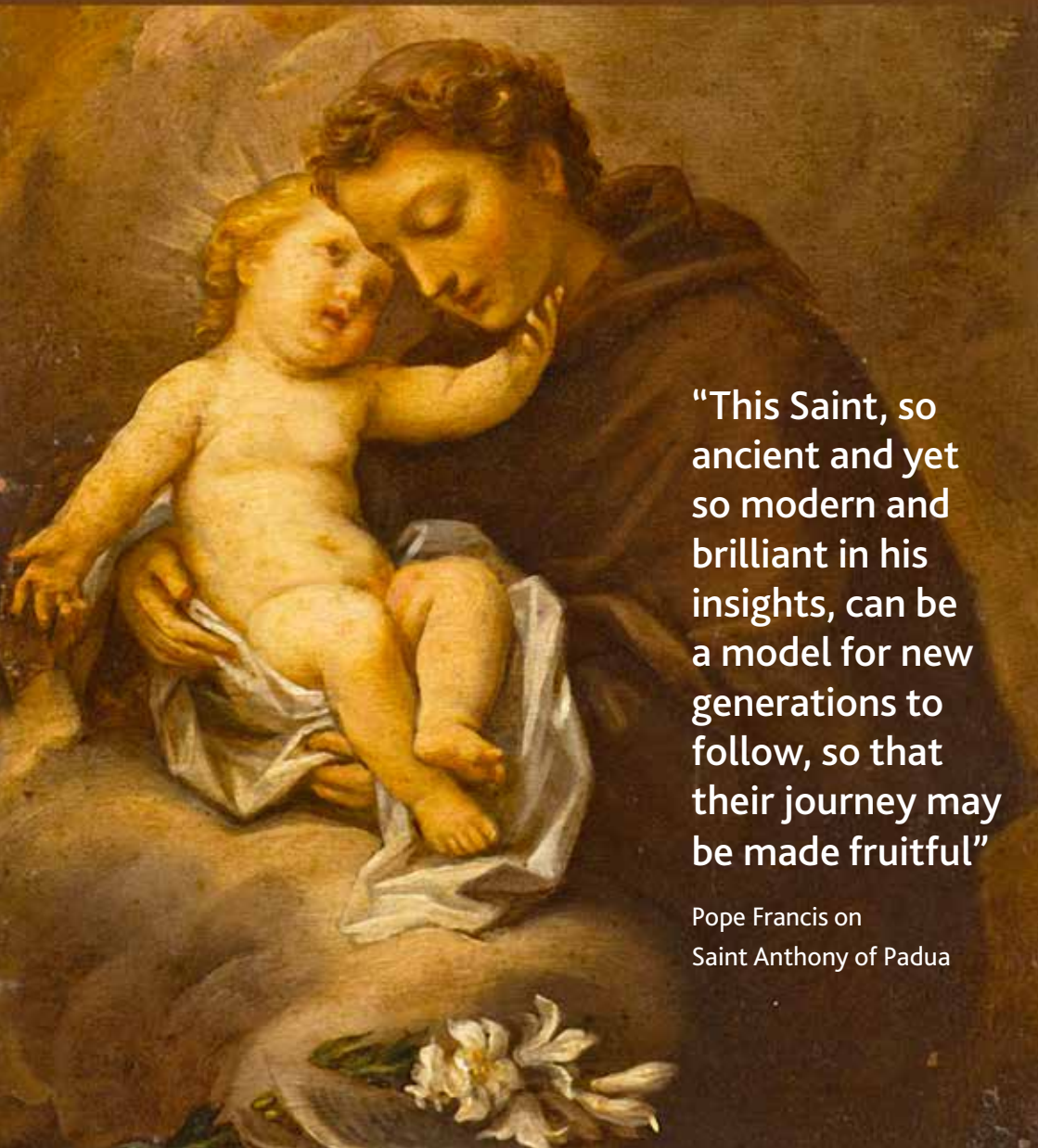


# Troubadour

Volume 66, No.2

Spring/Summer 2024



"This Saint, so ancient and yet so modern and brilliant in his insights, can be a model for new generations to follow, so that their journey may be made fruitful"

Pope Francis on  
Saint Anthony of Padua



In the 12th century Christ spoke to St Francis of Assisi from this cross:

*"Francis, go and rebuild my Church which you see is falling down."*

Don't complain about the Church in the 21st century.

