



# Newsletter 2022

## Annual Report 2021



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

**Kindly update your current contact details** by sending an e-mail to [bbg@bbg.org.za](mailto:bbg@bbg.org.za) or a SMS or WhatsApp message to Father Gérard at +27 82 4924043. That will make it much easier for us to contact you. We will never share your private details with anybody.

# We are ...

- a group of more than 2600 **idealists** with the aim to enable and empower people to help themselves and to provide direct aid in cases of emergency and immediate need.
- the South African **relief organisation** of the Order of Malta. The latter had been founded as a nursing brotherhood by Blessed Gérard more than 900 years ago.
- a **faith based organisation** (FBO) putting into action what our motto "tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum" means: "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-discriminating** and **non-exclusive organisation**, which serves the needy irrespective of their abilities, creed, ethnicity, political affiliation, sexual orientation or social status.
- a **charity** which helps within its own capability according to the identified needs of the people.



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 services are rendered free of charge.**

With the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa in March 2020, we introduced a new reporting medium, which we initially called "Covid-19 Chronicle" and have renamed "Chronicle" since March 2021. We tried to report about our work every day if possible. However, this chronicle was and is only published online: <http://bbg.org.za/chronicles.htm>

So that those who do not have access to the internet can also find out about our work, we are reprinting excerpts from this chronicle here:

## 21 January 2021



Our teenager boys and girls are embarking on an exciting new chapter in their lives, independent living. The youth of Blessed Gérard's Children's Home left the Care Centre to take up residence in two houses, which are owned the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard on Anderson Road.

Boys between the ages of 13 and 18 occupied one house (69 Anderson Road) on 21 January 2021





while girls between the ages of 13 and 18 occupied the other (65 Anderson Road) on 26 January 2021. These houses are for the purpose of teaching the teenagers to live in a family environment and learn skills that will help them live independently when the time comes for them to spread their wings and fly solo.

They will, under the guidance and instruction of our caregivers, do all daily activities for themselves such as budgeting, shopping, cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening etc. We look forward to seeing them learn and grow and tasting the delicious dishes they are learning to make.



**22 January 2021**



We were very honoured today by an official visit of the Deputy Head of Mission of the Hungarian Embassy in South Africa, Zsuzsanna Bernadett Rothschild. She could see with her own eyes what we could achieve through the help of the Hungarian Government through its relief agency "Hungary Helps".

Summarising her visit, she messaged us:

“Dear Father Gérard,  
I would like to express my grateful and sincere appreciation for the warm welcome, kind hospitality and meaningful program of today at the Care Centre. You and your committed colleagues accomplish an enormous and praiseworthy mission. I am honoured to be allowed to witness it personally.



I wish you all the best for your blessed work.  
Sincerely yours,  
Zsuzsanna Rothschild”

**3 February 2021**



New Jungle Gyms for our Children's Home

**Caring without borders**



**15 February 2021**

The schools were re-opened after the Covid-19 lockdown. Children of our Children's Home are ready to go "back to school" to start the academic year 2021.



**31 March 2021**



**Mary Liesse Zulu** came to Blessed Gérard's Children's Home on 6 December 2002, the day she was born.



She was baptised on 27 April 2003 with Clare Kalkwarf being her godmother.

She **left us today**, 31 March 2021. Mary is a most talented Rugby player and is now **part of the junior national Rugby team of South Africa**. She had outstanding matric results and was awarded a **full scholarship by the University of kwaZulu-Natal**. She left us today to move to the students' residence of her University in Durban. We are extremely proud of her and wish her God's richest blessings for all future.

She wrote to Father Gérard:

"Dear Father, I write this letter to you sending my greatest appreciation for everything you have done for me, from the day of my arrival till this day as I depart for my future. I have always wondered how life would have been for me had it not been for you welcoming me with warm wide hands. Welcoming me to this home has made me realize from the very first day that life has a lot to offer. No one knows how my future would have turned out to, had it not been for you. You mean the world 🌍 to

me, and I will never forget the good things you have done for me, it shall never perish in my heart even in the toughest times. Your name will forever poke in my heart since you played a role in my future. You have done so much countless things for me, but with that being said, I have ran out of words to say, but the least I can say is, you will forever reign in my heart



❤️ . Thank you very much for being a loving and caring dad to me and I make a promise to you that I shall forever make you proud in all that I do in the future ahead, and to forever be a good example to others.

LOVE YOU DADDY 🙏

🙏 ❤️ ❤️ ❤️

Yours sincerely  
Mary Liesse Zulu  
Your beloved daughter

❤️ "

29 April 2021



We are very proud of Mary Liesse Zulu, who spent her entire life since the day of her birth at Blessed Gérard's Children's Home.

The Department of Social Development of the Province of kwa-Zulu-Natal presented her with the "2020 Matric Top Achievers' Award for children in alternative care" on 29 April 2021.



4 May 2021

Mr. Mathonsi, our Children's Home Deputy Manager, wrote:



"Today we diarise an important milestone of organizational development at Blessed Gerard's Children's Home. The training of our care givers in HWSETA accredited training NQF level 5 certificate in child and youth care. This is an occupational training method and will increase efficiency in duties of child care, behavioural management, and administration pertinent to child care activities. For our care givers

too, this is a profound human transformation that has been long anticipated. Our care givers will have professional knowledge in dealing with children's sensitive matters, facilitate support group of teenage and junior children and to assist babies to reach appropriate human and social developmental prospects.

