



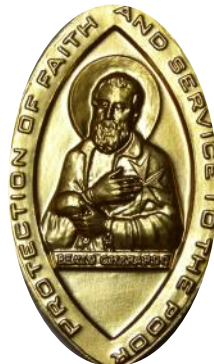
Newsletter 2025

Annual Report 2023 & 2024



Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard
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The
Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard
is an Association
of the Roman Catholic Church,
a South African
Public Benefit Organisation
and the Relief Organisation
of the Order of Malta
in South Africa.



**Caring
without
borders**



Our **mission** is

to further the glory of God and strive with a common effort to foster a more perfect life of our members by devoting ourselves to the apostolate of the Church in works of charity to serve "the poor of our Lord Jesus Christ" extending God's loving care to them under the motto "tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum"
(Protection of faith and service to the needy).

"Vision"

May the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard in adopting its patron's charisma continue the ancient spiritual tradition of its roots to humbly serve the hungry and thirsty, estranged and naked, sick and imprisoned Lord and thus become a sign of Christian faith, cheerful hope and apostolic love to the people.



**We care
in any case**



Imprint:

The "**Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard** Newsletter/Annual Report" is the official mouthpiece of the **Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard**.

This Newsletter and Annual Report is also published online at

<https://www.bsg.org.za/en/our-organisation/publications/newsletters-annual-reports.html>

Kindly update your current contact details by sending an e-mail to bbg@bbg.org.za or a SMS or WhatsApp message to Father Gérard at +27 82 492 4043. That will make it much easier for us to contact you. We will never share your private details with anybody.

We are ...

- a community of more than 2800 **idealists** whose goal is to empower those in need to help themselves and to provide direct and immediate assistance in urgent emergencies.
- the South African **relief organisation** of the Order of Malta, which was founded more than 900 years ago by Blessed Gérard as a brotherhood for nursing.
- a **faith-based organisation** (FBO) that puts into practice what our motto "tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum" says: "Protection of faith and service to the needy".
- a **"Private Association of Christ's Faithful"** in the Roman Catholic Church, open to members from all different faiths and cultural backgrounds.
- a **community based** (CBO) **non-governmental organisation** (NGO).
- a **"public benefit organisation"** (PBO) operated not for profit (NPO) and dedicated to the welfare of all people.
- a **non-discriminatory** and **non-exclusive organisation**, that serves those in need regardless of their abilities, faith, ethnicity, political affiliation, sexual orientation or social status.
- a **charity organisation** that helps people within its means and according to their identified needs.



is a "Non-profit Organisation" (Registration No. 080-935-NPO)
and a "Public Benefit Organisation"

(PBO number 13 000 2777, VAT No. 447 0252 182)

founded and owned by the **Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard**.

It provides a comprehensive system of holistic care in the wider Mandeni area
where a quarter of a million people are estimated to live.

More than 80% of these live in poverty.

All our help is provided free of charge to everyone.

Dear readers of our newsletter,

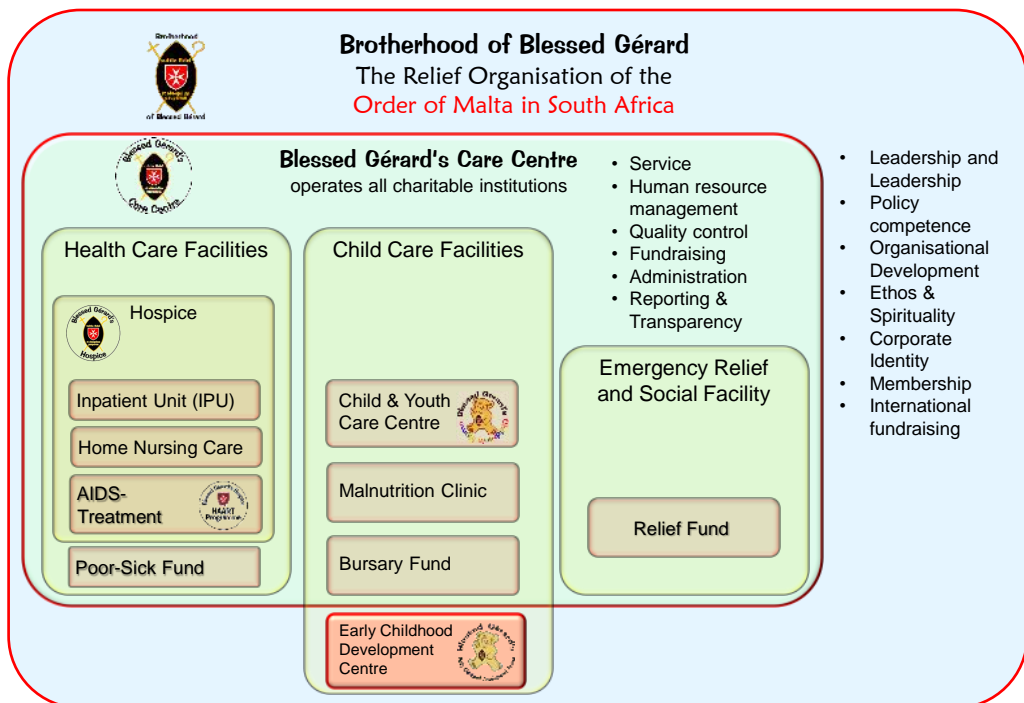
This time, we've redesigned the layout slightly. We'll guide you step by step through the various areas of our services, assembling articles, reports, information, and images into a mosaic of our work. **By the way: The people depicted in the articles have expressly consented to the use of their photos and their "stories."**

You know that the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard has long since transferred all its charitable services to its subsidiary, Blessed Gérard's Care Centre. At the request of the local authorities, the Care Centre has now established the early childhood development centre as an independent subsidiary. I have tried to illustrate this graphically below. The three legal entities are **outlined in red**.

Enjoy reading!

Yours

Father Gérard



Thomas Garth Vogel succeeds Father Gérard as the Director (Chairman of the Board) of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre.

We asked him to introduce himself:

I am Thomas Vogel. 53 years of age. I am an Industrial Relations practitioner with 25 years of experience in the field.

As the son of Swiss immigrants, German Catholic missions featured largely in my childhood. With an uncle being a monk at the Mariannahill Trappist Mission as well as my Father being a former Seminarian at St John Vianney Seminary.

This association carried on into my work life, dealing with employment and Labour Law issues at various Catholic Institutions throughout kwaZulu-Natal. From 2008 I have been serving on the Finance Board of the Archdiocese of Durban and in 2022, Father Gérard invited me to join the Governing Council of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre and the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard, which has been an honour to serve on. With all my experience of various Catholic Missions in kwaZulu-Natal, the Blessed Gérard's Care Centre immediately struck me as being a level above in terms professionalism and dedication. Which is a credit to the Governance provided by



Fr Gérard and the Brotherhood. When Father Gérard asked me to step into his shoes as Chairperson of the Governing Council of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre, I felt both daunted and honoured by the request. I realized the importance of someone stepping forward in at least some small way lessening the burden on Fr Gérard's shoulders in both Governing the Organization and raising funds at the same time.

My hope for the future is to ensure continuation of the valuable aid provided by Blessed Gérard's Care Centre to the poorest district of kwaZulu-Natal.



Blessed Gérard's Hospice

Inpatient hospice · Palliative care unit

27 February 2023 ploma and then joined the army for many years.



Maresi Rehder visits a young patient in the palliative care unit of our inpatient hospice. We admit patients of all ages there and provide them with care, support,

and therapy. Palliative care provides holistic care for life until the very end.

27 February 2023 After his mother's funeral, he and his friends got involved in a fight that had serious consequences for him. He was sent to prison for a few years.



Maresi Rehder reports: **Falakhe** has been with us at the hospice for two weeks and told me his

story:

A life that hasn't been straight, with more downs than ups! Nevertheless, he radiates a winning, calm cheerfulness.

Falakhe passed his high school di-

ploma and then joined the army for many years. In 2014, his mother became very ill, and no one was able to care for her, so he brought her to Blessed Gérard's Care Centre. Friends had recommended it to him. He describes how friendly the nurses were and how much his mother enjoyed being here. Here, she died in complete peace.

He only knows that it was becoming increasingly difficult to care for

himself; neighbours helped occasionally, but it wasn't enough.

2 October 2023

Then he remembered the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and prayed that the Care Centre would take him in, at least until he found a solution for his care.

He was so relieved and grateful to be allowed to come. His mother always told him how comfortable she felt here, and he now knows she was telling the truth.

2 March 2023

Dr. Dumezweni Ntshangase, the physician and manager of our hospice, during a round in our palliative care unit.



7 March 2023

Basic care in our palliative care unit.



Physiotherapy in our palliative care unit.



"Good evening

I would like to just take the opportunity to thank you personally and to your staff at Blessed Gérard's Care Centre for all the time and effort invested in my father Mate' Van Rooyen, to make him feel as comfortable as possible.

We as a family are humbled by the amazing facility you run, and I am grateful to our heavenly father that he could spend his final days in a clean, friendly & safe care facility such as yours.