Hear Our Lord's call and do something about it!

*The Friars Minor have followed St Francis' example for the last 800 years.*

**Why not be one of them?**

Contact Br Donal Walsh OFM,  
Franciscan Friary, 270 Ballater Street, Glasgow. G5 0YT  
Email: vocations@friar.org

# Troubadour

A MISSIONARY MAGAZINE

*at the service of*

- The Franciscan Missionaries working throughout the world but especially in disaster areas.
- The Franciscan Missionary Union.



Volume 66, No 2

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## COVER PHOTOGRAPHS:

*Front cover:*

Saint Anthony of Padua in Adoration of the Child Jesus.

*Back cover:*

Educating is a way of being.

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## MISSION OFFICE:

FMU Director  
Franciscan Friary,  
270 Ballater Street,  
Glasgow.  
G5 0YT

## EDITOR:

Br. Edmund Highton, ofm

Registered Charity  
No. 232177; SCO 39191



# Our ongoing Work in Sharpeville

## Historical Background:

Sharpeville is a township situated between two large industrial cities, Vanderbijlpark and Vereeniging, in Southern Gauteng, South Africa. Sharpeville is one of the oldest of six townships in the Vaal Triangle. It was named after John Lillie Sharpe who came to South Africa from Glasgow, Scotland. Sharpe was elected to the Vereeniging City Council in 1932 and held the position of mayor from 1934 to 1937. The main reason for the establishment of Sharpeville was the relocation of people from "Top Location" to an area away from Vereeniging. Because the project was intended only to relocate residents of "Top Location", and not to house additional people, it did not alleviate the housing shortage.

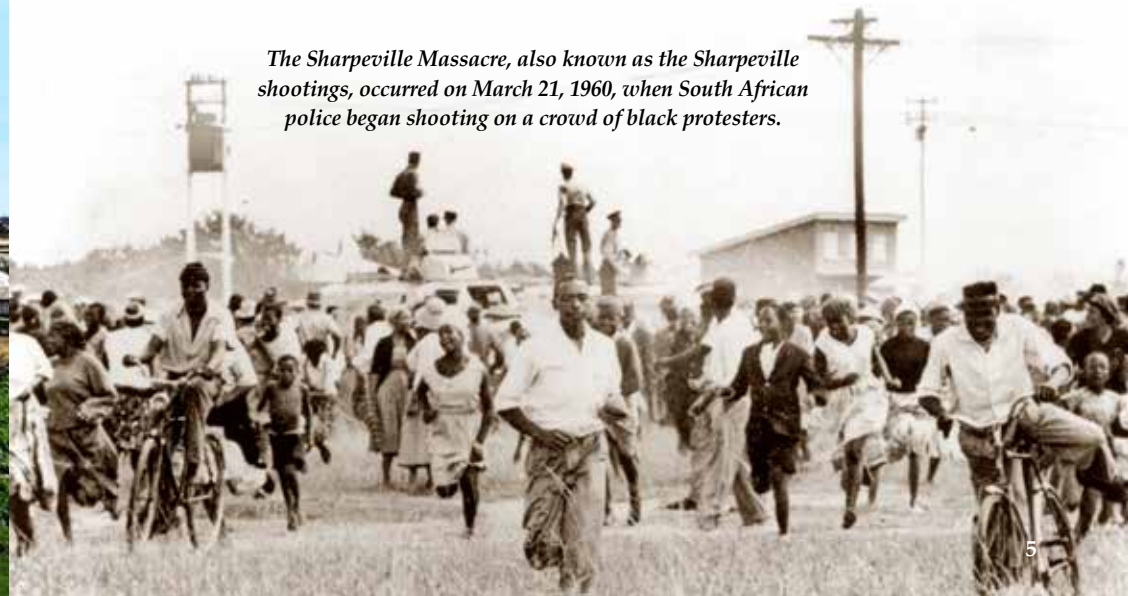
What was planned as a five-year resettlement project beginning in 1935, in fact, took 20 years. In 1941, 16,000 people lived in "Top Location". The building of the houses only started in 1942. A sub-economic housing scheme was used for Sharpeville. Water was free but 14 houses shared one tap and there were two bathing complexes in the township. By 1946 some of the houses had their own taps and bathrooms. The township was first called "Sharpe Native Township", but it changed to Sharpeville in the 1950s.