We hope this occupational development training will bring a positive change and an increase in key performance areas at our children's home.

Thank you!

All 21 care givers and one volunteer of our Children's Home are attending this course. Miss Nomali Chili from Rishaka Development Services is the Trainer."



The one-year training is expected to be completed on 30 April 2022.

**Caring without borders**



**19 May 2021**



Corporate members of SAPPI Paper Mill Mandeni visited Blessed Gérard's Care Centre today in order to hand over a donation to assist us in our fight against Covid-19.

The donation consisted of several litres of sanitizer and two bags of face masks.

Blessed Gérard's Care Centre would like to extend

our sincere thanks to SAPPI for their assistance in our fight to combat Covid-19.

**26 May 2021**



A milestone in our fight against Covid-19:



Officers from the Department of Health came to Blessed Gérard's Care Centre today to vaccinate our health care workers and senior citizens for the first time.

**2 June 2021**

Activities of our  
Children's Home



We faithfully take care  
of the high-risk group  
of the children  
of our children's home

where some are  
particularly at risk  
from previous illnesses.



**3 June 2021**



Monthly  
birthday celebration  
at Blessed Gérard's  
Children's Home

**3 July 2021**



Schools closed down early because of the outbreak of the “Third Wave” of Covid-19 in South Africa.

Our child care givers keep the children of our Children’s Home occupied at the sports ground within our own premises.

**19 July 2021**



Children from our Children’s Home show their good spirit of responsibility and solidarity with our community.

They help to clean up the debris after the looting of our local shopping centre.



**2 September 2021**



Our active member Zanele Mzimela is in charge of Othandweni Day Care Centre in Hlomendlini. She asked us to help them with mattresses and a baby bed.

We gladly helped them out and delivered our donation.



**20 September 2021**

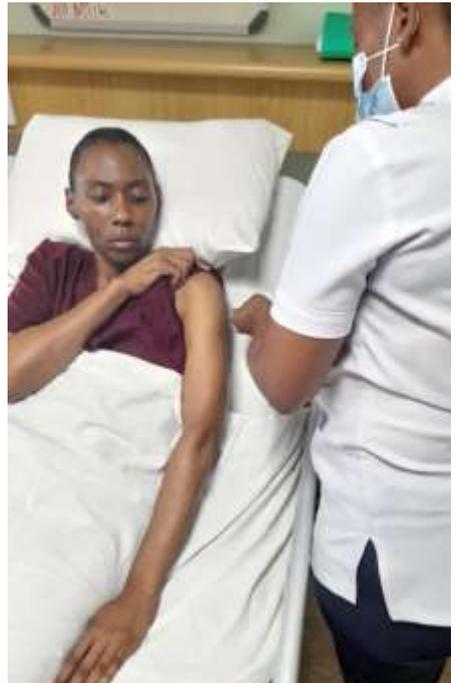
We received a very welcome donation in kind from the Catholic Health Care Association (CATHCA) today:

- 15 Gloves (boxes of 100)
- 10 Hand sanitisers (20 l)
- 4 Sanitiser Stands
- 60 Masks
- 25 Gowns
- 10 Thermometers
- 18 Spray Bottles 750 ml

We are very grateful for the generous donation.



**30 September 2021 Covid-19 Vaccination**





### Routine in our HAART Clinic

Dr. Ntshangase monitors the progress of our AIDS treatment. The patient reports all her ups and downs and possible other problems. The doctor then gives advice and reviews the treatment.

Sister Nkambule examines the patient and takes blood for the ongoing monitoring of the patient's condition.



Nurse Nxumalo issues the antiretroviral medication for the next month and records the dispensing. The patient signs that she has received the ARVs.

Chronicle continues on page 27 →

# Annual Report 2021

## Activity Report

**The activities of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre in the year 2021, as in the year before, were concentrated on maintaining momentum in our existing projects: Blessed Gérard's Care Centre provides a comprehensive and holistic system of care:**

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

Voluntary Counselling and HIV-Testing (VCT)

We offer free and confidential HIV Tests to the general public.

20 patients tested.



Antiretroviral Treatment

We provide free Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Treatment (HAART) as comprehensive medical care including regular medical examinations, blood monitoring, on-going prevention or treatment of opportunistic infections, medical and psychosocial counselling and dispensing of the drugs.

3339 outpatient consultations for  
625 patients on ongoing life-long treatment.  
11 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.

145 home visits made.

Nutritional and Social Care

961 Covid-19 relief food parcels, blankets and second hand clothing delivered to starving AIDS patients.





## 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.



**4895 social workers' consultations** (mostly for the Hospice, but also for the Children's Home, Bursary Fund and Relief Fund)

738 outpatient consultations

26 inpatients admitted

9 inpatients accompanied when they died.

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.

602 Covid-19 relief food parcels, blankets and second hand clothing delivered to starving home care patients.



120 patients enrolled.

52 sick visits made.

10 patients transported by ambulance.

5 patient assessment visits done.

## Relief & Social Care



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

We provided relief in 5 social emergency 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.



