPIRATION

While in Kenya in 2009 the team had the pleasure of meeting a small support group by the name of Maisha Mapya - which means New Life. We were so impressed with this gathering of HIV positive people whose purpose was to support each other and learn how to live happy productive lives. Each year we have visited this enthusiastic support group and each year we are overwhelmed & humbled by their determination, their strength and their dignity. Last year we decided to fund a cow project by purchasing two cows. The group is divided into eight subgroups of five members. Each subgroup of five will eventually receive a cow and once that objective has been met the members of each subgroup will receive a calf once it is born to the group. We are very pleased with the commitment shown by all members and how they support each other to help make each project a success.

This year Charlotte & Wendy had the pleasure of spending a couple of hours visiting with the members of Maisha Mapya and were thrilled to see so many of them doing well. It certainly was a joyous occasion. During the course of their visit they heard many tributes to the wonderful support available to each and every one of them from Susan Nanjala who is much more than our administrator on this project. One person's story stood out and we requested that she write her testimony down and forward it to us so we could share it with you all. Below is Carolyne's story - it is a tale of faith, hope and determination. We hope you find it as inspiring as we did when we heard it first hand.

### *Carolyne's Story*

"My name is Carolyne Nasimiya Nyongesa. I am a widow age 36yrs. and residing in Kakamega town, Western Kenya. I was born and brought up in Bungoma District where I went to school and managed to do my O level examination and scored a mean grade of C plain. I enrolled and completed a Diploma in Building Construction in 1995. Before I secured a job I got married in 1999 to a handsome young man and was blessed with a bouncing baby boy named Shawn Obore. He is 13 yrs. and now he is the only child I have. He is in class six at Kakamega Primary. I tested HIV+ve in the year 2000. During that time in Kenya, there were no interventions like ARVs (antiretrovirals) and no psychological counseling as it is today. On learning of my HIV status, I simply gave up on everything. I did not look for a job or plan for anything. I thought I would die the next day or the next week or after a year. But days, weeks, months and years passed without that death coming. I am now 12 years down the line and now I am full of life and hope."





"My husband also tested HIV +ve. He lived a reckless life with multiple sexual partners and abusing alcohol. He did not seek proper medical attention as advised by doctors and finally succumbed to opportunistic infections and passed away in 2008. I suffered a major opportunistic infection of Tuberculosis in 2004 after my second pregnancy. All through the pregnancy I was in and out of hospital due to malaria and anemia. My baby passed away after a month and this really broke my heart. Then my first born child, Shawn, who was always sickly, also tested HIV+ve and believe it or not I was completely heartbroken because the three of us in the family were now HIV+ve. Life became unbearable and things could not move, worse, my husband was never cooperative at all. I wished I had just died."

"My son and I were both enrolled in comprehensive care at Kakamega Hospital. Later we were referred to Maisha Mapya Support Group for psychological support where I met Mama Susan, a nurse counselor affiliated with the Catholic Diocese of Kakamega. Mama Susan gave me all the necessary psychological support and my life started changing. I started to restore hope in my life and vowed to do anything so as to prolong my life and lead a positive life.



Mama Susan is also one of SFA's administrators.

In the support group I met people who were also infected with HIV and we all received counseling by Mama Susan. I became a very strong member of the group and was elected by members to be the secretary of the group. I was exposed to other support groups and networks and was empowered with knowledge on HIV and this strengthened me more. I started appreciating myself and I am now leading a positive life thanking God for every day of life he gives me."

"In the support group I have been empowered socially, physically and economically. I have been able to attend several trainings on income generating activities (IGAs) and borrowed a loan of Ksh.20,000 (just over \$200) from a micro credit society where I joined as a member paying only Ksh.200 (just about \$2) per month. The money I borrowed enabled me to put up a small hair dressing salon in town. From this business I have been able to sustain my life and provide food for my child and also cater for our medical bills. I am also struggling to put up a semi-permanent house in my rural home since my husband had not constructed any family house. It is quite expensive but I will have a place to call home however long as it takes. I am praying to God to give me strength, ability and good health so that my dreams of having a house of my own and for my child will come true. "