On 21 March 1960 the infamous Sharpeville massacre occurred, against black African protesters who attempted to hand in to police their Apartheid-required pass books which restricted

them from going in certain areas. Although the crowd was peaceful throughout the day, over 70 men of the South African Police (SAP), thirteen of them armed with sub machine guns, fired at point blank range. About 69 Africans were killed and 180 wounded by the police. All of these people were long term residents of Sharpeville.

Sharpeville includes the Sharpeville Memorial and Exhibition Centre, also called the Sharpeville Human Rights Precinct, in Seeiso Street opposite the police station where the shootings took place. Opened in 2002, the Memorial / Exhibition Centre commemorates the events of 21st March 1960, and honours those who died on that horrific

*The Sharpeville Massacre, also known as the Sharpeville shootings, occurred on March 21, 1960, when South African police began shooting on a crowd of black protesters.*





*The Sharpeville Memorial.*

day. It is one of six Heritage sites related to the Massacre and its eventual role in the downfall of Apartheid. The other five being the Sharpeville Police Station, the Phelindaba and Vuka Cemeteries, where the victims of the Massacre were buried, the Sharpeville Catholic Church where the strategic meetings were held as well as hiding places for



*Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church, Sharpeville.*

armed struggle leaders, and the Kwa Dlomo Dam at the entrance to the township, where legend has it the blood of the massacre victims flowed.

Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church, Sharpeville, has embarked on building a new church with the money we saved over

the past many years. We managed to complete the office building. Foundation and brickwork for the new church building to the cost of R2 250 940,72 without roofing. We have attached pictures (Annexure 1 / 2) of the completed office building and the status of the new church building. We are halfway through; however,


our coffers have run dry, and the project has paused since August 2022 with complete walls. The impact of Covid-19 and regulations on church fundraising has been significant, as it has disrupted traditional methods such as in-person donations, fundraisers, and events. We experienced a decline

in donation due to financial hardships faced by parishioners and a decrease in attendance at Mass. Overall, Covid-19 has forced our church to innovate and find new ways to raise funds to support the building project. Covid-19 regulation was relaxed, and churches were reopened after 14 months. The parishioners resumed with fundraising activities, managed to raise funds to an amount of R720

541,13 and continue with fundraising activities. Given this situation we are compelled to look outside the church for financial assistance.

We basically milked our parishioners to the core. The roof costs of R1,6m. Your donation will enable us to cover costs for finishing (roof, windows, plastering, doors, and flooring). We would like to appeal and request you generously assist financially with donations. A total of R2 million is needed. The old church building will be repurposed to community benefitting programs and social programs.

The building remains unchanged based on its historical background and the impact it had on fight apartheid system. The church was used as strategic venue to hold movements meeting. We hope that we can count on your help in order for our project to be completed. May the Lord bless you in advance for your donation. Bank account details are shown in the letter below.

 <b>Standard Bank</b>	STANDARD BANK VEREENIGING 06 Mar 2024 4637	Customer Care: 0860 123 009 Website: <a href="http://www.standardbank.co.za">www.standardbank.co.za</a>
Date: 06 March 2024		
To Whom it May Concern:		
<b>Confirmation of Standard Bank Account</b>		
This letter serves to confirm that the below customer holds a valid bank account with Standard Bank.		
<b>Account details:</b>		
Account holder:	CATHOLIC CHURCH SHARPEVILLE	
ID/Tag number:	UNKNOWN	
Account type:	CURRENT	
Account number:	02 235 446 8	
Branch:	VEREENIGING	
Branch code:	4637	
SWIFT code:	SBZAJJ	
Date account opened:	05 March 1991	
This letter is given without responsibility and does not give rise to any obligations or liability on the part of the Bank and/or its officials.		
Yours Sincerely Standard Bank of South Africa		
<small>The Standard Bank of South Africa Limited (Pty) Ltd. 1993/001710/06. Authorised Financial Services Provider. VOT Reg No. 41121/2010. Registered credit provider. BK0000170. We are subject to the Code of Banking Regulations. South African and International Banking. Request registration through the Consumer Protection Board.</small>		



+27 78 771 1824  
fatima.sharpeville@catholicjhb.org.za  
Our Lady of Fatima, Roman Catholic Church  
P.O. Box 10040, Sharpeville, 1928

Date: 07 March 2024

### Request for donations

Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church, Sharpeville, has embarked on building new church with the money we saved over past many years. We managed to complete the office building. Foundation and brickwork for the new church building to the cost of R2 250 940,72 without roofing. We have attached the pictures (Annexure 1/2) of the completed office building and the status of the new church building.