### We provided

- 30330 specialised food servings by
- 1348 400g packs of milk powder and
- 674 500g packets of future life fortified porridge in
- 337 consultations to
- 59 malnourished children with an average of
- 28 children per month.



### Children's Home

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



- 21 children were admitted.
- 10 children were discharged.
- 60 children lived here on 31 December 2021

### Bursary Fund

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

363 bursaries granted.

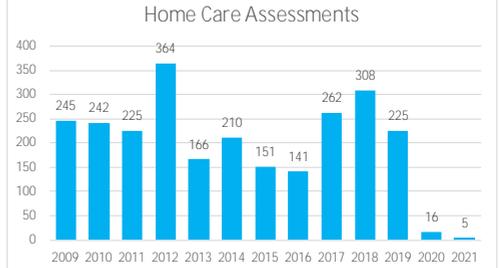
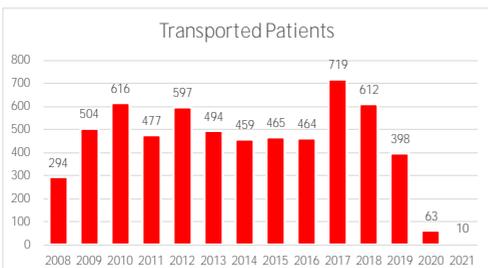
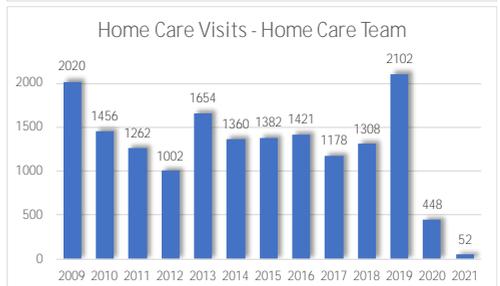
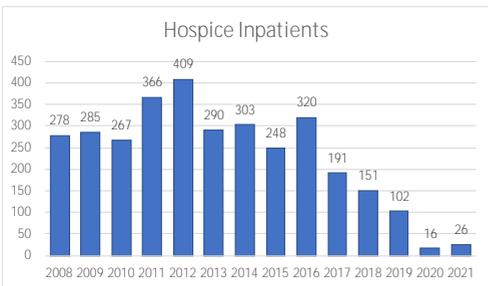
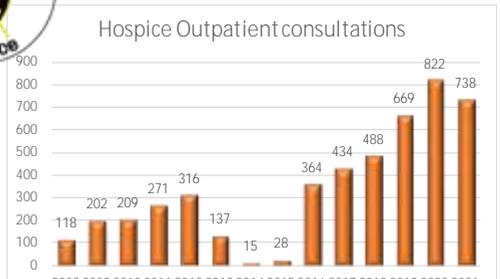
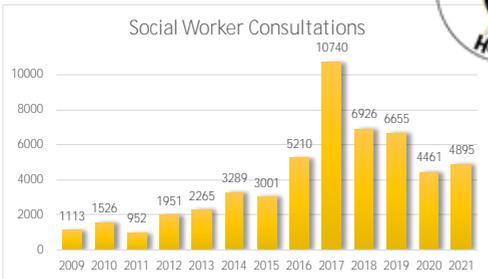
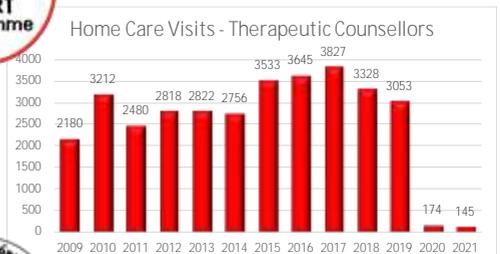
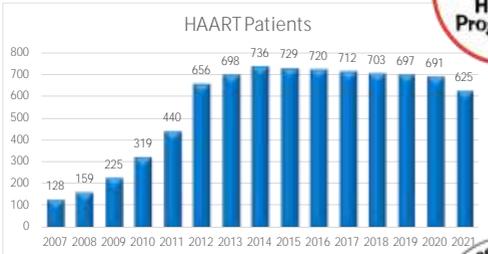


