

BICO CHEERS ST. MICHEALS AND ALL ANGELS CHILDREN



On 19th December, 2015, Blantyre Institute for Community Ophthalmology (BICO) cheered St. Michaels and All Angels Church of Central African Presbyterian (CCAP) Church children in Blantyre. St. Michaels and all Angel's children are orphans of the church that are taken care of by the church. They are well known as "*Ana a St. Michaels*" meaning Children of St. Michaels.

St. Michaels and all Angels Children are taken care of by the church in several aspects however they still stay with their relatives in different locations of Blantyre. They are known to stay in Ndilande as most of them stay in Ndilande but they are from different locations as far as Chileka. There are about **45** children that stay with their relatives however there are also some who are fully taken care of by the church about **13**, these stay in Nyambadwe at a home called Steka. The age range of these children is from 3 to 15 years. These children go to the church each and every Saturday where they are taught the word of God and then are served with lunch. The lunch is prepared by the different home cells of the church, the duty rotates from one home cell to another. Mr. Mkandawire is the overseer of the children and also mentioned that apart from those children the church also looks after over 150 disabled and mentally disturbed children across Blantyre.

During the festive season BICO thought it wise to have time and cheer the children. This was basically done simply because it is true that much as many celebrate during the festive season but there are a lot who do not have the opportunities like the St. Michaels children therefore it is good to spare some time and resources for them just to express love during this period.



Salome getting the packs from the vehicle into the hall where the activity took place



St. Michael's children being led into the hall

The activity took place in the Multipurpose Hall at Henry Henderson Institute (HHI) where St. Michaels and All Angels CCAP church is from 9:00am to 11:00 am. The activity started by an opening prayer which was led by Mrs Kulujiri the Overseer of all Sunday school children at St. Michaels and all Angel's CCAP Church. Mrs Chipojola then made her welcoming remarks and basically thanked BICO for considering the children and for all the gifts that BICO brought for the children. Mr. Mkandawire the overseer of the St. Michaels children also welcomed BICO and briefly talked of the background of the

St. Michaels children, how they are identified, how they are taken care of and the responsibility of the church on the children. He continued by thanking BICO for the initiative and encouraged BICO not to stop there but to continue and help many other under privileged Malawians and also to urge other organisations to take a move in helping fellow Malawians who are struggling.

BICO Officer who was coordinating the activity, Mumderanji Salome Balakasi appreciated the work that the church is doing in taking care of the children. She said that it is not easy to take care of such a large number of children especially to the overseers who are directly involved in taking care of and interacting with the children. She continued by saying that many have everything to support those kind of children but they do not do, that just shows that as a church they are responsible and are really practising the love of God. She further thanked the BICO Director, for the financial support that was provided for the whole activity. If not for him may be that could have died a wish but it was accomplished with his support. Salome finally encouraged the children to be obedient, faithful before God and work hard in school.

Mrs Kulujiri, the overseer of the Sunday school children was so happy with the coming of BICO and encouraged BICO as well not to stop from there but to continue supporting the children as they lack a lot of support in different forms. Mrs Kulujiri encouraged the children as well to work hard in school so that they become independent someday.

Gift presentation was led by Mr. Mkandawire and Salome. The gifts were presented to 45 children who were all present on that day and everyone received a pack which had the following; 1 tablet of laundry soap, 1 tablet of toilet soap, 1 kg packet of sugar, 500g packet of kitchen salt, 1 packet of coconut cookies biscuits, half litre bottle of orange squash, 1 kg packet of kilombero rice, 1 packet of corn snacks, a sweet-lolly pop.



Mr. Mkandawire and Salome presenting the gifts



St. Michael's children with packs in their hands

After the gift presentation, Mr. Mkandawire made closing remarks and finally the group took a group photo.



Group photo after the gift presentation



Joy as the children moved out of the hall

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!!