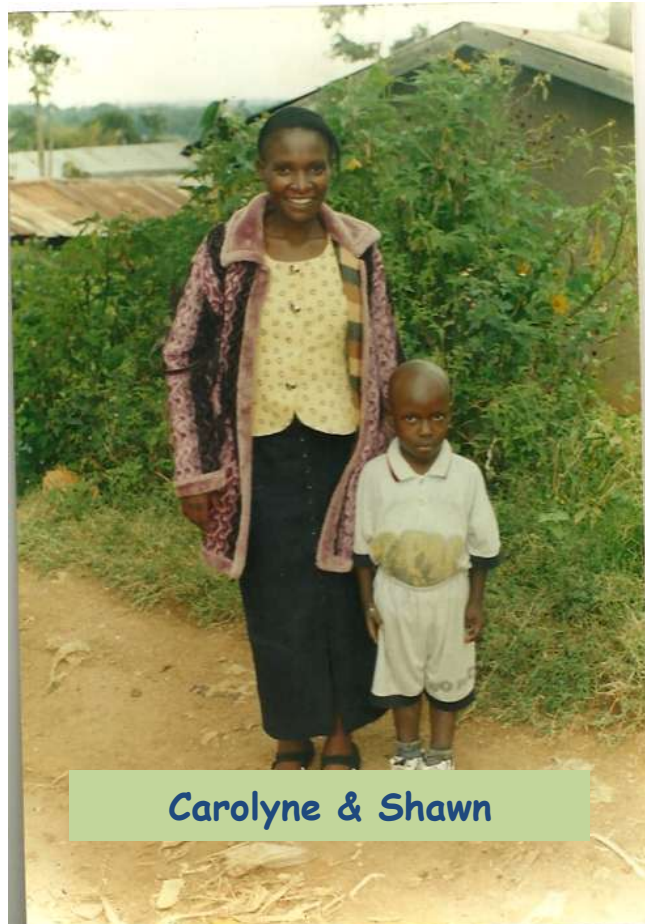
"Now after realizing that life is God given and it is only God who knows when to take life from a person, I am a changed Carolyne. Last year, 2011, my desire was to go back to college and to pursue a diploma in social work inspired me. I was enrolled in college in January 2012. The course will take 2yrs. I am struggling to ensure that I pursue this diploma course and later a degree and get a Masters, if God is willing."

"Also I am grateful to our almighty God to have enabled me to live up to today and be able to share this Testimony and experience of my journey of life with HIV. I have been able to escape death not once but twice. When I was started on ARVs I suffered adverse side effects and that saw me hospitalized because of liver problems. I escaped death narrowly and I thank the Doctors and Nurses who gave me the necessary medical attention and restored my life. I was also treated for TB - a killer chest infection in HIV positive people - but I took my treatment well and completed the course of treatment as recommended. I was completely cured after completion of the TB regimen."

"Finally I wish to thank all those who have assisted me to be what I am today. I am full of Life and Hope and very healthy until I have forgotten that I am HIV positive. I appreciate all Doctors, Nurses, counselors, the Diocese of Kakamega, my support group and all donors who have stood with us to fund our ARVs. Through the Diocese of Kakamega ARVs have come from Canada and assisted HIV positive persons in Kenya. We could not be here today to give this testimony but I must say that I am really full of life and yearning to do more and not just for myself but for the entire community."

"Special appreciation also goes to SUITCASES FOR AFRICA for their concern over my welfare and the welfare of the Maisha Mapya Support Group and for being able to show us what can be described as unconditional support. I wish to salute you all and God bless you."

*"Thank you so much."*



**Carolyne & Shawn**

by **Carolyne Nasimiyu Nyongesa** (Edited by SFA)