# We care in any case



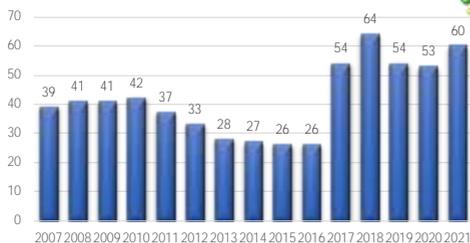
# Activity Report – continued

## Statistics: Graphs

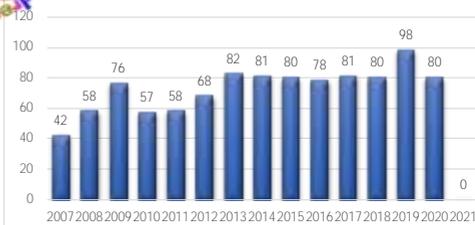




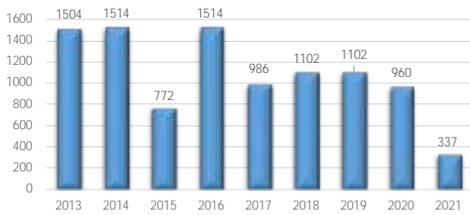
Children - Children's Home



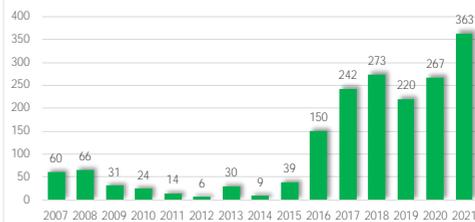
Children - Pre-Primary School & Creche



Malnutrition Clinic - Consultations

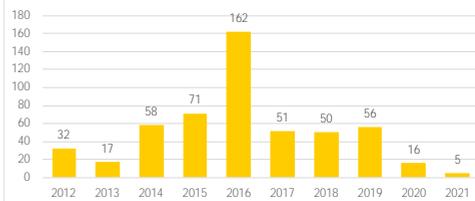


Bursaries

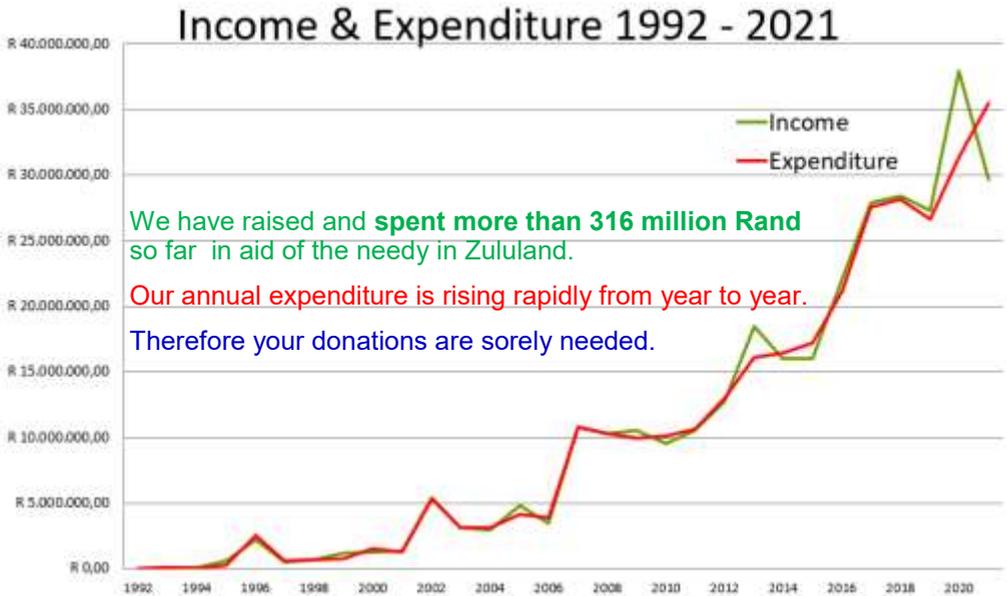


The noticeable statistical decrease in several areas of our activities in 2020 and 2021 is due to necessary **Covid-19 restrictions** to protect our immune deficient patients and children (especially those with comorbidities) and our personnel from possible infection. The Pre-Primary School & Crèche is still closed. The AIDS therapeutic counselling, hospice inpatient admissions, hospice homecare visits, assessments and patient transport had to be minimised. We hope and pray that we will be able to resume all our activities responsibly as soon as possible.

Social Cases - Relief Fund



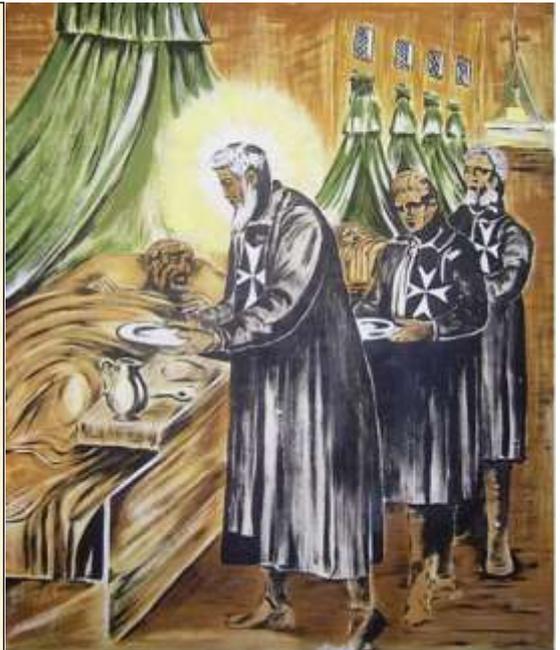
## Finance Report: Financial growth



Blessed Gérard,  
our patron saint,  
is quoted to have 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."