My father as you are aware passed away on the 26 September, last Tuesday, peacefully just after lunch time .

I life lived well, however Dementia and being bed ridden took its toll on my father.

He is a peace and no longer suffering

Forever grateful to you and your team

Regards

John van Rooyen"

**Caring
without borders**



19 February 2024 I don't have a cent.



My name is **Simphiwe Mathonsi**, and I've been here at the Care Centre for about five months. When I arrived, I was so weak because of my HIV that I

couldn't walk or sit.

My two adult children, who live with me, couldn't care for me properly because they both worked all day. So, I was home alone for hours.

When the nurses from the home health team offered me a place to come to the Care Centre, I was so grateful.

Here, I receive help and I'm not so alone anymore.

I come from a good middle-class family, but I've always struggled with learning, so I have no vocational training.

I had my son at 16, and my daughter at 20. The fathers of my two children were never interested in the children.

My life is hard; I worked odd jobs, and my parents took care of my children. Now I should be getting disability benefits, but they still haven't been approved.

I thank God that my children have good jobs.

The Care Centre isn't my home, but I like being here because everyone is kind to me and I'm well cared for. I thank all the people who make these good deeds possible.

I hope that in about four weeks I'll be strong enough to go home again.

22 February 2024

My name is **Sandile**, I'm 35 years old, and I've been at the Care Centre since September 1st.



I'm not married and I don't have any children.

I grew up in a good family; my mother is from Mandeni, my father from Durban.

There were six of us siblings; I'm the second oldest; two of my siblings have unfortunately passed away.

I had a good start in life. I completed my matric (high school diploma) and began studying chemistry. But after three semesters, I became ill, and so I couldn't finish my studies. There were always times

when I was too weak for anything. Often, I couldn't even get up or go to work.

Whenever possible, I worked at a Shell gas station in Durban.

Then my mother returned to Mandeni, and so did all my siblings. I followed them because my family could still support me here. But they don't want that anymore.

I'm so grateful to be here at the Care Centre; I really get help here. I'm being treated for HIV and TB, and I really hope to be discharged next month. Then the difficult job search will begin again.

I'm 35 and desperately want to stand on my own two feet.

9 April 2024

To the management and staff of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre

We would like to thank you for your dedication to caring for and healing people with life-threatening illnesses, providing love, comfort, and support. Your dedication, passion, and tireless commitment have a profound impact on the lives of people and their families.

We lack the words to thank you.

God bless you.

We thank you in Jesus' name.

From the **Mkhwanazi family**



Blessed Gérard's Hospice

Outpatient Hospice • Home Nursing

February 28, 2023

Home Nursing



Nursing home visits from our outpatient hospice

Our mobile nursing teams make initial visits to patients in their huts or houses to take their medical history and plan their care.





If necessary, we also arrange patient transport.

der of Malta's Global Fund for Forgotten People. Father Gérard cut the ribbon.

28 February 2024

Dr. Dumezweni Ntshangase makes a home visit to one of our patients.



We care for the seriously ill in their homes, advise their families, and guide them in their care.



23 September 2024

The Management and Out-patient Care Services Team: Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard Care Centre

I am writing this letter to express my deepest gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to the entire team at the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard Care Centre, particularly the outpatient care services team. Your unwavering support and care have made a significant impact on my family, especially in the recovery journey of my 15-year-old daughter, **Philasande**.

In February 2024, Philasande was bitten by a snake, a traumatic event that required immediate medical attention at KwaDukuza Private Hospital. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints, we



The main motivation for founding the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard was that

we saw people dying due to neglect.

We simply had to help.

We often find that we are the only ones caring for those in need.



27 July 2023

Blessing and "opening" of our new am-

bulance, which was very generously funded by the Or-



had to seek further treatment at Gizenga Regional Hospital. This experience was both emotionally and financially draining for us as a family. However, since May 2024, when we were warmly welcomed into the care of your outpatient services, we have experienced an incredible transformation in our journey toward Philasande's healing.

Your team's dedication, professionalism, and compassionate care have been nothing short of remarkable. The consistent attention and commitment displayed in treating Philasande's wound have not gone unnoticed. Each visit by your staff has been met with kindness and understanding, and their ability to foster a trusting and supportive relationship with my daughter has greatly contributed to her comfort and healing.

I am particularly moved by the manner in which your team upholds the values and vision of your organization. The care, compassion, and love extended to Philasande and our family have been in perfect alignment with your mission, which speaks to serving with Christian faith,

cheerful hope, and apostolic love. Your team has not only attended to my daughter's physical needs but has also eased our financial burden by providing excellent outpatient services that spared us from the costly hospital visits. For this, we are immensely grateful.

In closing, I wish to thank you for your unwavering commitment and for embodying the vision of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard. The healing progress Philasande has made and the comfort we have felt as a family are direct results of the love, dedication, and professionalism of your outpatient care team.

We will forever hold a deep sense of gratitude for your organization and the incredible work you do. May the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard continue to shine as a beacon of hope, care, and faith for many others as it has for us.

With heartfelt thanks
Mr& Mrs. Nzima





Blessed Gérard's Hospice

AIDS-Treatment-Programme



Blessed Gérard's Early Childhood Development Centre

31 January 2024

Therapeutic counsellor **Sihlesenkosi Dube** makes "home" visits to patients to ensure that they reliably take their vital medications every day.



5 February 2024

Everyday life at **Blessed Gérard's Kindergarten** in oWhebede.



Kindergartens in South Africa are now being called "Early Childhood Development Centres."



20 February 2024



Therapeutic counsellor **Wiseman Zulu** makes a home visit to a very cheerful patient.

12 July 2024



The Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Eshowe, **Wilfrid Fox Cardinal Napier OFM**, blessed and opened the kindergarten, which had been renovated, with modernized classrooms and kitchen and new outdoor facilities.



2 December 2024

One day late, our hospice's AIDS treatment program is celebrating World AIDS Day today.





Blessed Gérard's Relief Fund

1 February 2024

We provide social and charitable assistance to people in unexpected emergency situations.



Our social worker, **Nana Masi-kane**, manages our emergency relief fund.



She visits numerous people in dire need, organises, and provides professional emergency and social assistance.



18 September 2024

Nana Masikane writes:

Mr. **Khulekani Ngcobo** reported that he was unemployed and had no accommodation. He had se-

cured accommodation during his working hours. He was very young, and the community leaders asked him to come with an older person. He brought his mother to the community leader. They agreed to stay with his mother. When he was due to apply for a RDP house, he was not in Mandeni. He worked outside the home, so his mother applied for the house. In early September 2024, she evicted him, claiming it was her house. He lives in a small shack, which he used as a kiosk during his working hours. He received counselling and a food parcel.



1 October 2024

Mr. and Mrs. Branken reported that their house burned down on October 1, 2024. They live in a two-story house. The fire broke



out on the second floor, and all their belongings, including important documents such as identification papers, were incinerated. The family needed support with food, clothing, and blankets. They live with their two children, one of whom is still in school. They received counselling support. They also received food packages, clothing, blankets, and household items. The family continues to receive support and counselling from the Care Centre.



4 March 2023

Dr. Paul Thabethe, co-founder of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and board member, providing nutritional counselling at our clinic for malnourished children.



**We care
in any case**



**Blessed
Gérard's
Bursary Fund**

26 February 2024



Hi, my name is John Zulu, and my friends call me Jay. I'm a 19-year-old young man who grew up in the Brotherhood of Blessed

Gérard's children's home. Now I'm on the threshold of an independent life. I'd like to look back with you on all the joys and laughter, but also the sadness and insecurities, that I experienced at Blessed Gérard's Children's Home.

How did it all begin?

I was born in June 2004, and on the day of my birth, the police took me to the children's home. On the day of my birth—abandoned by my father and mother! Many children in this situation die, but God was kind to me, and so I was allowed to live. I was found by a local, and a few phone calls later, I was in the children's home.

My "mothers" became the caregivers, and the other children—we

were 25 at the time—became my siblings. 25 children of different skin colours and different backgrounds—and yet we felt like siblings.

Our mothers protected us like their own children. We laughed and argued, we played pranks, and stole cookies. This is how I imagine a real family, like our life here in the children's home. Our life was care-free.

As I grew older and more mature, my perspective changed, and I understood that our entire life here depended on donations, on people willing to share.

And I saw that our life stories were different from those in normal families.

I thought about this a lot, and the question about my parents bothered me more and more. Not because I was unhappy in the children's home, but I think everyone wants to know where they came from.

Then came the question of why. Why did they leave me? Why did they abandon me? Will they ever come back to ask how I was doing? These questions swirled in my head incessantly. I found and still find no answers.

Deep within, hidden beneath the

weight of my grief and unanswered questions, a strength grew within me, and I realized that even though my past consists of many blank pages, my present is what I make of it.

I decided to take control of my life and make the most of it. I want to let the past rest and look forward with joy.

With this decision, my perspective changed again. I no longer saw only the sadness of my story. I began to see all the good that had been given to me.