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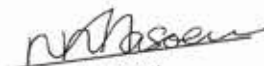
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We hope that we can count on your help to make our project our project to be completed.

May the Lord bless you in advance for your donation.

Yours in Christ 

Fr Hlonpho Nqaba (OFM)  
Parish Priest

  
Michael Masoeu  
PFC Chairperson

Bank Details:  
Account Number: 022354468  
Bank Name: STANDARD BANK  
Account Holder: SHARPEVILLE CATHOLIC



- A** The project of building new church started in August 2021 with TLB removing the Foundation of the old building. We were fortunate that we had an adequate and usable piece of land within the yard of the church next to the old structure.
- B** We embarked on building a new church with the money we saved over past years. The foundation, and brickwork for the new church building was completed in six months period.
- C** On the left of the image is the new church building without roofing. The old building, to its right, was built 61 years ago for a population of about 150 to 200 members at the time. Our old church was in a bad state of repair. It was also not relevant to the changing times.
- D** The area is 45m x 23m and the roof structure will rest on Reinforced Concrete beams. The building is shown without the steel structure.
- E** Height (brickwork) = 5.4m. The total height = 6m. Due to the complexity of the building a special roof shall be required.
- F** It was envisaged that, over and above the new church building, offices and meeting rooms were required in response to local community needs.
- G** The window frames are in place.

Fr John Allen Green OFM

# How a big boss became a simple Franciscan

John Allen Green OFM was once a successful business tycoon. But he left all that behind and became a Franciscan priest in search of silence and solitude.



At the age of 40 in the early 1990s, John Allen Green was diagnosed with cancer. From his second-floor hospital room he could look out over the tops of the trees to the beautiful blue sky beyond. “The sound of the rustling trees gave me some comfort. A quiet voice inserted into the silence, ‘Come, I will lead you back to my Son’,” he recalls. It was a key moment in a journey of faith that would culminate in the priesthood.

## Always walking with Jesus

Fr Green was born in 1952 in Bez Valley, Johannesburg, to parents of Portuguese and Irish descent. As a child, he attended church at Holy Angels parish in Bez Valley. “My earliest recollection as a Catholic was as a very young child falling in love with Jesus at the Exposition and Benediction that I attended with my grandmother each Wednesday evening. With Mario Lanza’s song ‘I’ll never walk alone again’, the promise of Jesus as constant companion touched my heart. At the age of 7, I promised Jesus that I would

always walk with him,” he told *The Southern Cross*.

In 1969, after completing his matriculation at Marist Brothers College in Johannesburg, he studied to become an accountant and went on to build a diversified group of companies under the umbrella of the *Progress Group*, whose products included weaponry.

When he could take time out from work, he made pilgrimages to Fatima, Lourdes, the Miraculous Medal chapel in Paris, Częstochowa in Poland, and the basilica of the Visitation of Our Lady in Hejnice in the Czech Republic.

A pilgrimage to Fatima in Portugal coincided with his fight with cancer. “At the chapel of the Apparitions, I knelt down in silence to pray. Time stopped for me at that moment. With the receding light I came back into awareness of the present moment; there was a feeling of a warm glow throughout my body, and I knew immediately that I had been healed. Back in South Africa, this was confirmed



*The Chapel of the Apparitions, located in Cova da Iria, Fátima, Portugal a place of special significance to Fr John.*

by the doctors. I had no trace of cancer remaining in my body," Fr Green said.

In 1994 he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. "To walk in the footsteps of Jesus seemed appropriate for me at that stage of my life. I had discovered the priority of Jesus' solitude and silence everywhere in the Gospels. It was in solitude and silence that Jesus dealt with painful emotions like grief, the constant demands of his ministry, and finally how he prepared for his own death on the cross."

Travelling by road east of Jerusalem into the Judaeen desert, he saw something

glinting in the sun. Walking over to it, he bent down and picked it up. "It was a brass bullet 76mm cartridge case. I looked at its base. There it was, the year of its manufacturing, the batch number - and my own armaments company's logo. I

was reduced to utter disbelief," he said.