## Emalindi Orphan Hostel.....Help is on the way..



During our 2011 trip to Kenya, we were introduced to **Sr. Salome** by Fr. Paul and we learned about the huge challenges being faced by herself and **Sr. Beatrice** who were attempting to assist and feed many local orphans. They were trying to feed 85 children one meal a day and housing 18 of them to sleep. It was an urgent matter and rapidly growing in size. We immediately began with some emergency food donations and the students of John Abbott College raised funds to build them a poultry raising project. We addressed the terrible sanitation issue by replacing the two toppling, wooden, and over-filled latrines with 4 new, efficient and well -designed concrete ones. Their living conditions still remain difficult. The sisters now house 72 orphans! There are few beds and mattresses and those they have, are broken and unsanitary. The roof of the structure leaks with a mattress stuffed into it to block the rain. The children still have to fetch water and they bathe in a cobbled together shack of rusty corrugated iron. We have decided to make the hostel one of our main focuses for 2013. Hopefully with funds we raise we can give these children a better quality of life by improving the dormitory and furnishing it. A clean water project would be a dream. The colorful squares many of you knitted were put together by the children last spring: **NOW THEY NEED BEDS.** We will keep you posted as funds come in and work gets underway.

**Photos of their present living conditions**

**may be seen on the following page.....**

## Dormitory Upgrades Desperately Needed



Bathing room for the children

too few beds, many broken



•



Thanks to you, SFA is Making a Difference:  
One Child at a Time. One Community at a Time.



How Canadians are Helping in their Own Way

SFA would not be able to realise the wonderful projects taking place without the help of many Canadians who are finding ways to get involved. We thank them for sharing their ideas and their time and talents in many simple and creative ways. We are proud to introduce some of them to you today on the following pages. **THANK YOU!**

## Corpus Christi Parish June Bake Sale & Mini Jumble Sale



Many thanks go out to Patricia Jackson and her team of volunteer bakers for organising another great Bake Sale and Mini Jumble Sale. Funds totalling \$849.00 will greatly assist us with our wish list to benefit struggling rural communities.

*Thank you for your enthusiastic support!*



SFA members Judy Swedburg & Edwina Mattinson are shown manning the table of baking for sale on the day.



## An Ecumenical Service in the Park



On June 24th, 2012 there was an ecumenical outdoor service held on the shore of Lake St. Louis in Baie d'Urfe. Beaurepaire United Church, Briarwood Presbyterian Church and Beaurepaire's Anglican Christ Church were all represented. It was a wonderful, peaceful start to the summer season. A special thank you goes to the organizing committee for choosing SUITCASES FOR AFRICA as the recipient of the loose collection that was gathered during the service -the \$410.51 will be put to good use in Kenya!

*Thank you for the generous support of everyone involved.*

## A LESTER B. PEARSON SCHOOL BOARD STUDENT GETS INSPIRED

After writing a provincial language arts exam, at St. Edmund Elementary School in Beaconsfield, ten year old Avery DiAdamo could not get the theme of the exam out of her head: **"Making a Difference"**.

Avery kept wondering how she could make a difference in the world. Not long after this the principal of the school, Nathia Messina and the lunch program co-ordinator Louise Cavalier offered to teach interested students how to knit.

That is when Avery's imagination kicked in. She began knitting scarves and soon had quite a stock. Avery decided to donate the money that she made selling the scarves to SFA. Avery's mother Stephanie had worked with Wendy Buchanan and had followed SFA for a long time. Avery had also heard about SFA from Darlene Anderson when she gave a talk at their church. With her mother's help Avery was able to sell her creations and before too long she had collected \$200. SFA was certainly thrilled to be the chosen recipient. The money went to Kenya this spring and new shoes were purchased for every student in the educational sponsorship program. Avery is still busy knitting and she even took time to give Wendy a quick lesson on scarf knitting!



**Thank you Avery - you are truly an inspiration for young people who are wondering if or how they could "Make a Difference".**

**See the photos taken in Kenya on the following page and how big an impact those shoes will make on the health of the children who received them.....**