I have a safe place to live, enough to eat, I am allowed to go to school, and now, after graduating from school, I can go to college and learn a trade.

I am very grateful to all the people who support this home, donate money, or work here as caregivers and mothers.

You have given me a good start in life.

On the day of his birth, 26 June 2004, John is introduced to his new “siblings” in the children’s home.



13 September 2024 my guardians. As someone who

My name is **Sindi Zulu**. I am 22 years old and studying at Capsicum Culinary School. I am in the second year of my culinary diploma.



I enjoy the practical challenges most about my course, as we then go into the kitchen to prepare the requested dishes or desserts. Cooking and baking is a true indulgence for me.

Especially now that I am completing my continuing education at the Coastlands Hotel in Musgrave, I have the opportunity to cook something new almost every day.



The biggest challenge for me starting my studies is adjusting to the workload each year. The higher the grade, the more the work-

load increases. Sometimes you feel less like a student and more like a professional administrator.

I am currently living in a student residence in Durban, and being away from home is difficult, as I sometimes miss my siblings or even

my guardians. As someone who attends a school with no holidays, it's hard when I feel homesick, knowing I won't be home until the end of the year. But I understand that this is part of growing up.

It's also very difficult because you have to make decisions like a young adult, and it can be tough not having a parent constantly guiding you and literally holding your hand. But I understand that this is part of growing up and brings with it a certain independence and the ability to make your own decisions (in a positive way).

Personally, what I enjoy most about being a student is learning new things. Every day I learn something new, I feel like I've accomplished a lot, and you never know if what you've learned will be useful to you later in life. I think I understand now why so many students are dedicated (not that I wasn't). I understand how important dedication to learning and schoolwork is. I now realize that it is a privilege and a gift to be able to spend so much time learning.

Sindi Zulu

Sindi,
two weeks old,
on
25 July 2002



10 December 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,



I hope this message finds you well. My name is **Mlando Maphumulo**, a medical student at Stellenbosch University, and a proud beneficiary of the

BGCC bursary. I am writing with a deep sense of gratitude and emotion to share that I have successfully completed this academic year. The journey has been far from easy. There were moments when I questioned whether I could keep going, but through hard work, resilience, and an unwavering determination to succeed, I made it through. My results may not reflect my full potential, but they tell the story of a young person fighting through a chronic medical condition (which I have now resolved) and struggling with the immense transition from high school to university. Despite these challenges, my

hunger for success has never been stronger, and I am more confident than



ever that I will continue to grow, adapt, and overcome. I cannot fully express how much this opportunity means to me. Your support has brought me closer to my lifelong dream of becoming a doctor, and for that, I will be forever grateful. The chance you've given me is more than just financial assistance – it is the foundation of my future, and it has given me hope when I needed it most. I am committed to giving back, so that young people like me, who come



from humble beginnings, can have the same opportunities. If given the chance again, I promise to work even harder, to push myself beyond what I

thought was possible, and to never disappoint you. Your faith in me will not be in vain. I will keep striving, and I will succeed.

Please find my academic results attached to this email.

Once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support, your belief in me, and for helping me take this life-changing step toward my dreams.

Warmest regards,
Mlando Maphumulo

10 February 2023 **BLESSED GÉRARD'S CARE CENTRE** despite the world economic conditions.

Greetings

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude with regards to the work you and your team is doing for our community. My daughter was granted bursary for Tugela primary school. She received 2x vouchers for stationery and uniform. You guys have no idea of the amount of difference you made.

When I came to collect the vouchers from you, I couldn't help but wonder what did the community of Mandeni do to deserve assistance of this magnitude? So many people getting so much help from

We really appreciate what you are doing for us guys and I would like to thank you all on behalf of the bursary recipients. May the good LORD bless you all abundantly.

Please pass the message to Father if possible. We appreciate him and we humbly ask that he continue to be our hero as long as he lives. My daughter was asking who is this Generous man buying her so many things.

Thank you so much.

Best regards

Mlondi Mtetwa

Due to the extreme poverty in our area, many families are unable to afford their children's education. Unfortunately, there is no free access to teaching and learning materials in South Africa. Parents must pay all this themselves.

However, because education is the foundation for a better future for the population and thus for the future of South Africa, the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard established this bursary fund in 1993. Your donation or "sponsorship" helps us provide talented young people of

poor parents in the Mandeni area with a quality education.



I Would Have Never Asked For Anything Different:

The Story of Mary Zulu

A Journey of Resilience and Achievement

Mary Liesse Zulu's life commenced with significant challenges. She was brought to Blessed Gérard's Children's Home by the police on the day of her birth, December 6, 2002, in poor health and heavily sunburnt. However, under loving care and attention, she transformed into a happy infant, poised for a bright future.

By the time I first encountered Mary at the Children's Home, she was approximately 12 years old. She was an open-minded, lively girl with exceptional team spirit. Mary naturally assumed a leadership role among her group of siblings, excelling academically and showing a strong passion for sports. Her afternoons were often spent outdoors, encouraging her siblings to play soccer, football, or rugby — the latter soon becoming her preferred sport.

In a manner similar to any family, the caregivers at the Children's Home closely observed the children, identifying and nurturing their talents. Mr. Clark, our Children's Home Manager, recognized Mary's potential and secured a training opportunity for her with the under-16 Sharks girls' rugby team. From the outset, Mary demonstrated a natural aptitude for the sport, quickly honing her skills and showcasing her talent.

Mary's academic journey was equally commendable. She completed her schooling in 2020, receiving the "2020 Matric Top Achievers Award for children in alternative care." This prestigious accolade came with a full scholarship from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, enabling her to pursue



higher education. Transitioning from the Children's Home to her new student residence in Durban marked a significant milestone in her life.

At the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Mary pursued a Bachelor's degree in sports science, demonstrating remarkable dedication and progress. By 2023, Mary reached a notable achievement that brought immense pride to her and everyone associated — she began representing South Africa in the Women's Springbok National Team. Her journey had now ascended to the global stage.



Currently, Mary is preparing for the Rugby World Cup in London, an event that signifies the culmination of years of diligent effort and relentless determination. During my stay in Mandeni this past February, I had the pleasure of reconnecting with Mary. We enjoyed a delightful lunch together with Father Gérard, and it was heartwarming to observe how reflectively and openly she spoke about her life.

During our conversation, it became evident that Blessed Gérard's Children's Home was not merely a place of shelter for Mary but truly her



family. She expressed her happiness and gratitude for the life she has led. "Of course, there were times when I wondered about my biological parents and how they might be," she shared, "but I always had someone to turn to, someone to talk to when I needed, so I didn't feel like I was missing anything. I would have never asked for anything different"

What impressed me the most was how Mary talked about her

“siblings” in the Children’s Home. The loving care these children experienced in the home helped them to feel really close to each other. Sindi, who is learning to become a chef, John who is in university, Flora is studying to become a teacher, Gérard is



working as a junior manager in a restaurant. They all consider Blessed Gérard’s Children’s Home as their home and they feel for each other like a real family.

Mary’s story stands as a testament to the power of love, support, and the opportunities that can transform lives. From a vulnerable newborn



to a celebrated athlete, her journey epitomizes resilience and success, illustrating the profound impact a nurturing environment can have on a child's development.

As she prepares for the Rugby World Cup, her story serves as a beacon of what can be achieved with unwavering dedication and the right support. Her life is a cele-

bration of triumph over adversity, and she stands as a role model for many.

Blessed Gérard's Children's Home remains a cornerstone of her identity, a place where she found love, encouragement, and the foundation to pursue her aspirations. Mary's achievements in sports and academics reflect her determination and the values instilled in her during her formative years at the Children's Home..

In conclusion, Mary Zulu's life story is a poignant narrative of overcoming obstacles and reaching for the stars. From a vulnerable infant, she has grown into a confident, accomplished young woman, ready to make her mark on the world. Her achievements serve as a reminder that with love, support, and opportunities, anything is possible. Blessed Gérard's Children's Home provided her with a family, a sense of belonging, and the tools to build a bright future. Mary herself is an example of what can be achieved when we uplift one another and believe in the potential within us all.

By Maresi Rehder

Mary says in this [film about our bursary fund](#):

"The care and support we've received from everyone here has been incredible, and I feel privileged to be part of this community. That's why I've never given up. The mental support of our counsellors and staff has been invaluable. I'm grateful for the opportunities I've had, and I believe Mr. Clark's guidance has been a blessing and inspired me to pursue my passion for sports. Our children's home provides a safe haven for children who don't know their parents or who are facing difficulties at home. It's a place where we can come together, support one another, and strengthen our own family bonds despite our challenges. The Bursary Fund here is a lifeline for students who excel academically. By applying and writing a motivational letter, we can demonstrate our potential and receive the support we need to thrive."



Blessed Gérard's Bursary Fund

Newsletter continues on page 35 ➡

Annual Report 2023 & 2024

Activity Report

The Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard operates and finances the facilities it founded: Blessed Gérard's Care Centre and Blessed Gérard's Early Childhood Development Centre. Together, these two facilities form a comprehensive and holistic support system.