"This was my Damascus moment, waking from a dream-state to recognise that I had been slumbering with a serpent coiled on my breast: terrible weapons of destruction spread across the world, greater profits always the goal... To see my actions in their true light against the goodness of God is the deepest sorrow. And once you see, you see it everywhere. My complicity in an oil spill, killing our oceans and sea life, the burning forests of the Amazon, the desperate refugees fleeing war and poverty - this is my guilt as it is also our guilt as a species."

## The Franciscan path

After his retirement, he worked with the late Fr James Fitzsimons SJ, who was also his spiritual director, in the writing, publication and distribution of the Jesuit publication *The Sacred Heart*

*Messenger*. This was coupled to his work with the Knights of da Gama in their *Right to Live* Campaign, the Missionaries of Charity at a hospice, and the caring for street children.

In 1998, he attended an annual convention organised by the Franciscan

Order in South Africa. "This was a get-together of the various groups following the Franciscan Charism. There was one person at the convention, Fr Robert Stewart OFM, whose presence

captivated me, and would greatly influence me in the years ahead," Fr Green recalled.

The call to solitude led Fr Green to move into a small cottage in the Swartkopps' hills, above Eikenhof about 30km south of Johannesburg.

After a few weeks, "I had gradually disengaged myself from all the frenzied activity of the previous five years that had followed my 20-year corporate path of money, prestige and power. The late Bishop Gerard Ndlovu became my monthly director and confessor," he said. "Increasingly, I turned towards the Franciscan way."

From 2004 to 2007 he lived in Britain at the Franciscan International Study Centre in Canterbury, earning an honours degree in theology through the University of Lampaster



*Fr John with four-legged friend, enjoying each other's company.*

in Wales. After returning to South Africa, he undertook further postgraduate studies in Christian spirituality and psychology at St Augustine College in Johannesburg while also teaching at the Franciscan seminary.

Fr Green was ordained in January 2010, and immediately assigned to a parish in Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal. "Rebuilding the parish community was my top priority, and I fell into my earlier trap of busyness and frenzied activity. Many of the parish structures required reinvention and rebuilding. Each day was filled with meetings and every night of the week was taken up in teaching, adult catechetics, marriage preparation, financial administration as the bursar for the friary, various committees and a contemplative prayer group. I was also the chaplain to the local Knights of da Gama as well as being the regional chaplain for KwaZulu-Natal," he said.

Because of his business experience, Bishop Graham Rose

of Dundee requested Fr Green's assistance on the board of the St Antonine's Old Age Homes, which had been established in the mountainous rural area of Amakhazi to care for the elderly, abused and destitute. The load was further increased when he was requested to chair the board of the Duduza Care Centre, which was run from the Maria Ratschitz mission in Wasbank, started by the Franciscan Nardini Sisters in 1998.

### **From hospital to cottage**

In September of 2015, Fr Green suffered acute heart failure, aggravated by chronic obstruction pulmonary disease. He was transferred to a cardiac intensive care unit in Johannesburg, where he spent two weeks in the intensive care unit, followed by a further two weeks in the cardiac care unit.

"This period of total dependence on others became once more a teacher through which I could view and challenge my thought patterns in past events, and especially my role as parish priest and as

a pastor. I'd fallen into the trap of the literal instruction of St Francis to hold back nothing of yourself for yourself," he said.

In December of the same year, he began a period of recuperation and rest following his hospitalisation. To facilitate this period of recuperation, his brother had a wooden cabin erected in a corner in the gardens of his sister-in-law's home, situated in Johannesburg and close to the various specialists who were treating Fr Green.

"I spent 15 months in Franciscan solitude in my 'Little Portion Hermitage' in Johannesburg. My desire has always been to live this life of Franciscan solitude, shared with two or three other Brothers. This is in accordance with St Francis' unique vision for solitude lived in fraternitas. Having two or three other friars alternating as Martha and Mary would allow for extended periods of silence. It flows from this silence that I find I am enabled to listen and to hear and to be truly present to others; striving always to become the Christ reflection of

joy, peace and love," Fr Green said.

With the permission of his order, Fr Green was living the Franciscan life and prayer in solitude, in his small hermitage cottage in the corner of the family garden.