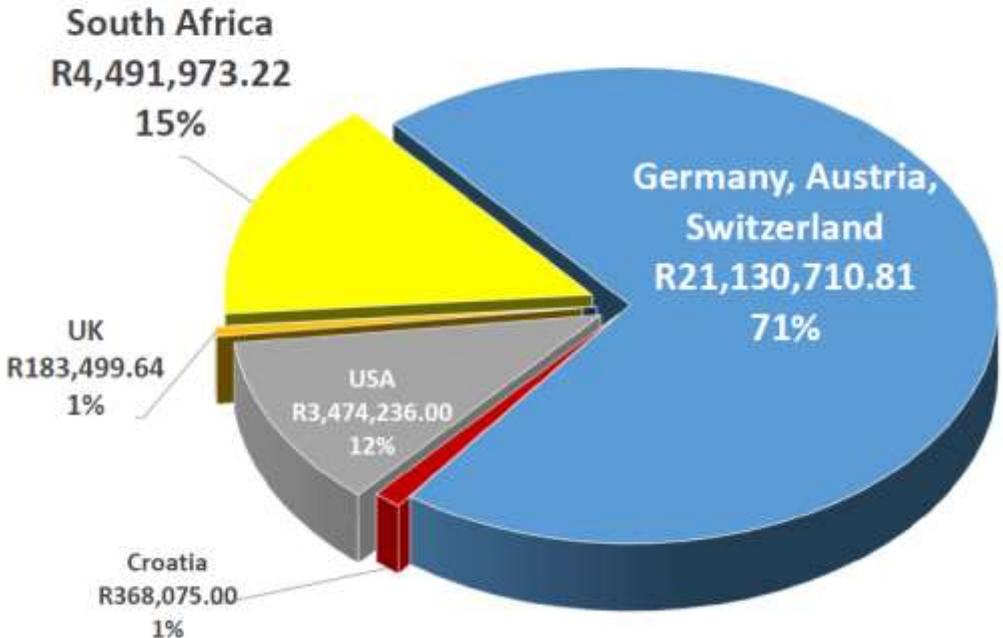
**Blessed Gérard, pray for us!**



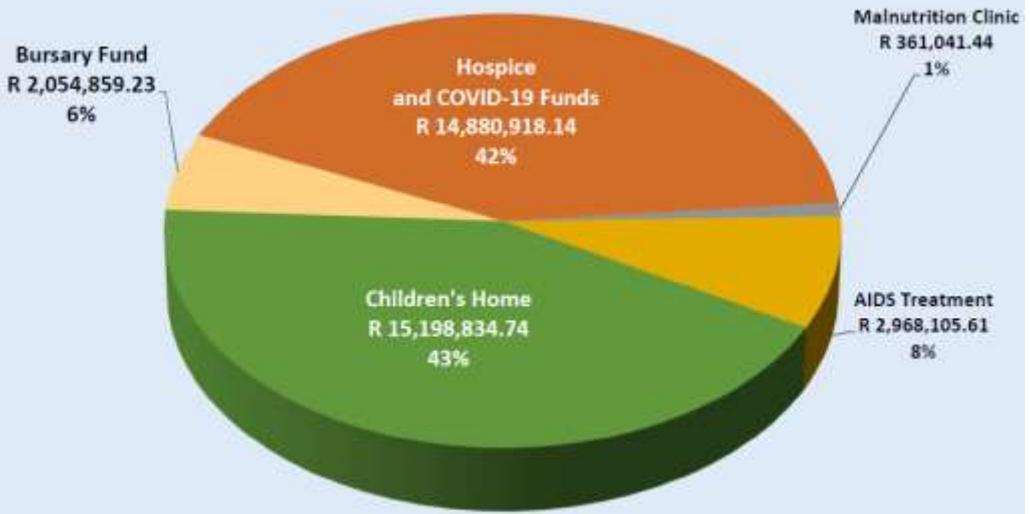
# Finance Report

## Income and Expenditure in 2021

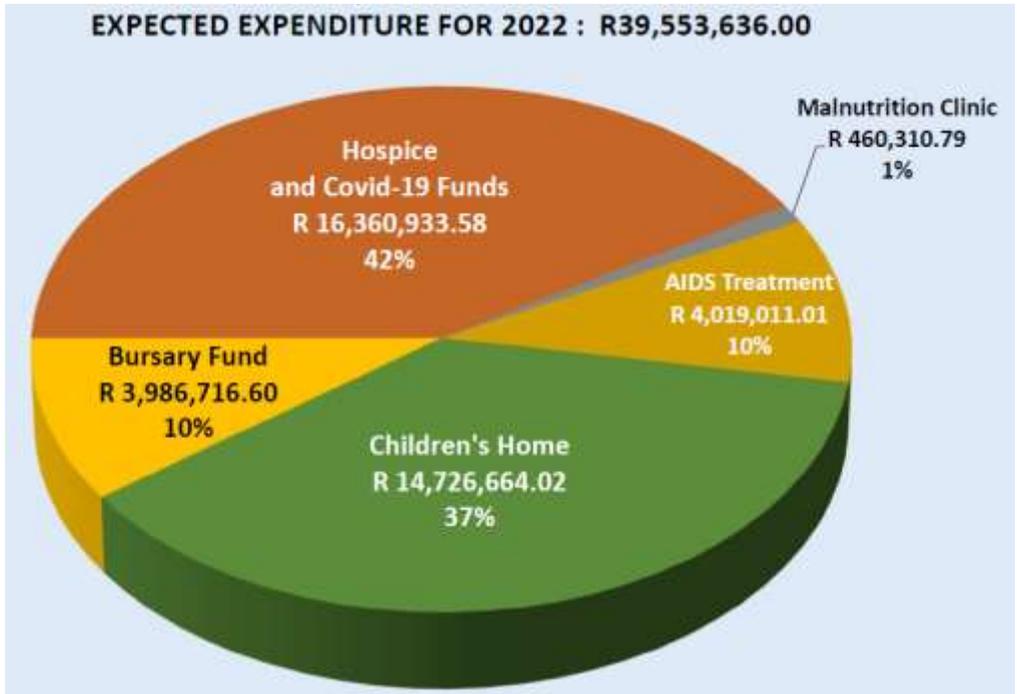
SOURCES OF INCOME 2021 : R29,648,494.67



EXPENDITURE 2021 : R 35,479,765.30



## Expected Expenditure in 2022



**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.

### Financial Audit:

The external Financial Audit of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard and of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre for 2021 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.

