

Dear SMC Supporter,

As I sit down to pen my first address as SMC President, the words evolution and reflection have jumped to the forefront of my mind. In the past year, we have purposefully initiated great changes to Sister Mary's Children, including a new website with a fresh color scheme and logo, a project site visit that has inspired new ways to engage with the SMC partnering projects, and a change in our board leadership. The evolution of SMC has been incredible over these past seven years. However we can only start to appreciate where we are by reflecting back from where we began under the leadership of Joan Riggers as board president. She has graciously and fearlessly led SMC from only an idea to what we know SMC to be today. Although I am biased, I can think of no one better to mentor me in this role. Fear not, Joan Riggers is still highly involved, and is exploring new ways to support SMC. So, with the lens of evolution in mind, we are beyond excited to share with you our 2023 newsletter.

Brenna Riggers-Brewster
SMC Board President

Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season.

Sister Mary's Children's Board of Directors:

Brenna Riggers-Brewster, Joan Riggers, Mary Lytle, Steve Tacke, Sue Tacke, and Joan Brown

Donor Highlights

Earl and Arlen Uptmor

Earl and Arlene have supported SMC from our very earliest days as an organization. Their generosity stems from Earl's lifelong friendship as a classmate to Sister Mary Paule while attending St. Gertrude's Academy in Cottonwood, Idaho. Over the many decades of their friendship, Earl and Arlene kept abreast of the work of Sister and gave continued financial support to Sister's ongoing efforts. When SMC came into existence, the Uptmors continued their generous support of the work that was started by Sister. The Uptmor's continue to support SMC because in their words, they are inspired by others who give and they know their contributions are used wisely. Thank you to the Uptmors. Your support grows hope, education and empowerment every day.

Marjorie Tacke Dawson

We would like to extend our sincerest condolences to the friends and family of Marjorie Tacke Dawson. As Sister's sister-in-law, Marjorie was a longtime supporter of Sister and her work. Sister Mary's Children is humbled to be the stewards of such incredible gifts in her honor.

Celebrations!

Ikhwezi Lokusa Rehabilitation and Development Society

Ikhwezi Lokusa Rehabilitation and Development Society serves approximately 60 young adults who live with mild cognitive or physical disabilities. The students live on campus for up to five years as they participate in skills and independent living training programs, and receive physical therapy as needed.

While much of the year is regularly routined with daily classes and meals together, ILRDS also provides times of fun and special celebrations. On September 24th, 2023 Heritage Day was celebrated throughout South Africa. At Ikhwezi the young people, administrators and staff were encouraged to embrace their own unique customs, traditions, language and culture at a large celebratory gathering. Everyone enjoyed the variety of dishes prepared for the Heritage Day feast, as well as all the dancing and singing!



Sinako (We Can) Garden Project:

Thembelihle Home

Thembelihle Home, one of SMC's partner projects, serves as a foster home for children ages 6 to 16 brought to them from the Department of Social Development. Approximately 46 children are provided with a safe place to grow and heal from trauma by the caring staff members.

In early June of 2023, Thembelihle Home board members were approached by the manager from the local grocery store, Circle SuperSpar. A relationship between Thembelihle Home and Circle Spar has existed since 2011. This year the manager came up with an idea of starting up a project for the home that could help them generate income and sustain the Home during difficult times. The grocery store paid the start up costs for the project, and helped design the garden areas on the Thembelihle Home site. The children and staff nurture the plants through watering and weeding. SuperSpar is committed to buying many of the veggies from them for farm to store produce. Additionally, Thembelihle Home can use some of the vegetables for their own food. A grand opening celebration of this partnership occurred on June 16th, where there was singing, dancing, speeches and food!



Be a Part of 23 in 23!

Our new website now has a monthly automatic donation feature. Help us meet our goal of 23 recurring donors before the end of 2023 by visiting **sistermaryschildren.org** and becoming part of our monthly giving!



**\$5/month =
\$60/year =**

School uniform for a child at
Thembelihle Home

**\$25/month =
\$300/year =**

2 weeks of lunches for the
60+ young adult learners
at Ikhwezi Lokusa
Rehabilitation &
Development Society



**\$50/month =
\$600/year =**

Care of one child in the
nursery of Bethany
Children's Home for 6
months.

Set up your monthly donation at **sistermaryschildren.org** or send a check addressed to SMC.

Sister Mary's Children 501(c)3



SMC
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McCall, ID 83638

Contact Us:

sistermaryschildren.org

 [@sistermaryschildren](https://www.instagram.com/sistermaryschildren)

 facebook.com/sistermaryschildren

Building Expansion!

Bethany Home

Approximately 70 children, ages newborn to six years old, are lovingly served at our partner project, Bethany Home. Children are brought to the home from the Department of Social Development, and are provided with all the care that young children need to thrive during their stay.

Bethany Home has tackled several renovations of the facilities in recent years. New toilets and bathing areas, an updated kitchen, and the transformation of the nursery and preschool classrooms have all been completed. In 2023 the construction of a new Meeting Hall has begun! This hall will provide a place to conduct meetings without disrupting the children's programs, and will meet handicapped accessibility standards. The possibility of renting out the space occasionally for the purpose of generating funds for the children's home is also part of director Rose Kasumbi's dream for the future.