"Each one of us is called to make that journey to the centre of our being, finding that core of the divine within us that resonates with the divine beyond space and time," Fr Green noted. "Touching the eternal transcendent, we come face-to-face with Truth that dissolves our illusions of who we are. This is the sacred space of encounter with Jesus who is the Way, the Life and the Truth."

Fr John Allen Greene ofm died on Saturday, 13th April 2024 in South Africa.

May he rest in peace.



# St Anthony's update...

St Anthony's Child and Youth Care Centre  
23 Jooste Road  
Newcastle,  
Kwa Zulu, Natal,  
South Africa



Dear Fr Eddie,  
I hope that you are well and we are well too. I am just following up if there are new development regarding our request considering the changes and the amount asked. At the moment in South Africa, particularly in St Anthony's is the challenge of loadshedding that affects the entire life of everybody, e.g. studying, homework, preparing food and other activities that are not executed due to what I have mentioned above. Sometimes we are without electricity for 24 hours to 48 hours. This has an impact to all our children and the staff that are carrying our children and bring many things into a stand still. Currently, we are asking people who can support in installing solar system that help us to have solar system in our property. Many of our children are traumatised by the darkness due to what happened into their lives. This project is costing a lot of money to install this and we hope that the project will be successful if can raise a million rand in South African currency. In... successful in having solar system installed... eventually save money that we pay to... the money that will be invested in... years because the Orphanage... we currently pay. Having so... not... some extra support. We hope that this will shed some terms of support needed by

**We have answered this appeal from St Anthony's Child and Youth Care Centre and sent them the funds for a Solar Panel system which will hopefully, help the children who are in the Home. Thank you for the donations which have enabled to help these and so many other people in different parts of the world.**

## Feast of St Anthony 13th June 2024



As always in June we celebrate, here in Glasgow, a Novena in preparation for St Anthony's Feast on 13th June. We begin on the 4th June and have nine days of prayer and preparation for the Feast on the 13th. This is always a happy and joyful event and we are looking forward to see many people coming and sharing with us their petitions to St Anthony and their re-acquaintanceship with many old friends. Hopefully new friends of St Anthony will join us also. Many petitions will be received from many parts of the country and these will be remembered in our Novena prayers and Masses. May St Anthony hear your prayers and intercede with our loving Father on your behalf.

## Sweet Jesus, Thy Name is Joy

by St Anthony of Padua OFM

Sweet Jesus, is there anything sweeter than Thee?

To remember Thee is more delightful than everything else.

Thy Name is joy - it is the true Gate of our Salvation.

What else are Thou, Jesus, if not our Saviour?

Be our Redeemer.

Give us the virtues of hope and love, just as Thou hast given us faith, our primary joy.

Give us the words which we need to praise Thee always.

With the help and through the prayers of Thy Mother.

Thou who art blessed throughout the ages.

Amen



# Education support for Sudanese Students in Alexandria

From Fr. Hillary Augustino OFM,  
Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 155 Port Said Street Alexandria, Egypt

On behalf of the Sudanese refugee community at Sacred Heart Church in Alexandria I wish you a happy and blessed 2024.

We are forever grateful for your continued support for the Sudanese refugees and the Franciscan mission in Sudan and Egypt.

The situation in Sudan is still very bad and the people continue to come to Egypt in large numbers. Now, their main concern is education of their children.

Therefore, I am sending you this application with the hope that you will put it in to your consideration.

No.	Items	Beneficiaries	Individual ratio	Total Amount
1	School fees	100 students	\$200 x 100	\$20,000
2	Books	100 students	\$50 x 100	\$5000
3	Bags	100 students	\$ 10 x 100	\$1000
4	Uniform	100 students	\$30 x 100	\$3000
5	Transportation	100 students	\$50 x100	\$5000
6	<b>Total Amount</b>			<b>\$34.000</b>

May Almighty God bless your service among the people as our founder St Francis did. We remain united in prayer for peace in Sudan and the entire world.

Thank you.

*South Sudanese who fled Sudan  
wait at Renk transit camp.*



Colour this page as neatly and brightly as you can. HAVE FUN!



**St. Anthony of Padua - Doctor of the Church.**

“ Do not be discouraged by the difficulties  
that the educational challenge presents.  
Educating is not a job but an attitude.  
It is a way of being. ”

Pope Francis