## Personnel

### Employees

On **31 December 2021** we had 91 employees. Two **new staff members** were welcomed:

<b>Member statistics</b> (31 December 2021)	
1596	active members
+ 723	financial supporter members
+ 354	spiritual supporter members
= 2673	members.



Sr. **Silindile Pearl Nkambule** was employed as Registered Professional Nurse in our AIDS Treatment Programme on 1 June 2021.



Mr. **Robert Craig Allan** was employed as Support Services Manager of our Care Centre on 1 September 2021



**We care in any case**



### Special event in 2021

The **Covid-19 Pandemic** continued over the year. Several of our activities were **severely impeded**, especially the AIDS Adherence Monitoring, the Hospice Inpatient Unit and Home Care and the Relief Fund (which have only been fully functional towards the end of the year 2021 again), whereas the Pre-Primary School and Crèche is still closed and intended to be re-opened as soon as possible in 2022.

The pandemic confronted us with **extraordinary challenges** over and above our usual routine services:

We faithfully took care of the high-risk group of our **immune deficient and geriatric hospice patients** and the **children** of our children's home where some are **particularly at risk from previous illnesses**.

We continued to ensure that the 625 patients we treat for life in our **AIDS treatment** program, despite the restricted freedom of movement due to Covid-19, reliably received their life-sustaining, highly effective antiretroviral drugs and were able to take them daily.

We also took care of our needy **home care and AIDS patients** at home. Many of these patients and their families had lost their sources of income and were starving.

We have distributed 1563 food parcels (each feeding a family of four for a month) to 154 families in 2021.

Our Clinic for **malnourished infants** continued to prevent starvation, **examined** the children, advised and **counselled** their caregivers, and provided an average of **6636 baby food meals** per four-week-cycles.

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## Kindly Help Us to Help!

All our services entirely depend on your support!

### 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 tax payers 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: 529 4004 0349

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.

You may make a **donation online** using <https://www.paypal.me/SMOMRSA>  
or <https://www.facebook.com/BBG.ORG.ZA>

## 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://bbg.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 [bbg@bbg.org.za](mailto:bbg@bbg.org.za)

**5 October 2021**



On Tuesday 5th October 2021 all the children from Blessed Gérard's Children's Home, over the age of 6, departed on an outing to BergVenture Outdoor Adventure Camp in the Central Drakensberg. The children were extremely excited about experiencing the long bus trip and contending with the unfamiliar cold of the Drakensberg mountains, many of them never having experienced anything other than the hot and humid conditions of the

KZN North Coast. Being a UNESCO World Heritage Site the Drakensberg has much to offer and the programme at BergVenture was filled with "Edutainment" activities which were both fun, educational and encouraged team-building. From zip-lining to tree-climbing, raft building to hikes in the mountains, they loved it all. We especially thank our generous donors, Kindermissionswerk, for funding the outing and allowing our children the opportunity to broaden their horizons and life experiences.

**19 October 2021**

SAPPI visited us here at the Care Centre in order to share with us their Arbour Day "Plant a Tree of Hope" climate change campaign.

They brought with them 20 porkbush saplings that they donated to us for planting at the Care Centre.

The porkbush was specifically chosen as it has the highly effective ability to absorb carbon dioxide from the air making it very beneficial in the fight against climate change.

We gratefully acknowledge SAPPI's contribution to the Care Centre and will be planting all the porkbushes in front of our community centre.



28 October 2021



Great news

Five of our Children's Home caregivers have received their learner licenses today.

The funding was received from Caritas Croatia.

They will now start with their driving lessons.

1 December 2021



World Aids Day Celebration

Theme of the day:

End AIDS  
End Inequalities

Dr. Ntshangase and the HAART team ran a successful World AIDS Day ceremony



with Fr. Ngema opening with a short prayer and reading.



A guest speaker who is one of the HAART patients gave a short talk of his experiences interacting with the HAART team and the Hospice as he was also an inpatient and describing his journey living with AIDS.

He also thanked the Care Centre for thinking of the needy patients and providing them with much needed food parcels. He was presented with a small gift.

Dr. Ntshangase shared with us the history of World AIDS Day and how it came into being celebrated on the 1st of December.

We then lit candles from each other as a sign of

sharing and caring for each other.

The Care Centre provided care packages with biscuits, fruit, a sandwich and juice to all those who attended the celebration as well as those patients who attended the clinic that day.

The World AIDS Day feature wall and the hall were beautifully decorated.