## Tracing the children's feet so shoes can be purchased.

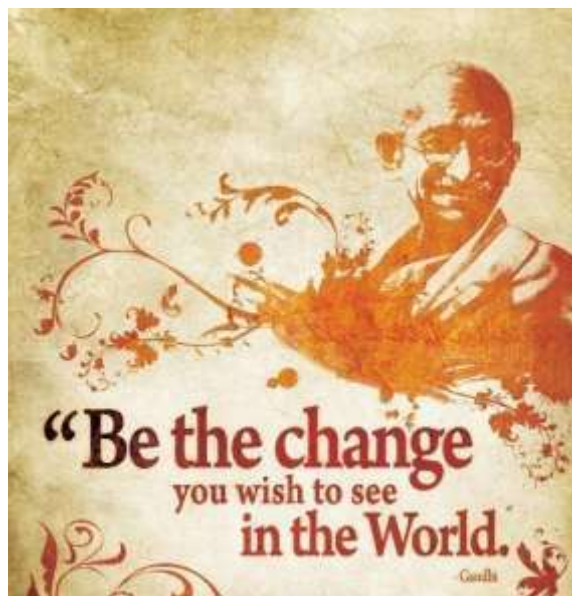


The new shoes will protect the children from painful effects of parasites known as "jiggers" which burrow into the feet to lay their eggs. They cause terrible infections and pain and are endemic. Many children and adults suffer from them and if untreated they are debilitating and make walking difficult.



## NOVA Volunteer, Monica, Redirects her Birthday Gifts to those in Need

Monica Brennan is a long-time volunteer at the NOVA Thrift Shop in Beaurepaire. Monica is at the age that she feels that she really does not need any more "stuff" in her life. She was very inspired by the story of Veronica the cow that was highlighted in our previous newsletter. Monica's grandchildren have also been moved by the pictures of the children of Kenya. She decided to tell her children & grandchildren not to buy her anything for her birthday this year but that she would appreciate the money going to SFA. The picture, taken at the NOVA shop, shows Monica presenting Wendy with the cash that her family had so generously given her for her birthday. Monica also gave money that was sent to Kenya this spring and a group of orphans enthusiastically enjoyed lollipops as a result.



Thank you Monica  
and family for  
your kind hearted  
support.



## Maxwell Residence Seniors Knit Dolls for Orphans. A Gift of Love & Comfort



Darlene recently had the great pleasure of an invitation to lunch at the Maxwell Residence in Baie D'Urfe. Pat Motherwell, 88 years young, had 42 little comfort dolls and some knitted baby sweaters to present to SFA. Pat and her friends, Amanda Pierlet, Dorothy Helleur and Margine Toren had been working together to make them for the young orphans and babies in the Kenyan Projects. Activities manager, Paulette Challenger, also pictured above, is delighted with their enthusiasm and involvement. It is such a generous gift of their time, energy and love and we know they will bring much joy to the little children who will receive them! **What an enjoyable visit, we look forward to visiting again soon!** *Thank you Ladies!*

## Upcoming Fundraising Events



### **A CONCERT NOT TO BE MISSED**

Who Sang: I FEEL THE EARTH MOVE? FIRE & RAIN?  
GOODBYE YELLOW BRICK ROAD?

Carole King? James Taylor? Elton John?

Correct - but - also the talented students of  
Kerry-Anne Kutz

Come & enjoy an evening of song as Kerry-Anne's treasured vocalists pay tribute to these three amazing artists by providing their version of some of the most popular & memorable music of Carole, James & Elton.

**This COFFEE HOUSE FUNDRAISER will be to benefit  
SUITCASES FOR AFRICA  
&  
THE LAKESHORE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20TH, 7:30 P.M. at  
THE LAKESHORE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH  
5065 Sherbrooke, Lachine Quebec**

\$10.00 minimum donation per person at the door. Coffee, tea, desserts & much more will be available for purchase following the concert.

Information: Wendy 514-697-5588



## St, Edmund School Christmas Fair.Sat.Nov.10



We will be selling our new 2012 donation gift cards which make a satisfying Christmas gift to friends & family. We will also have Kenyan jewelry, crafts and jackets.

This year we will also have beautiful wall calendars for sale which feature many photos and large space for writing your daily activities. Stop by and say Hello.

## Soko Shopping Night



Come shop at Soko for beautiful gifts on Thurs. Dec. 6th from 6-9pm and owner Michelle Shepard will donate 25% of all sales that evening to Suitcases for Africa. Soko is located at:  
319 Chemin Bord du Lac, Pointe Claire Village.

