



Bienvenu Shelter

For Migrants and Displaced Women and their Children

Association Inc. Under Section 21

36 Terrace Road
Bertrams, 2094
Johannesburg, RSA
Tel/Fax: (011) 624 2915

Registration no. 2010/004379/08
Not For Gain
P.B.O. 930019703
N.P.O. 062 - 717
BBBEE E001171

P.O. Box 53288
Troyeville, 2139
Johannesburg, RSA
info@bienvenushelter.org

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matt 25:35)

Johannesburg, 7 June 2020

**Dear Sr. Breda Grehan
And the Holy Family Community in South Africa**

Re: Holy Family Sisters Tribute - Celebration of Bicentenary of Foundation.

In 2001, the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St Charles Borromeo (Scalabrinians), initiated the project of Bienvenu Shelter as a result of the commitment of the Charism in promoting the human dignity and human rights of Migrant and Refugee Women and their Children.

The Scalabrinian Sisters first met with the Holy Family Sisters on their arrival at The Archdiocese of Johannesburg, in the Human Development Department, in 1998. Both Missionaries came to serve the most vulnerable and destitute mothers and their children with humanity and dignity.

When leaving the offices each day, it was painful knowing that these mothers will be staying on the streets at night. After listening to all the saddening stories of many mothers having to flee their countries due to war, many in search of finding their husbands who had left before them, it was heartbreaking.

Unfortunately when arriving in Johannesburg, women were left alone with no food, no shelter, and their only luggage they had was their baby on their back and other children at their side. This was the reality and we were not able to respond to such a great need.

Both Congregations were enlightened by the Holy Spirit and they were to put in place concrete plans to serve these needs.

The Catholic Church at this time, were celebrating the 2000 Jubilee of the Church and they wished to help the most vulnerable and to make a donation to such a cause. They opened their loving arms and hearts to assist by donating a building of four flats that they had, initially used as a Convent, to be used to serve the neediest in the surrounding area.

The Holy Family Sisters kindly donated to the Scalabrinian Congregation in order to provide a safe and secure place for the most vulnerable Migrant and Refugee Mothers and their Children.



Bienvenu Shelter

For Migrants and Displaced Women and their Children

Association Inc. Under Section 21

36 Terrace Road
Bertrams, 2094
Johannesburg, RSA
Tel/Fax: (011) 624 2915

Registration no. 2010/004379/08
Not For Gain
P.B.O. 930019703
N.P.O. 062 - 717
BBBEE E001171

P.O. Box 53288
Troyeville, 2139
Johannesburg, RSA
info@bienvenushelter.org

Bienvenu Shelter, (meaning welcome) was named after the founder of the Holy Family Sisters, Pierre Bienvenu Noailles, continues to be with us to this day and his memory is still very much alive within the project of Bienvenu Shelters as well as the Holy Family Sisters Congregation.

We are eternally grateful that we have been able to serve so many Mothers and Children over these 19 years and this is all thanks to Fr. Noailles and the Holy Family Sisters. We express our sincere gratitude to this present day, in embracing the true meaning of family. The Family of Nazareth who were Refugees in Egypt also found a welcoming place, like Bienvenu Shelter welcomes all Migrants and Refugees. We serve by welcoming, caring and empowering.

Fr. Noailles had a broad vision for the *Holy Family*. He did not see it under the form of a narrow Organisation, nor even in the strict form of a religious congregation, but as a very extensive family destined to renew society. Bienvenu Shelter became an extended family of The Holy Family Sisters where we have and continue to hold each others hands, in the hope of renewing society, together in unity for those in need.

The journey of these last 19 years has always had the presence of The Holy Family Sisters in the Mission, assisting with financial support, being present on the Board. Sr. Cathy Murugan helped to put in place the Governance Board to have a Legal stance and today we are grateful and blessed to have Sr. Shelagh Mary on our Board.

We are united in thanksgiving on the Bicentenary of the Holy Family Foundation. We join you in celebrating the memorable history of your Foundation. May we continue on our path together, embracing the Mission.

May God Bless you all Abundantly!

Gratefully yours,

Sr. Marivane Chiesa, mscs
Director

BIENVENU SHELTER
For Refugee Women & Their Children
36 Terrace Road
Bertrams 2094, Johannesburg
Tel & Fax (011) 624 2915
N.P.O 062 - 717
BBBEE E001171