**24 December 2021**

**Christmas Eve at Blessed Gérard's Care Centre**



Father Ngema celebrated "Midnight" Mass in Zulu at 7 p.m. at Blessed Gérard's Church.

**25 December 2021**

**Christmas at Blessed Gérard's Care Centre**

Father Gérard celebrated Holy Mass in English at 9:30 am at Blessed Gérard's Church



**Christmas Celebration of Blessed Gérard's Children's Home**





# 25 years Blessed Gérard's Care Centre and Blessed Gérard's Church

Jubilee on 3 September 2021

On September 3, 1996, the then Bishop of Eshowe, Dr. Mansuet Dela Biyase, blessed Blessed Gérard's Care Centre and Blessed Gérard's Church.

Blessing and Opening of Blessed Gérard's Care Centre

Liturgy: <https://youtu.be/wYZ12H4P6co>

Function: <https://youtu.be/cP3C4ddyVmk>



Blessed Gérard's Care Centre on the day of its opening

Bishop Biyase blesses the Church.



Frà Ludwig Hoffmann von Rumerstein brings a relic of Blessed Gérard donated by the Grand Magistry of the Order of Malta.



Frà Ludwig Hoffmann von Rumerstein presents the relic of Blessed Gérard to Father Gérard.



Albertine and Hans Sporer, Johannes Lagleder and Daniel Meehan were invested as Honorary Dedicated Members of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.



Hans and Albertine Sporer and Johannes Lagleder

The founder of the Order of Malta, Blessed Gérard, died on September 3, 1120 and the church consecrated to him was thus blessed on the 876th anniversary of his death. The church is the seat of the South African relief organisation of the Order of Malta, the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

Blessed Gérard's Care Centre is the headquarters of the organisation.

Even back then, after it was founded on 28 October 1992, they were running their aid fund for poor sick people, emergency aid fund, scholarship fund, child hunger aid project, home economics school, senior citizens' club, sewing school, HIV / AIDS awareness program, kindergarten, and their disaster relief project.

The opening of the Blessed Gérard's Care Centre marked the beginning of the hospice.

Later the first aid service, the children's home and the AIDS treatment program were added.

All of these services were not developed on the drawing board, but were each a courageous and effective response to specific emergency situations on site that had otherwise not been dealt with or not adequately dealt with by others.

The Care Centre is the fulcrum of this comprehensive program of holistic care in the middle of an area of a quarter of a million people, often referred to as the AIDS stronghold of the world, where over 40% have not even attended secondary school and over 80% live in poverty.

On 20 May 2020 the district of iLembe, in which Mandeni is located, had the second highest Covid-19 infection rate in all of South Africa, and on 27 August 2021 the seven-day incidence was 237.

The activity report of the centre impresses with notable statistics:

More than 10,000 patients have so far been treated and cared for by the Care Centre.

5420 inpatients,  
4673 outpatients,  
5134 home care patients,  
7654 ambulance transports,  
3623 counselling consultations,  
1624 AIDS patients and 2240 social cases.

The current statistics can be found on pages 15 ff. of this newsletter.

But even more than these statistics, the idealism, the devotion and the tender loving care of the Centre's many full-time and voluntary helpers for the patients, clients and people looked after are a reason for pride and lasting gratitude.

Most of our staff come from the same poverty-stricken area as our patients. That is why we have an even greater responsibility for our staff.

We are a popular employer. Given the catastrophic unemployment rate in this country, the fact that we pay 94 people better than a living wage means a lot. A whole bunch of unemployed family members is dependent on every breadwinner. A salary is usually filling 10 to 20 hungry stomachs. This means that up to 1,500 people a day are incidentally, so to speak supplied with the essentials. For that reason alone, it would be socially unjust if we only paid starvation wages.

Our volunteers, like the full-time employees, therefore also receive two full meals per shift, adequate reimbursement of expenses and free on-site medical treatment and medication.

When outsiders call the house a “**heaven of care in the midst of the AIDS hell**”, “**where love overcomes misery**” and the beneficiaries experience a “**culture shock of love**”, the goal “*tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum*” (**preservation of faith and help the Poor**) is achieved, which appears on every badge of the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

The South African relief organisation of the Order of Malta has reason to be lastingly grateful – Thank God we are now also supported by the South African Department of Social Development and the Department of Health, but we have to raise the vast majority (89%) of our annual financial needs through fundraising – for the many donors and supporting members, who thankfully always made it possible up to now to raise the funds to fulfill the huge demand to finance all the vast activities.

**Please continue to help us!**



Brotherhood  
of Blessed Gérard

### 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 actions 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.

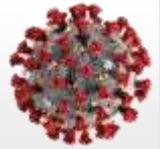
Grant me the strength needed to live according to this resolution as an upright Christian selflessly in the Spirit of Your Gospel, for the honour of God, for the peace of the world and the benefit of our community.

Amen.





# How we help people in need because of Covid-19 **Our food aid programme**



## **CORONA: WE HELP!**

Many needy sick people and their families have lost their sources of income and are starving. We look after them and have already distributed thousands of food parcels and there is still a need for many more. A grocery package that will feed a family of four for a month costs now R400.00 (\$27.00 | £21.00). Meanwhile we also distribute blankets and second-hand clothing to support the destitute.

