

Oh How Good Is Our God!

Orphans of Our lady of Sorrows Foundation Newsletter



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The Current Situation in Burundi

By Regina Nsanzimana

As many of you know, the war between Congo and the Rwandan M23 rebels has been unfolding right on Burundi's doorstep, and these past few weeks have been some of the most difficult to watch from afar. Earlier this month, the presidents of Rwanda and Congo traveled to the United States and signed peace agreements, and for a moment, it felt like there might finally be a breath of hope. But despite the peace deals, the fighting has actually intensified. The rebels have now made their way into Uvira, a city that sits directly on the border of Burundi. That is how close this war is to the children.



Preparing for the Unknown...

Because of this, the U.S. Embassy in Burundi has once again issued warnings to American citizens in the country, and the tension there is incredibly high. Soldiers are also pouring into Burundi dressed as civilians, their intentions remain unknown. Every day, I am afraid for the children's safety. Every day, I am praying that God protects them. In times of war, there is always the looming fear that the banks will shut down again, which would make it almost impossible for us to send money for food, medications, and daily care. So we are working closely with our team on the ground to figure out logistics and make plans for the future. If the rebels were ever to push their way into Bujumbura, we are thinking through how we would continue supporting 38 children, how we would keep them safe, and how we would continue providing stability in a time of uncertainty.



SOS, 2025



Al Jazeera, 2025

What breaks my heart the most is hearing the reports coming out of Congo. There have been widespread assaults, rapes, and violence against women and children from both sides of the war, though especially from the M23 rebels. So many people have been killed. So many families have been torn apart. And with each new tragedy, the number of orphans and widows grows. I worry about the trauma these children will carry, about how this conflict will shape their lives, and about what it means for future generations. Burundi is already facing a refugee crisis, and earlier this week, the government even closed its borders with Congo, forcing desperate families to flee on foot. Many have resorted to throwing themselves into crocodile infested rivers to try to swim into Burundi. As a mother to these children, even from thousands of miles away, I feel the weight of all of this so heavily. I want to hold them, to sit with them, to reassure them that they are not alone. I want them to stay children as long as possible, untouched by the horrors happening around them.



Meet the Children

This year, our family has grown in the most beautiful way. We now have 38 children in our care, ranging from 3 to 17 years old. There are so many little faces and personalities now that sometimes it is hard to keep track of everyone, and I always laugh to myself because what a blessing that is! Every child who walks through our doors feels like a small miracle, a reminder of why this mission exists and why we give everything we have to keep them safe.

Being thousands of miles away from them has been incredibly hard. There are days when I wish I could walk into the courtyard and see their smiles, hear their laughter, or sit beside them during dinner. But even with the distance, every time I get to speak with them on the phone, it fills my heart with so much joy. They always yell, “Auntie!” with their little voices, and just hearing them makes all of the miles between us feel a little smaller. Below, I have included photos of our new children and the older ones as well.





Oh, How Good Is Our God!

There are many heartbreaking stories woven into the lives of our children, but there are also moments where you can so clearly see God's hand moving. Two of our newest little ones were referred to us by local priests. Their father had abandoned them, and they were staying with extended relatives who were unable to care for them. When we took them in, they were quiet, fragile, and clearly coming from a place of deep hardship.

No more than a week after bringing them into the home, we received news that their biological father had passed away. And all I could think in that moment was, Oh, how good is our God! He brought those babies to safety before tragedy struck. He moved them out of harm, out of neglect, and into a place where they would be held, fed, comforted, and loved.

We were able to support them in attending their father's funeral. It was absolutely heartbreaking. Even though he was not present in their lives and did not take care of them in this life, they cried. They mourned him. Their grief was real. And when they returned back to the home, they were quiet and heavy-hearted for days. But what broke me the most was something one of the girls said: "Now we're truly orphans."

I remember hearing those words and feeling them all the way in my chest. These children have endured more loss at their young age than most adults face in a lifetime. And yet, even in their sorrow, God has made a way for them. He brought them into our care before they were left completely alone in the world.

He is so good! even in tragedy, even in brokenness, even when the story hurts to tell.



I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done.

Psalm 9:1 NLT



Life Inside Our Home

People often ask, "What do the children do all day?" The truth is simple, they live full, happy, everyday lives. Some head to school early, others later, and the little ones stay home or go to preschool. With Burundi's rotating school schedule, everyone ends up home around lunchtime, filling the house with noise, joy, and laughter.

Our home runs with round-the-clock care. Four staff are always on shift, making meals and keeping things running. Some of the older girls love helping with cooking or laundry, taking pride in caring for their home and their younger siblings.



Just like in any of our own homes, there is order and routine. Weekends mean shared laundry duty, and school days often bring a last-minute uniform rinse after a muddy game outside. There is always movement... someone reading, someone playing, someone singing, someone helping, someone resting. It is simply the rhythm of everyday life.

"It's not enough to love the children, it is necessary that they are aware that they are loved."

+St. John Bosco



Our Most Urgent Needs

While daily needs like food, water, and clothing continue, there are always unexpected situations that come up when you have a house full of children. Illnesses can range from malaria, even with the use of mosquito nets, to rashes, to chronic conditions like epilepsy. Whenever one of the children needs medication or medical attention, it requires extra care and resources. Making sure each child is healthy, safe, and cared for can be challenging, especially with 38 children under our roof now.

The cost of supporting the children is growing quickly. With the economy constantly fluctuating and the value of the dollar rising and falling, food and basic necessities are more expensive than ever. Kids eat a lot, and caring for 38 children, providing their daily needs, and paying our dedicated staff requires significant resources. Supporting just one child's monthly meals costs roughly \$40 a month. When you add staff salaries and other essential expenses, our total monthly spending ends up being between \$2,600 and \$3,000.



Our most urgent need right now is consistent monthly donors. Regular support allows us to cover the children's food, medical care, clothing, and all the other needs that come up unexpectedly. We also want to continue welcoming more children. Every day, children come to our door asking for help, and it is always heartbreaking to have to say no. With your help, we can continue to open our doors to as many children as possible and provide them with the care, safety, and love they deserve.

I also want to take a moment to say thank you to all of our wonderful donors who have provided so much for the children this past year. I am always incredibly grateful for the support we continue to receive, and I could not do this work without you.



If we share with the poor, out of love for God, whatever he has given to us, we shall receive according to his promise a hundredfold in eternal happiness." + St. John of God