We render a **health care service** to poor and needy persons, including the care for people living with HIV/AIDS at the hotspot of the AIDS pandemic in the world, the North Coast of Zululand in South Africa.



Our **AIDS treatment (HAART) Programme** comprises

Antiretroviral Treatment

We provide free **Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Treatment (HAART)** as comprehensive medi-

cal care including regular medical examinations, blood monitoring, on-going prevention or treatment of opportunistic infections, medical and psychosocial counselling and dispensing of the drugs.



2024 2023

3905 3978 outpatient consultations for
584 606 patients on ongoing life-long treatment.
3 6 new patients admitted.

Adherence Monitoring

Our Therapeutic Counsellors make home visits to our patients on ARV-treatment to ensure that they adhere to the treatment. This enables us to discover adverse drug reactions early and to prevent problems.



2024 2023

2213 2155 home visits made.



Hospice & Palliative Care

We provide **residential Palliative Care** for terminally ill patients in our **Inpatient Unit**. We can admit up to 40 patients, which makes us the largest inpatient hospice in South Africa.



2024 2023

1345 1345 outpatient consultations

81 73 sick visits made.

37 31 inpatients accompanied when they died.

2657 3925 social workers' consultations

(mostly for the Hospice,
but also for the Bursary Fund and Relief Fund)



We send out mobile home-nursing teams, which supplement and support the family's home-based care through hands-on-training and additional aids in the home situation of the respective patient. This includes the assessment of patients at home and proper medical **home care**.

2024 2023

81 106 patients enrolled.

1917 1803 sick visits made.

269 304 patients transported by ambulance.

204 192 patient assessment visits done.

Relief & Social Care



Relief Fund

We provide poverty relief by helping people in genuine cases of immediate need.

We provided **social emergency relief**
2024 in 118 cases and 2023 in 56 cases.

Poor Sick Fund

We provide poverty relief by helping sick people from our local community, if they cannot afford urgently needed medical treatment.



Child Care

Malnutrition Clinic

We provide a health care service to poor and needy persons by running a clinic, where we examine, treat and feed malnourished infants and teach their parent/carer in proper baby care and nutrition.



2024 2023

21610 59694 specialised **food servings** by
1214 3214 400g packs of **milk powder** and
576 1702 1 kg packets of future life **fortified porridge** in
149 703 **consultations** to
25 100 **malnourished children** with an average of
25 59 **children** per month.



Early Childhood Development Centre

We provide "edu-care" and an early childhood development service for underprivileged pre-school children.

Children educated:

2024: 69 and **2023: 67**



Children's Home

We look after, counsel and give a home to sick and healthy "Orphans and Vulnerable Children" (OVCs).

2024 2023

69 73 **children looked after**
24 12 **admitted**
10 24 **discharged**



Bursary Fund

We provide poverty relief by giving bursaries to poor pupils and students of our local community.

2024: 28 and **2023: 394** **bursaries granted.**



We care in any case

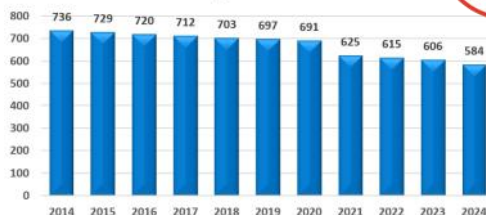


Activity Report – continued

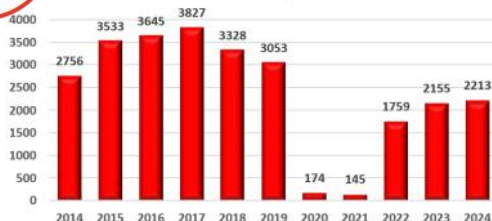
Statistics: Graphs



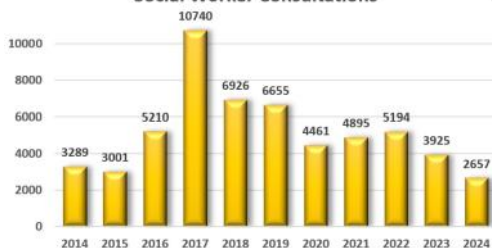
Patients receiving antiretroviral treatment



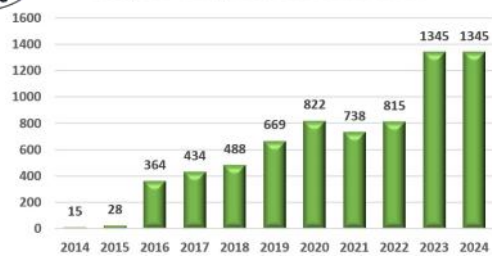
Home Care Visits · Therapeutic Counsellors



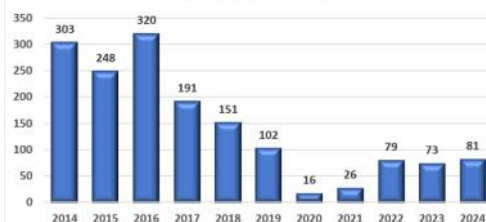
Social Worker Consultations



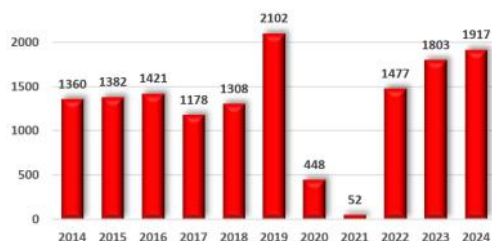
Hospice · Outpatient Consultations



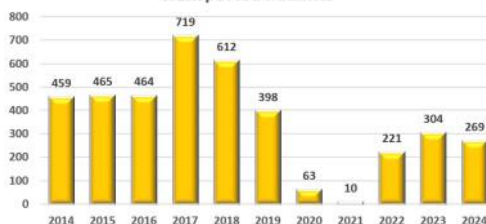
Hospice Inpatients



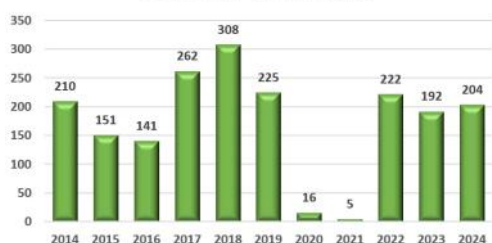
Home Care Visits · Home Care Team



Transported Patients

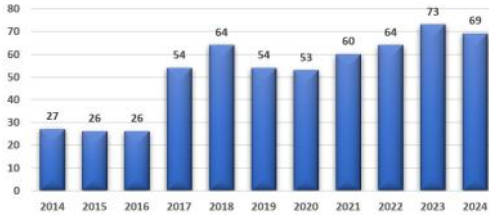


Home Care · Assessments

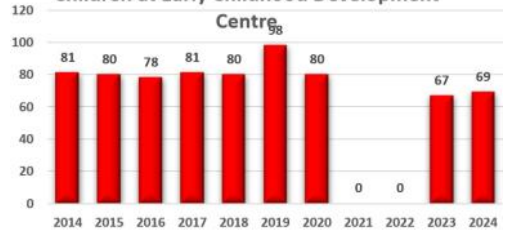




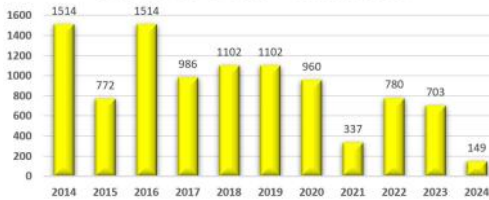
Children in Child and Youth Care Centre



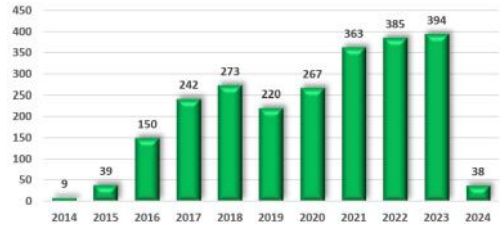
Children at Early Childhood Development Centre