*Our members will be on hand to meet you and answer questions about our work.*

## Corpus Christi Parish Christmas Bake Sale

To be held at Corpus Christi Parish,  
16 Pacific Ave. in Senneville,

Sat. Dec. 8 (after the 5pm Mass)  
&  
Sun. Dec.9 (after the 10 am Mass)

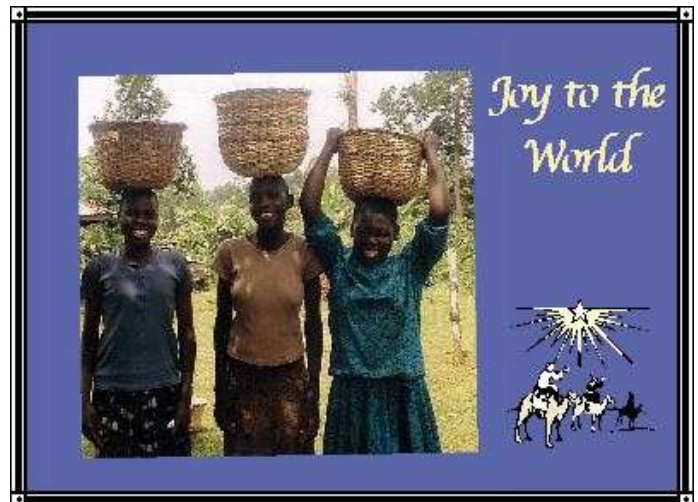
- Come purchase delicious baking for the Holidays and support the parish volunteers who will donate the funds to life saving projects for orphans.
- Christmas Gift Cards will be on sale as well as Kenyan jewelry, crafts & clothes.



This year we have two new Donation Gift Cards (see below) available in French & English.

These cards can be seen in detail on our website:

[www.suitcasesforafrica.com](http://www.suitcasesforafrica.com)





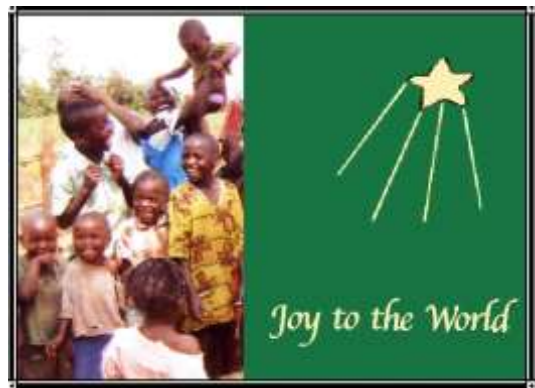
## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Join us in raising funds and awareness with your own ideas or events.
- Make a donation to support our projects. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$25.00 or more.
- Purchase our donation cards (see below).

Looking for a Special Gift this Christmas?  
We will have five Donation Christmas cards this year. For each card you can choose an insert describing the project you wish to support. Then give the card as a gift. We have had wonderful feedback from those who receive them.



Cards can be purchased for \$10.00 and up and are great as gift for a teacher, a business contact, or for friends and family.



To Purchase cards call **Wendy** at 514 - 697- 5588 or **Darlene** at 514 - 457- 3786.

## Coming this November.....

A new full size "Wall Calendar" for 2013 with space to write and featuring SFA photos.

The new calendar will be posted, when available, on our website:

[www.suitcasesforafrica.com](http://www.suitcasesforafrica.com)

## *Pennies from Heaven, the Campaign Continues*

Now that pennies are about to become extinct we invite you to liberate them from your old jars and tins so they can be put to one final good use.

Perhaps they will feed orphans, help to build a classroom or with what is most urgent!

Please consider donating your pennies to Suitcases for Africa! Let them go out in a blaze of Glory!  
Thank You!