These photos need no words. They are self-explanatory.





# Blessed Gérard's Care Centre

Welcomes New Managing Director



1 February 2022



Blessed Gérard's Care Centre Welcomes New Managing Director, Dr Douglas Ross, To The Team!

Blessed Gérard's Care Centre (BGCC) is excited to welcome Dr Douglas Ross to the BGCC Team, as its new Managing Director or "MD". This new top management position, recently created by our Council, as part of the Council's ongoing strategic realignment initiatives for BGCC, is a challenging position. Council has no doubt that Dr Ross is up to this challenge, hence his recent appointment.

Dr Ross is highly experienced in healthcare management, having worked for 26 years in Chief Executive/ Hospital Manager roles in both the South African non-profit and for-profit health sectors. For 20 of these years, Dr Ross was the CEO of the catholic non-profit mission hospital – St Mary's Hospital Mariannhill. St Mary's Hospital, Mariannhill, where a number of BGCC staff trained as nurses over the years, functioned as a public-

sector district hospital in its district and in its sub-district.

Following his time at St Mary's Hospital, Dr Ross moved into the South African private health sector and ran both acute private hospitals (Midlands Medical Centre and then Kwa-Dukuza Private Hospital) and a sub-acute and rehabilitation hospital (Royal Hospital).

Dr Ross has extensive governance experience in the SA non-profit health sector, having been a director of St Mary's Hospital

Nursing College, and having held various positions on the board of a national faith-based non-profit organization, CATHCA, over a period of nearly 20 years. Dr Ross is currently the Chairperson of the board of CATHCA.

His various leadership roles on the Board of CATHCA enabled him to maintain his interest and involvement in the South African faith-based non-profit sector beyond St Mary's Hospital and in fact throughout his executive career. BGCC is itself a member of CATHCA. Hence Dr Ross has for many years now had dealings on occasion with BGCC.

He holds an MBA and remains a registered family practitioner, who continued clinically caring for patients (mainly religious personnel and staff), as a part-time general practitioner for 20 years of his 26-year executive career. His clinical skills were used again more recently in the capacity of a voluntary part-time medical officer at the Usizo Lwethu Afrisun Clinic at the Denis Hurley Centre in downtown Durban.

Dr Ross is highly resilient, having worked in the challenging public/non-profit partnership environment at St Mary's Hospital and the independent private hospital environment at Midlands Medical Centre, Royal Hospital and KwaDukuza Private Hospital.

He thrives in diverse settings, having worked effectively with stakeholders from multiple disciplines across all healthcare sectors (public, private, and non-profit) from South Africa, SADC countries, and internationally (USA, Italy, and Israel). His respected standing in these diverse environments is evidence of Dr Ross's communication, relationship building, and networking skills

Dr Ross is strong in operational and strategic management, and also clinical and corporate governance.

His high business acumen is evident in his track record of driving actions which improve the clinical and business effectiveness, and the overall effectiveness of the organisations he worked for. Examples include: transforming St Mary's Hospital's



earlier management model to that of a mission-based business; overseeing a large, highly successful HIV/AIDS treatment and care programme, and a voluntary male medical circumcision programme, both while at St Mary's Hospital; and professionalising the governance and operations of CATHCA.

Dr Ross used his influencing skills to market St Mary's Hospital to a broad set of stakeholders the Department of Health KwaZulu Natal, local communities and the South African and international donor-community. He established a Fundraising and Marketing Department at St Mary's Hospital which brought in millions of Rands of donor funding to the hospital and successfully applied for and received major grants from the US Centre for Disease Control (CDC) via the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), funding the hospital's ARV Programmes for 8 years.

Dr Ross is a visionary leader who enjoys motivating and developing others to achieve personal and organisational excellence and has done so in both his professional roles as CEO/ Hospital Manager, and in his leadership roles on the Board of CATHCA.

Dr Ross feels he has "benefited significantly at both a personal and professional level and has grown in his Catholic faith through his many years of working in the healthcare ministry, whether at St Mary's Hospital, Mariannhill or at CATHCA. Dr Ross states that he is "looking forward to this exciting new challenge, to learning, growing and continually improving together with the BGCC Team as the BGCC Team takes its ministry of delivering holistic care into the future"

Dr Ross has been married to Charlene for over 32 years.

They met in their first year of medical school at Wits University and married 6 years later.

Charlene practices as a GP in Westville, which is where they live.

They have 2 children, Elizabeth and James, who have both left University and are working in Johannesburg, Elizabeth as a board-certified industrial psychologist and business consultant, and James as a second-year soon-to-be chartered accountant who is currently in training.



**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 the honour of God.

Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 36:1-4

Saint Benedict of Norcia  
healing a man suffering from leprosy

Fresco from the 10th century  
in the crypt of San Crisogono, Rome

**You are cordially invited**  
to join us at the celebration of the



**30th anniversary  
of the establishment**  
of the  
Brotherhood  
of Blessed Gérard



**28 - 30 October 2022**

**at Blessed Gérard's Care Centre  
61 Anderson Road  
Mandeni 4490, South Africa.**

We, the children of **Blessed Gérard's Children's Home**, express our gratitude for all your benevolence and support on behalf of the many thousands of people, who have been helped, cared for and looked after by the Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard.