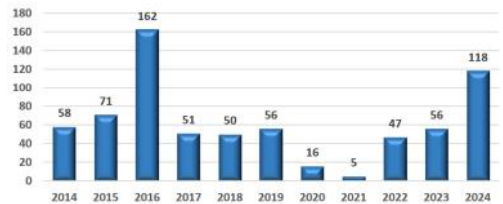
Malnutrition Clinic · Consultations



Bursary Fund · Bursaries given



Relief Fund · Social Cases

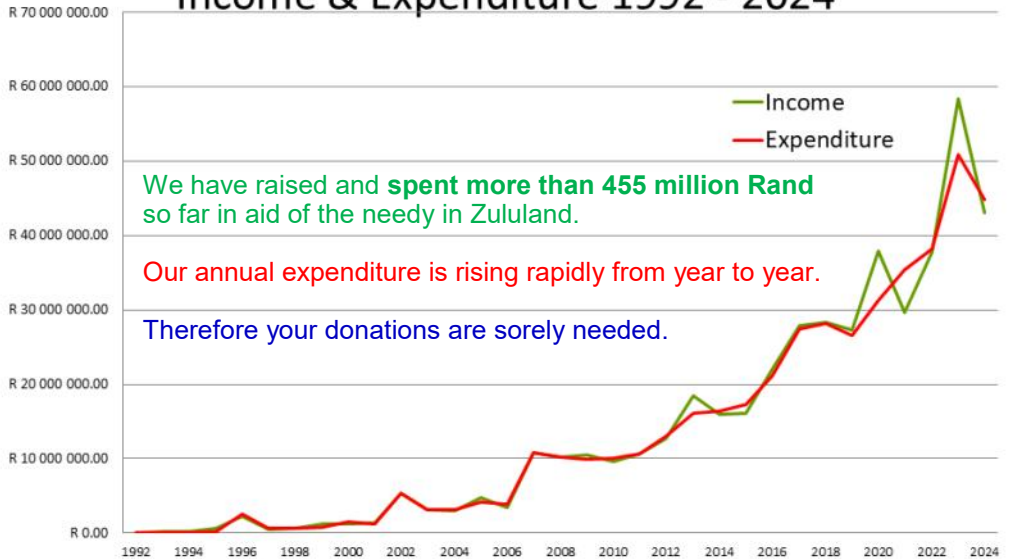


**Caring
without borders**



Finance Report: Financial growth

Income & Expenditure 1992 - 2024



Blessed Gérard,
our patron saint,
is quoted as having said:

**"Our brotherhood
will be everlasting**
because the misery of the world
is the ground,
within which this plant is rooted -
and because, God willing,
there always will be people,
who want to work
towards decreasing these sufferings
and increasing the resilience
against this misery."

Blessed Gérard, pray for us!



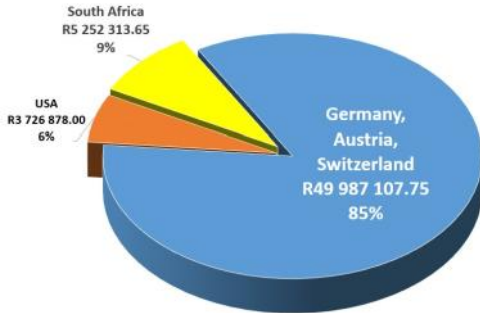
Finance Report

2023

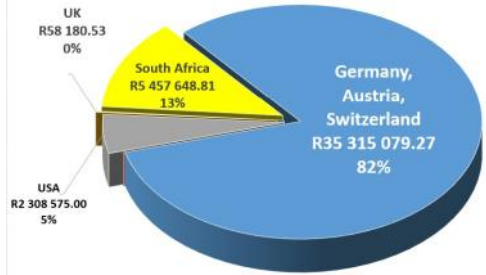
Income

2024

SOURCES OF INCOME 2023 : R58 966 299.40



SOURCES OF INCOME 2024 : R43 139 483.61



**We wholeheartedly thank all our donors
for enabling us to render our services.**

We serve an impoverished community.
Therefore we have to offer all our services free of charge
and must rely solely on donations and grants to finance our work.

We included the monetary value of the benefits in-kind (medicines and laboratory for our AIDS treatment programme) from the Department of Health of KwaZulu-Natal as income and expenditure in the financial report again.

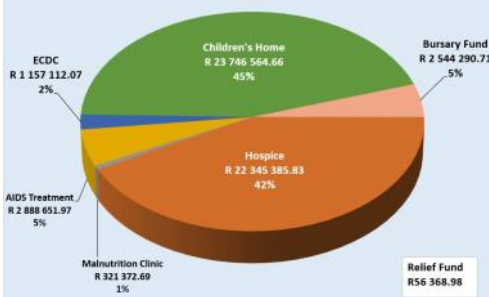
International donations via the PayPal account of our German benefit association are part of the donations from Germany.

2023

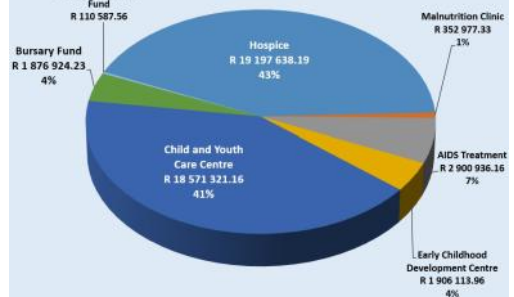
Expenditure

2024

EXPENDITURE 2023 : R 53 059 746.90



EXPENDITURE 2024 : R 44 916 498.60



Financial Audit:

The external Financial Audit of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre for 2023 and 2024 had **spotless results** again because of the expertise of the bookkeeping company "Burrows & Associates" (especially Mrs. Angelee Botha) which has kept our books for years impeccably.

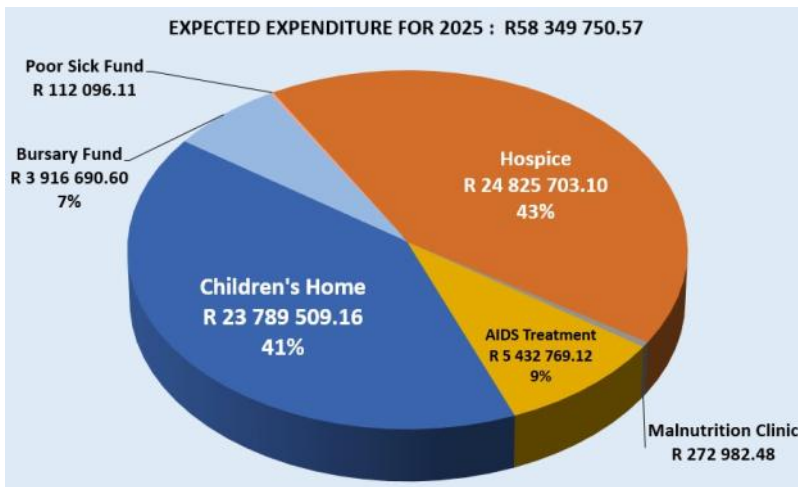
"We conclude the following overall comments from our audit work performed and our interaction with the various staff members of the organisations:



- **The organisations continue to be well run**, good controls are in place to safeguard the assets and control expenditure.
- The Managing Director has **maintained the high standards** set in the previous financial year, the esprit de corps and morale of the staff of the organisations continues to improve under his leadership. The strategic direction of the organisations is being focussed on and the participation of the Member and the Council is key.

Correct procedures and discipline are being entrenched with positive effects.

- The **financial records are kept accurately**, are up to date and sound internal controls are maintained.
- The Financial Manager and Admin Department are again commended in **maintaining financial controls and procedures of a high standard.**"



Personnel

Employees

On 31 December 2023...

- we had 110 employees
 - 83 full-time and
 - 27 part-time.
- 11 employees left us in 2023.
- We warmly welcome our new employee Nomcebo Myaka, who joined in 2023.

On 31 December 2024...

- we had 118 employees
 - 80 full-time and
 - 38 part-time.
- 7 employees left us in 2024.
- A warm welcome to our new employees Miss Dumisile Percy Mtetwa, Thembinkosi Blessing Sikhosana, Ignatia Zakhona Ngcobo, Sibongile Mtembu, Nomusa Sibongile Mathonsi, Nokwanda Bathabile Mpanza, Nontsikelelo Mwandla, Sithembile Portia Ndwandwe, Philisiwe Serote, Crescencia Ntombiyenkosi Shandu, Sibuyiselo Thembekile Shandu, Princess Nqobile Xulu, Jeremiah Siyabonga Zikhali, Thandokuhle Zulu and Zinhle Sinenhlanhla Cele, who were hired in 2024.

Membership statistics on 31 December	2023	2024
Active members	1602	1627
Financial supporter members	812	845
Spiritual supporter members	349	349
Total	2763	2821

Public Relations

The internet is increasingly being used as a source of information. Therefore, we list **current online media of ours** here. The underlined text can be clicked on in the PDF version of this document:

Thank you for your interest in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

A good place to start is our

[Homepage](#)

[Flyer](#)

[Activity Report](#)

[Newsletter](#)

[Calendar](#)

You can also find us on **social media**

[Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard](#)

(Facebook)

[Blessed Gérard's Care Centre](#)

(Facebook)

[YouTube](#) channel

[X](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Blogger](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[XING](#)

Image films:

["I'll be happy to die helping"](#) (2024)

[Where misery is overcome by love](#)

(2016)

[An Everlasting Brotherhood](#) (2002)

Kindly Help Us to Help!

All the work of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard has to be financed by donations because the patients are so poor that they cannot contribute to the costs. We depend on your help and are very grateful for every donation, big or small.

How You can help us to help:

By joining us

- as an **Active Member** if you are able and prepared to help in our projects to serve the poor as a volunteer and agree with our principles. In this case, please call us for an interview.
- as a **Donor member** if you want to support our service financially on a regular basis.
- as a **Spiritual Supporter** if you want to help us through your prayers regularly.

