



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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“So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth” (1 Corinthians 3:7).

Dear friends and family,

We have entered a new decade, the year of our Lord, 2010. I remember as a girl thinking that 2000 seemed impossible and then as a mother-to-be watching *2001: A Space Odyssey* still not being able to imagine life in a new century. For those of you who know me very well, you know that this month I will reach a milestone birthday. Having been born in a year where figuring your age is very easy even for the worst of math students, this year also seemed difficult to fathom but it has gradually snuck up on me (still waiting for it to grow on me). One good thing though is that God has indeed prospered and grown me and given me a blessed present and future as I trust Him more and more. Another benefit is that we are that much closer to Jesus' return to Earth. *Praise God with me that He is not slow in keeping His promises but desires none to perish without knowing Him as Savior and Lord.*

We have begun 2010 here at Rafiki Village Malawi with nearly a full quiver of children. Psalm 127:3 says that children are a “blessing” from the Lord and we now have eighty-eight blessings living here with us. Our nine existing cottages are only two away from capacity. *Praise God that we are building another cottage we hope will be ready to hold another family of ten boys in late spring.*

Adding new children into the Village always brings great excitement and joy. We have in the past months brought in three little girls, Sara, Sarai, and Sipiwe and two young boys, InnoC as we call one (he joins two other Innocents at the Village) and Smart. It has been especially fun to watch the two boys as both of them were under two years of age when we got them. InnoC could not even walk when he came at around twenty months. Now he lines up after meals with his brothers, hands behind the back. He quickly learned to say “Mama” and his brothers' names and now can sing hymns or portions of them like “Holy, Holy” Holy.” Smart was at another mission-based nursery for babies and his adjustment has not been so dramatic. So, it has taken less time for him to play silly games with Madam Deb and laugh and coo at me. Sipiwe, our newest child, is very reserved and has been observing her sisters and others a lot. Her cottage

has ridden with me to church recently and the girls always sing all the way to church. The first Sunday, all the girls were singing and then they began a song that Sipiwe actually knew. Her sweet little three-year-old voice chimed right in bringing a smile to Mama's face and giggles from her sisters. This Sunday if the girls would not sing with her on the song she knows she just sang it as a descant to the hymn her sisters were singing. *Pray with us that we would be able to raise these children to know Jesus from a young age and serve Him until they are old.*



SARA, SARAI, AND SIPIWE



SPENCER AND FISKANI, TWO BOYS WHO WERE AMONG THE FIRST TO COME TO LIVE AT RAFIKI VILLAGE MALAWI AND INNOC IN FRONT OF SPENCER AND SMART IN FRONT OF FISKANI

Along with growth at the cottages, our school is growing also with all of our classes being at capacity except for the pre-k one (three-year-olds) and pre-k two (four-year-old class). All of our children are in school except for the two youngest, InnoC and Smart. We have been operating out of a preschool designed building and this year we have too many classes for that building. Therefore, with the assistance of plant manager David Schaffer and Village director Ed Bland along with capable national workers, we have set up a temporary but quite adequate classroom in about one-third of the dining hall on the school side. Kindergarten has its classes there and class three (third grade) has taken the big room where kinder was for the past two years. Lunch is also a challenge because we are feeding approximately 105 people (day-students and teachers along with our three primary grades) in a space two-thirds the size of before in less than an hour. *Praise God that He has given the increase and pray with us that funds will be available to start a primary school building very soon.*

At the JSS (junior secondary school) we now have three classes of young ladies who are day-students and a faculty of six teachers including ROS (Rafiki Overseas Staff). Our oldest set of girls enjoyed a great success recently in passing the examinations for the junior certificate awarded here in Malawi. They are now preparing to take the MSC (Malawi School Certificate) exams next year which will give them if they pass the equivalent of a high school diploma. They will need to work hard as the material is quite difficult especially in science and math. Perusing the physical science material, I am glad that I am not sitting for that exam. Many of these young ladies live in precarious situations with very little in terms of material resources. School would be an impossibility for them if it were not for Rafiki. *Pray that these girls will be able to stay in school with us and reap the reward of the MSC.*

My family has grown also. In late September, we were blessed with a baby boy Connor Patrick Needham, born to my son, Rory, and his wife, Jessica. At Christmas, I was able to meet and enjoy him for a few days as our family took a wonderful vacation. To be able to hold that baby and sing to him as I sang to his daddy and his Aunt Danielle was so special (you know the commercial that says

“for everything else there is Mastercard”—it was indeed priceless). We are still debating over what he will call me with Danielle holding out for Grandma and others—me especially—leaning toward a *go-go* which is what they call grandparents here in Malawi. *Praise God for His plan for families.*



RORY HOLDING CONNOR

Experiencing all God has done here at our Village in Malawi and even the opportunity to see my grandson for the first time would not be possible without those of you who continue to “water and sustain” in my life. Surely, God gives the growth but you are His hands and feet. My cup runs over with joy and I thank God on each remembrance of you.

In His love,

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