

St. Joan of Arc Kenya Konnection

In 2006, St. Joan of Arc parishioner Jim Schermerhorn, who had worked at Holy Cross Parish as a health care professional, brought Holy Cross to our parish's attention, and we began thinking about ways to engage as a sister parish. Through Jim's efforts, Pastor Andrew Massawe of Holy Cross visited us in 2007. Our parishioners were very generous to Fr. Andrew, and our Konnection was established.

The Kenya Konnection Committee was formed to nurture the relationship and began working with other parish ministries to build the connection. Since then, our Women's Guild, St. Vincent DePaul Society, Youth Group, Prayer Shawl Ministry, and other groups have participated in a variety of ways.

In 2010, three of our parishioners, at their own expense, travelled to Dandora in what we expect to be the first of many visits to expand our spiritual connection.



St. Joan of Arc Parishioners in Dandora with some of the children of Holy Cross

At least 98% of contributions go directly to support our Sister Parish in Dandora Kenya.

Kenya Konnection Goal Support Children in the St. James Primary School

We support children in the St James Primary School at Holy Cross with scholarships. Since 2008, the Women's Guild has provided two scholarships, and additional children are supported through parishioner contributions. Beginning in the 2011 school year, we will provide six scholarships, which include tuition, books, uniforms, and meals.



The children we support with scholarships (as of February, 2010) with the shawls knitted for them by the St. Joan of Arc Prayer Shawl Ministry.



Our scholarship students with their mothers at the St. James School.

Kenya Konnection Goal Support the Mother and Child Health Program at the Brother André Dispensary

We contribute to the Mother and Child Health (MCH) Program at the Brother André Dispensary at Holy Cross. This program provides prenatal, post-natal, and infant care to 1500 women and their children. The rate of women dying in childbirth is forty times higher in Kenya than in the US, and mortality of children under 5 is fifteen times greater than in the US. Through programs such as this, we can help prevent the needless deaths of women and children and help more children grow to an age when they can attend school and benefit from our scholarships (13% of Kenyan children do not live until school age).

In the MCH Program, each woman is seen about 4 times during her pregnancy to receive basic, professional medical care including routine exams, testing for HIV, TB, malaria, diabetes, hypertension, anemia and other serious pregnancy-related medical issues, and all necessary support such as immunizations, vitamins, iron, and folic acid. After the birth of the child, this program provides maternal care for one year and infant care including 6 visits for well and sick baby exams and full immunizations.

The program is managed by Medicines for Humanity of Rockland MA, which runs several such programs around the world. We are thankful for our relationship with them as they help us in our connection to our Sister Parish.

Holy Cross Parish

Dandora is an area 7 miles east of the center of Nairobi, Kenya built in the 1970's as low-income housing for 60,000 people—now populated by 200,000. The first religious of Holy Cross went to Dandora in 1979. These pioneers built a tent where their growing community could pray and worship. The following year, a temporary church building was constructed. Eventually, through diligent work and dedication, the parish's permanent church structure was started in 1995 and dedicated in 1998. The parish community already overflows this beautiful house of prayer and celebration which seats 2,000 people. When the Holy Cross parish community celebrated its 25th anniversary in the year 2003 30,000 Christians were counted.



Holy Cross Parish is a true center of the Community, offering worship, school, health, and community services.



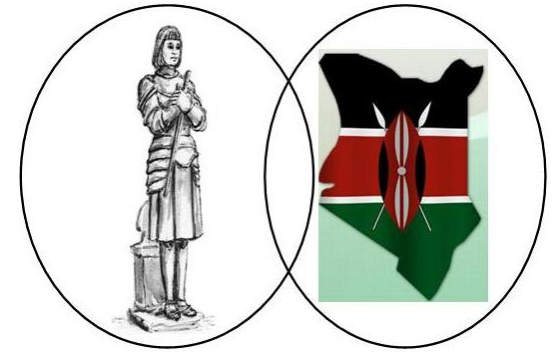
Participants in the Mother and Child Health Program in the waiting room at the Brother André Dispensary at Holy Cross Parish.



A class at the St. James Primary School in Dandora.

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*Saint Joan of Arc Parish
Kenya Konnection*



Mission

The Kenya Konnection Committee shepherds the relationship between St. Joan of Arc and our sister parish, Holy Cross in Dandora, Kenya. We provide our parishioners with opportunities for spiritual enrichment through action, education, and fund-raising in support of our sister parish.