By a donation towards our charity work. Financial contributions are most needed. If you want to donate goods, kindly contact us beforehand to make sure that the donation will be really useful.

By making us a beneficiary in your Last Will and Testament.

By your prayers that God may bless our service and those we serve.

Making a donation



If you live in **South Africa**:

Donations to Blessed Gérard's Care Centre are tax deductible. [PBO No 130002777]

We can issue South African taxpayers with a section 18A tax certificates for their donations upon request, which they can use for tax deduction from the SARS.

If you want to utilise this facility, make sure that you make your donation to Blessed Gérard's Care Centre (not to the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard!).

You may make a donation directly into our **banking account**:

Name of Account: Blessed Gérard's Care Centre
Type of account: Current Account
Bank: First National Bank
Account number: 631 1450 4839
Branch: Mandini
Branch code: 220 429

Please ensure that you put your personal details on the deposit or send the information directly to us, so that we can acknowledge and assign your donation properly.

If you are prepared to **donate regularly**, please organise a stop order on your account.



If you live in the **U.S.A.:**

Thanks to the generosity of the Benedictine Mission House in Schuyler, Nebraska, we can offer you a convenient way of making donations towards our work inside the United States, with the possibility of declaring your donation on your tax return. Checks should be made out to “Benedictine Mission House” with a remark Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard. (Please do not forget this!)

These should then be sent to:

**Benedictine Mission House ·
P. O. Box 528 ·
Schuyler, NE 68661.**

People who have made a donation of more than \$200 will receive a tax certificate immediately from the Mission House and donors of smaller amounts would receive one at the end of the tax year, if they want to declare their donations on their tax returns.

Our donation accounts in **other countries** are available at:
<https://www.bsg.org.za/en/how-you-can-help/donations.html>

You may make a **donation online** using
<https://www.paypal.me/SMOMRSA>

Application for Associate Membership in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

Kindly indicate ☒ which kind of membership you want

☐ I am prepared to support the objectives of the
Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard as a **Donor** through an
☐ annual ☐ quarterly ☐ monthly membership donation of
(currency) _____ (amount) _____
Kindly give your bank a stop order or make regular transfers!
You will find our banking details online at
<http://bbq.org.za/finance/donation.htm>

☐ I want to help the
Brotherhood of Blessed
Gérard through my
prayers as a **Spiritual
Supporter**

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Rev/Honourable) _____

First Name: _____ Middle Initials: _____

Surname: _____

Date of birth:
year month day

Postal address:

Street address or P O Box _____

Zip/Postal Code _____ Place _____ State/Province: _____

Country: _____

☎ Code _____ No _____

Mobile phone Code _____ No _____

Fax Code _____ No _____

E-Mail: _____

Internet Homepage: <http://> _____

Signed at _____ on the _____

Signature of applicant _____

In case of applicant being a minor,
signature of parent or legal guardian _____

Send this form to the
Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

P O Box 440 · Mandeni 4490 · Republic of South Africa

☎ +27 82 4924043 · Fax +27 32 456 7962 · e-mail bbq@bbq.org.za



Blessed Gérard's Child & Youth Care Centre

23 February 2023

Maresi Rehder reports:

Samukelisiwe Biyela is one of our part-time employees at the children's home, pictured here with one of our youngest children from Blessed Gérard's Children's Home.



I met Samukelisiwe while she was feeding the little boy. He is eight weeks old and came to us shortly after his birth.

We chatted while the little man sucked contentedly on his bottle, and she allowed me to write down her thoughts.

Samukelisiwe is 38 years old and married. Her husband works at iSithebe, and they have four children: three boys and one girl. The youngest is in kindergarten, and the oldest will finish school next year.

For years, she worked as a mechanic at iSithebe, but she increasingly felt that she actually preferred working with children, so she decided to train as a childcare worker.

"Children need so much support, especially when they come from difficult backgrounds, and I simply realized that I really enjoy teaching and guiding children."

She trained at a state-run care centre, which she unfortunately couldn't take over, so a friend who already works at Blessed Gérard's Children's Home advised her to apply there.

"I'm very happy to have gotten this part-time position. Working here is really nice because there's such a good team spirit. If I don't know something, I can ask, and there are so many things I can still learn here, and I love the children."

Jesus called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And **whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.** (Mt 18:2-5)

27 February 2023 Natal national

Maresi Rehder reports:

Zama Ntinga (16) is one of our girls from the children's home and an avid athlete.

She's tried many things, including rugby and cricket, and three years ago, she discovered that kickboxing was her sport. Kickboxing is a combination of karate, judo, and boxing, and a relatively new sport that's aiming to become an Olympic sport.

Zama trains hard, several times a week, with the big goal of making the national women's team in mind.

She competes in Mandeni with the "Wolverine Warriors" and returned from a selection tournament last weekend with two gold medals.

She has made it onto the KwaZulu-

Natal national team. We warmly congratulate her on this.

Her next big competition will be in April in Limpopo, north of Johannesburg.

She's competing for KwaZulu-Natal, and she knows that talent scouts from the national team will be there.

When I asked her why she was so enthusiastic about such a tough martial art, her answer was: I love the fast, powerful movements, the team spirit in our team; and knowing that I can fight gives me confidence.

I wish her all the best in her sport and that she achieves her ambitious goals.



"Children are the most important asset in a country. For them to become that asset, they must receive **education and love** from their parents."

"Give a child love, laughter, and peace, not AIDS."

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."



Mandela

These quotes demonstrate Mandela's commitment to promoting the well-being and development of children, and his vision for a society that prioritizes their needs and nurtures their potential.

28 October 2024

The manager of our children's home, Hayne Clark, reports:

Blessed Gérard's Children's Home has a number of school- going children from Day Care Centre to Tertiary education. When they are back from the school, they engage themselves in different activities. They go to Study Room for **school work**: homework, project, research, reading and to get remedial and reinforcement of the work learnt at school. Since our children are from traumatic backgrounds and experiences, they need fully support, love and dedication so that they meet the desired outcomes in education.

do different programs. They are watching educational videos in the Study Room with Ms Maduna and discussion follows. They are allowed to come up with topics they have heard about or learnt about in school but need more information on.



Apart from school work, our children demonstrate the amazing talents in different codes, like sport, drama, dance, music, karate, drawing and sewing. They go for competition in different places inside and outside the province. Sibusiso Zulu, Bhhekani Mthembu, Charles Benedict and Lungelo Mchunu are doing very well in Karate.



Pre-teens doing reading during their literacy programme. The Literacy programme assists children in being able to read, speak and apprehend English.

During school holidays, children





These are both Foundation and Intermediate Phase children and are taken out for Listening Walk. They are expected to take notes while walking and to identify a particular object to find more about it, for example; type of leaf, grass, tree, flower, stone, soil etc. when we are back, each child gives presentation to the whole group.



Our Grade 2 kids are in the Literacy Room with Mrs Jabulile Buthelezi, the Literacy Tutor. The focus is in Foundation Phase and they are doing very well in reading, writing and speaking. They take turns in attending and enjoy the program. Their performance is noticed even by their teachers at schools. Each group attends two times a week.



Mrs Buthelezi, a Literacy Programme Facilitator and Child and Youth Care Worker Ms Biyela with children during Literacy Programme.



Zama Ntinga in Grade 11 at Siyavikela Secondary School is doing her best in MMA. Zama's heart and talent led her to kickboxing under her coach Tollie Enslin. According to her coach, Zama is in good with her boxing and was a quick learner when it comes to wrestling and groundwork. Zama competes with bigger and older girls and never backs down from competition. We are proud of her and hoping to see her compete internationally.



Our children were part of Child Protection Week Campaign whereby different school children gathered to voice out their concerns about maltreatment, neglect, abuse and exploitation. Different stakeholders shared lot of information about the work they do in communities under child protection.

7 November 2024

Jabulile Buthelezi reports on the literacy programme

The Literacy Remediation Program at Blessed Gérard Care Centre started in May 2023. The need for this program was inspired by the observations at the Centre about how some children struggle to speak English or read for understanding. There was an article published on the 21st May 2023 on an online site called theconversation.com with the headline, "South Africa's Reading Crisis: 5 Steps to Addressing Children's Literacy Struggles". The article purported that a research study indicated that "81% of South African children cannot read for understanding"

The educator, Ms Maduna and Ms Jabulile Buthelezi were trained virtual-

ly by Ms Anne French from Catholic Institute of Education. The program was well received by some children, but some did not show much interest at the beginning. We later learned that the reason for lack of interest was due to their lack of confidence in language use. Children being children would laugh at those who were struggling to read. Different techniques were shared by Anne French on how to negate this and we started seeing a growing interest and improvement in most children.

BGCC provided useful resources to support the program, i.e. Child-friendly rooms, books, charts, flashcards and more. The program started with introducing phonics and phonemes, then rhymes and songs, observation walks, educational movies using the projector, roleplays, story tell-

ing and other techniques. Their confidence grew, they started competing among themselves and were rewarded with “stars” on star charts, or sweets and praises. Role-playing was one of their highlights and still is today.