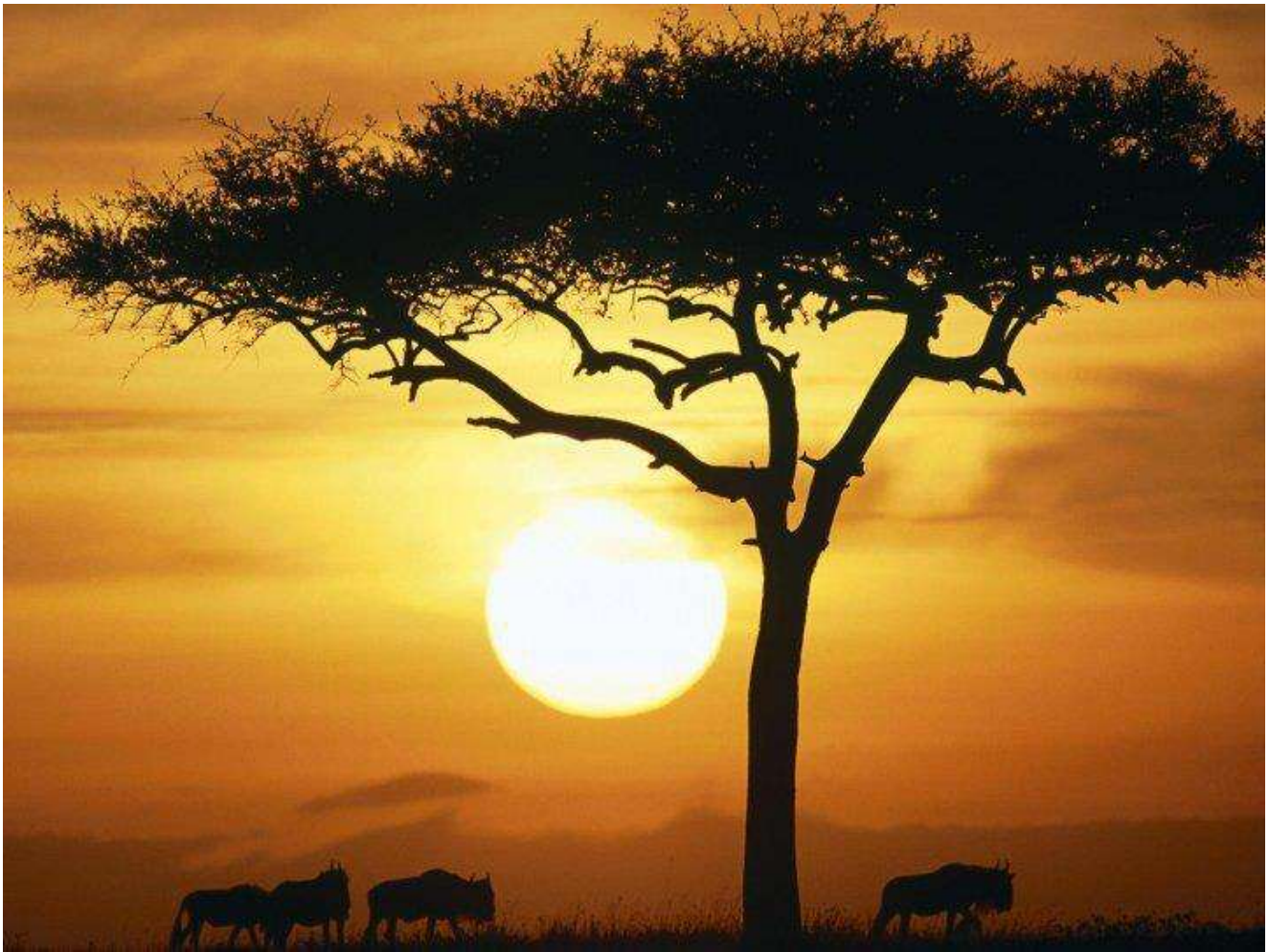
So far over \$542.00 in pennies have come in!  
Thank you to those rolling them for us!  
Especially "super rollers" Edwina Mattinson & Loise Blanchette.



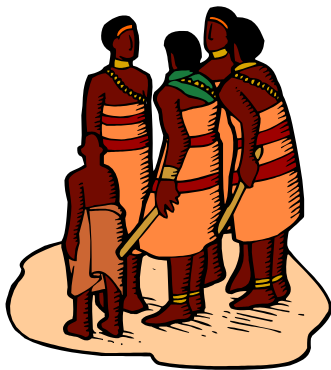
Please email us at [suitcasesforafrica@yahoo.ca](mailto:suitcasesforafrica@yahoo.ca) to find the closest drop off point for your pennies.

We thank **Soko** in Pte. Claire Village for being one convenient drop off point.





## How You Can Help



- Join us in raising funds and awareness with your own ideas or events.
- Sponsor a project with your school, church, company, family, or friends.
- Make a donation to support our projects. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$25.00 or more.
- View our website for more information.  
[www.suitcasesforafrica.com](http://www.suitcasesforafrica.com)