Great improvement in their language use was noticed. Positive comments were also received from their school teachers. Behavioural change and an improved attitude towards school work was also observed which for some contributed to improvement in academics.

In our assessment as facilitators of this Literacy Programme, great progress has been made. Some might even say that it transcended mere reading skill facilitation and ventured into the realm of healing and wholeness too. It is difficult to put into words the look on a child’s face when they make progress or overcome a word or pronunciation they had struggled with.

We were amazed at the progress they had made over time and are extremely proud of the growth we saw in them, both academically and personally.

Shine on little readers, soon you will be leaders.



Children participated in the Community Child Protection Program where they showcased their roleplaying talent in front of +/-200 people. This was well received by the attendants and they praised them for their confidence and good use of language.



Children interacting with “parents” and teachers in the reading program



Child-friendly classroom – resources provided to support the program



Toddlers attending Literacy Class



Children celebrated World Book Day

on 23 April 2024



Growing confidence in public speaking



Children on the observation walk / look and tell activity. Thereafter they go back to class and present to their class mates what they learned and observed.



Mindfulness exercise: children tell

what they observe about their teddy bear as they breathe in and out.



Story time: a “mother” reading a story to children



At the end of the year children are given a chance to choose what gifts they would like for Christmas. This twelve-year-old girl touched our hearts by choosing a World Book for short stories because of her love for reading, she also happened to be one of our most improved readers at that time. She was very excited when her wish was honoured on the day she was discharged from the Child and Youth Care Centre.

**Caring
without borders**



The Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Eshowe, Wilfrid Fox Cardinal Napier OFM, blessed and opened the children's home, which

had been completely renovated and restructured into four independent "family group units."



Snippets from the "photo album" of the children's and youth home



9 February 2023

We welcome a **newcomer** to our children's home.

man with children in our children's home.



Childcare worker Samukelisiwe Biyela teaches.

27 February 2023

Children from our children's home at the playground next to the Care Centre



12 September 2023

Father Gérard warmly welcomes a **newly admitted child** to our children's home.

Jesus says: "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them! For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."



3 March 2023

Zanele Zikhali, who works in our kindergarten, admires Spider-

**Caring
without borders**



1 February 2024



Human closeness and warmth provide the security that all children so desperately

need.

3 February 2024

The teacher **Mamosebetsi Maduna** provides homework support, tutoring, and religious instruction to the children at our children's home.



25 December 2024

Christmas dinner, gift giving and



Christmas joy



at Blessed Gérard's Children's Home.



Liturgy & Pastoral Care at Blessed Gérard's Care Centre

2 March 2023

Father **Thusaninkosi Ngema**, our hospice chaplain, and **Nicoleta Thiermeyer** visiting patients in our palliative care unit.



5 March 2023

Sunday service at **Blessed Gérard's Church**





6 April 2023

Today, on Holy Thursday, Father Gérard cele-

brates the liturgy of the Last Supper with the Care Centre community. Eight children from the parish and our children's home receive their **First Holy Communion**.

8 April 2023

Today we celebrate Easter Vigil at Blessed Gérard's



Church. Eleven children from our children's home are received into the church through the **sacrament of baptism**.

3 February 2024



Our hospice chaplain, Father **Thusa-ninkosi Nge-ma**, visits the patients in

our palliative care unit, counsels and supports them, prays with them, and blesses them. We rarely have Catholic patients, to whom he naturally administers the sacraments of the Church.

4 February 2024



Sunday service at Blessed Gérard's Church.

22 February 2024



Father Ngema is a priest of the Diocese of Eshowe and has lived here at the

care centre for several years. He has severely limited mobility and finds walking very difficult.

Over the years, he has become a valuable pastoral support at the hospice.

Twice a week, he makes his rounds through the hospice wards, visits the patients, prays with them, and blesses them.

It is often easier for patients to confide their worries to a Zulu, one of their own.

The patients need encouragement and prayer to accept their fate.

Father Gérard and Father Ngema alternate during the daily services, and when Father Gérard is in Europe, the pastoral duties are in good hands with Father Ngema.

14 July 2024

10 August 2024

Father Gérard visits our long-time spiritual supporter, **Sr. Eobarda Ries FNS**, in



Nkandla and brings her a large package that her niece gave him.

Given her failing health, Father Gérard visited **Sister Eobarda Ries FNS** once again. The



farewell was forever. She passed away on 4 October 2024. R.I.P.

15 October 2023

We celebrate the

Feast of Blessed Gérard



Father Gérard preached that the Maltese Cross and the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount,

which it symbolizes, must be deeply embedded in our hearts.



Among the new members who were received into the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

and received the membership medal was **Thomas Garth Vogel**, who is now the chairman of the board of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre.

Blessed Gérard died on 3 September 1120.

His epitaph reads:

Here lies Gérard, the humblest man among the dwellers in the East;

The servant of the poor, a welcoming friend to strangers; He was lowly and mien, but within him shone a noble heart. The measure of his goodness may be seen within these walls. He was provident in many things, painstaking in all he did; He undertook many tasks of diverse nature; Stretching out his arms diligently to many lands, He gathered from everywhere the means to feed his people.



**Blessed Gérard,
pray for us!**

13 October 2024

We celebrate the
Feast of Blessed Gérard



The main celebrant and preacher was the Apostolic Nuncio to South Africa, **Archbishop Henryk Mięczyński**. Concelebrants are Wilfrid Cardinal Napier, OFM, Monsignor Dario Paviša, Thusa-ninkosi Ngema, and Father Gérard.

During the festive Mass, our Managing Director, **Dr. Douglas Ross**, was invested as a **Dedicated Member of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard**.

Dr. Ross made this private promise:



Lord Jesus Christ!

In Your Grace You have called me to serve You in the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

I ask You at the intercession of our patron saints Mary, the Blessed Virgin and Mother of God, St. John the Baptist and the founder of the Order of Malta, Blessed Gérard:

Give me the courage, to live the faith in You as a convincing example and to meet our neighbour in charity, especially the needy, aged, disabled, sick and injured.

Give me the needed strength, to live as an upright Christian selflessly in the spirit of Your Gospel according to this resolution, to the honour of God, for the peace in the world and the welfare of our society.

I, Douglas Patrick Ross, hereby promise to protect the faith and to serve the poor of our Lord Jesus Christ by devoting myself to the apostolate of the Catholic Church in Works of Charity as a Dedicated Member of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

I devote myself with all my heart, with all my soul and with all my strength to Jesus Christ and his body, the Church.

I will strive to spread and increase God's love in my entire life as a

member of my family, at my work and in my leisure time.

May God help me, guide me and strengthen me to fulfil what he has called me to.

Amen.



Archbishop Henryk Mieczysław

Jagodziński then blessed the Dedicated Members' capes, and Dr. Paul Thabethe invested Dr. Ross with the cape. →

Afterwards, all new Associate Members (active and supporting members) were received into the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

Archbishop Henryk Mieczysław Jagodziński blessed their membership medals, Father Gérard called the new members,



and the Dedicated Members placed the medals around the new members' necks.



Finally, Archbishop Henryk

Mieczysław Jagodziński blessed all new members for their service.

At the function following Holy Mass, Dr. Ross presented certificates of appreciation to those celebrating their long service.

Father Gérard then presented this year's President's Award for Best Volunteer to the distinguished human resources specialist **Thomas Garth Vogel**,



and to **Jabulile Buthelezi** as Best Permanent Employee. She has rendered



great service as a social worker through the establishment and operation of our literacy program for children at our children's home.



After appropriate words of thanks, the celebration continued and concluded with a rich entertainment program provided by our children's home.



Staff & Personalities

Employees & Volunteers

16 January 2023

Our support services manager **Craig Allan** is celebrating his birthday.



Craig and he brought us a birthday cake to the office.

20 February—9 March 2023

Maresi Rehder, our dedicated member and Director of Charity and Communications Officer, is joining us again. She has been taking great photos and writing excellent articles for years, which can also be seen and read in this newsletter.



17 January 2023

We're celebrating the birthday of our Managing Director, **Dr. Douglas Ross**.



20 February—17 March 2023 International Nurses Day at our hospice.



Nicoleta Thiermeyer from the Malteser Hilfsdienst Eichstätt is joining us for voluntary service.

2 March 2023

Thusaninkosi Nge-ma, our hospice chaplain, and **Nicoleta Thiermeyer** visiting patients in our palliative care unit.



28 March 2023



The manager and physician of our hospice, **Dr. Dumezweni Ntshangase**, is celebrating

his birthday with us. He was a student there when Father Gérard was the administrator of the church secondary school in Mahlabathini.

12 May 2023

We are celebrating



2 June 2023

Requiem and funeral of our maintenance assistant, **Bongani Maphumulo**,



who had been raised

in our children's home since he was one year old. He was the victim of a car accident.

Bongani on 11 April 2001



27 July—28 August 2023



Medical student **Anna Ehmann** from Regensburg (now Ansbach) is joining us for a voluntary internship.

Anna's ceremonial admission into the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard on 20 August 2023.



7 February 2024



Four employees of our children's home, Fikile

Mashaya, Ntombi Ndlangamandla, Thulile Ndlovu and Gladness Xulu, are retiring and are given a ceremonial farewell.

1 July 2024

At the Care Centre in Mandeni, the management meets regularly with Father



Gérard in the conference room of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

18 September—18 October 2024



We welcome Franziska Roider. She's from Germany, a

physiotherapist, and previously worked at the Institute for the Blind in Regensburg. She's now volunteering with us.

21 July—26 August 2024

Our dear friends and great benefactors, Dipl.-Ing. Peter and Dr. Rotraut Krall, are visiting us and the Blessed Gérard's Care Centre.



The prayer of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard

Lord Jesus Christ, through your grace you have called me to serve you as a member of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

I thank you for counting me worthy of this task.

I ask you humbly, with the intercession of Our Lady, St. John the Baptist, Blessed Gérard and all the Saints that the spirituality of our Brotherhood may pervade my life and my ac-

tions to be always dedicated to your service to whoever needs my help.

Trusting in your help I always want to protect the faith and have an open heart for my neighbour, especially the Poor, the Sad, the Lonely, the Handicapped and the Sick.

Grant me the strength needed to live according to this resolution as an upright Christian selflessly in the Spirit of Your Gospel, for the honour of God, for the peace of the world and the benefit of our community.

Amen.

Belonging & Networking



We are the South African Relief Organisation of the
Order of Malta



8 January 2023 ment. We bid him farewell with dances and sketches by children from our children's home.

Bishop **Jean Clément Laffitte**, then Prelate of the Order of Malta, visited Father Gérard to gain insight into his pastoral ministry and our charitable work.



24—25 March 2023



12 January 2023 Father Gérard represents South Africa at the Order of Malta's international **Hospitallers Conference** in London.



Wilfrid Cardinal Napier, the Apostolic Administrator of our Diocese of Eshowe, received Bishop

Laffitte for a meeting at his home.

13 January 2023

Bishop **Laffitte** was enthusiastic about our work and pastoral commit-



16-17 March 2014



Our Director of Charity Works, **Maresi Rehder**, and Father Gérard

represented South Africa at the **Order of Malta's International Hospitallers' Conference** in Krakow. The new Prelate, **Monsignor Luis Manuel Cuña Ramos**, asked Father Gérard, on short notice, to be the main celebrant and preach-

er at Holy Mass on 17 March. It was an honour to preach before the Grand Master and all the Hospitallers.



23—26 September 2024

Father Gérard has been invited to the international conference of the **Chief Chaplains of the Order of Malta** in Rome.



Father Gérard belongs to the Congregation of the **Missionary Benedictines** who commissioned him with his missionary work



14 August 2023

For his 80th birthday on June 21, 2020, Abbot Primate Notker asked those wishing to well him to please transfer donations to our account instead of gifts. Over 20,000 € was collected at that time. We consider his favour a great honour. God bless you! R.I.P.

The now deceased former **Abbot Primate Notker Wolf O.S.B.**, the mission procurator (now Abbot President) of the



Missionary Benedictines, **Father Javier Aparicio Suárez O.S.B.**, and Father Gérard's superior, Prior Administrator

(now **Abbot Bonifaz Kamushishi O.S.B.**, are paying us a visit for information



and friendship.

15 September 2023

We are celebrating **Father Gérard's 40th profession anniversary** in Man-

deni. The main celebrant is Prior Ambrose Mshengu O.S.B.. Concelebrants are Father Maximilian Jacobs O.S.B., Thusaninkosi Ngema, and Father Gérard.



30 August 2023



The Care Centre presented him with a "Benedictine-style" clock, a wooden Benedictine medal with a clockwork mechanism.

21 March 2014

At the Solemnity of St. Benedict at Inkamana Abbey, Brother Bernard Pachner O.S.B. celebrated the 70th anniversary of his monastic profession, and Father Gérard commemorated the 40th anniversary of his own profession. Both had made their first vows at the Archabbey of St. Ottilien.



Abbot Pambo Mkorwe O.S.B. of Mvimwa Abbey in Tanzania was the secretary of the Benedictine Congregation of St. Ottilien before his election as abbot

in 2017. He sent this WhatsApp message:

Appreciation

Dear Fr. Gérard, many greetings from me. This time I have read intensively on the work you are doing.

I am so impressed. I wish many of us could embrace this special ministry.

There is great needs of such humanitarian helps. What you are doing is really living the Gospel and the Rule of St Benedict - IV.

Many sufferers are neglected for some reasons or for no reasons. Many people die who were not supposed to die at all.

The best I can do is to pray for you, for the benefactors who support you and for all the workers who work with you in this special ministry.

All the best dear Father.

Abbot Pambo Mkorwe O.S.B.

**Care of the sick
must rank above and before all else,
so that they may truly be served as
Christ, for he said:**

"I was sick and you visited me"
(Matt 25:36),

and "What you did for one of these least brothers you did for me" (Matt 25:40).
Let **the sick** on their part bear in mind that they **are served out of honour of God.**
Rule of St. Benedict · Chapter 36:1-4



Jesuit Order



27 January
2023

The German
Jesuit **Dr. Sebastian Maly SJ** and the

British Jesuit Father **Kensy Joseph SJ** are performing a social and charitable service with us as part of their tertianship, the final phase of their formation.

14 February 2023



Father Maly and Father Joseph introduce us to Jesuit spirituality.

17 February 2023

4 February
2023

Father Kensy Joseph SJ (left) and Father Dr. Sebastian Maly (right)



introduce themselves to Wilfrid Cardinal Napier in Eshowe.

Father Gérard, Father Joseph, and Father Maly visit the boys' group at our youth centre.



Dear readers of our newsletter,
We would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your generous support of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard. Your donations enable us to help people in need and improve their living conditions.

Our work encompasses a variety of projects aimed at promoting the health, education, and social security of people in South Africa. We are grateful for your support, which enables us to carry out the following projects:

AIDS treatment and prevention: We help people living with HIV/AIDS through medical care, antiretroviral treatment, and psychological support.



Scalabrini Order

28—31
March
2023

Father
Eduardo

Gabriel of the Scalabrini Order visits us to get ideas for his charitable work in Johannesburg.



Building & Maintenance

20 July 2023

20—27 July 2023



Gracefields is renovating our garages free of charge for **Mandela Day**.

Nelson Mandela dedicated 67 years of his life to

the fight for human rights and social justice. Therefore, everyone should dedicate 67 minutes of their time on this day to a social or humanitarian activity to change the world for the better.

To ensure the water supply for our care centre, we are drilling a **borehole** next to our community



centre. The water supply in Mandeni is dilapidated. The old pipes keep bursting. Water pressure fluctuates, and the water often stops running. Self-help was necessary.

Palliative care: We provide dignified care and support to people in the final stages of their lives.

Children's home and kindergarten: We offer children a safe and loving home and support their development through education and support.

Bursary fund: We support talented pupils and students with scholarships so they can realize their dreams.

Malnutrition clinic: We help children suffering from malnutrition through medical care and nutritional counselling.

Emergency and social assistance: We offer assistance to people in acute emergencies, such as personal disasters or social crises.

Your donation makes a profound difference in the lives of the people we serve. We are grateful for your trust in our work and your willingness to support the cause.

We ask God to bless you for your generosity and grant you peace and joy. May your donation be a seed of hope and love that grows in people's hearts.

Thank you for your friendship and support!

With heartfelt thanks and warm regards,

Yours

Father Gérard

Public Relations

29 January—5 February 2024 Rost, Peter Schöllhorn and Jessica Rank)



The Royal Film Company, a professional film company that primarily produces commercials for industry, came to us again.

The owner, **Moritz Schreiner**, first came to us when Tellux was shooting the film "Das Antlitz Christi" (**The Face of Christ**) for Bayerischer Rundfunk. The film was intended to address the purpose of Pope Benedict XVI, who stated that he wanted to explore the face of Christ with his Jesus trilogy "**Jesus of Nazareth**." Manfred Mandlik of Bayerischer Rundfunk and the then Abbot Primate Notker Wolf O.S.B. had recommended that we will be the protagonists to film the sequence "Das Antlitz Christi im Nächsten" (**The Face of Christ in Our Neighbour**). The cameraman was Moritz Schreiner. He was so impressed by our work back then (2015) that he shot an image film for us in 2016, entirely at his own expense, with his own film crew. We titled it "**Where misery is overcome by love**." The image film was an incredible success. Now the four-person professional team (Moritz Schreiner, Simon X.

came back to us and shot a new, up-to-date image film, which we titled

"**I'll be happy to die helping**".

The first image film "**Where misery is overcome by love**" is available online at:

<https://youtu.be/x2dpaTl1qnc>



Where misery is overcome by love (version :

The up-to-date image film "**I'll be happy to die helping**" is available online at:

https://youtu.be/CrkN_Q2BRfw



"I'll be happy to die helping" :