



NAZARETH  
HOUSE  
CAPE TOWN

**Report on the  
Children's Department,  
May 2011  
for Bushbaby Travel**

**Written and compiled by Janice Mulholland**

## ***Introduction and Background to Our Organisation***

Victoire Larmenier arrived in London in 1851 at the request of Cardinal Wiseman, the Archbishop of Westminster. Known as Mother Saint Basil, she founded the Sisters of Nazareth to care for the aged poor, many of whom were living in appalling conditions and needed not only material assistance, but also nurturing and companionship. She was also deeply touched by the plight of the orphans and destitute children of London and readily agreed to care for them as well as the impoverished elderly.

Today, the dedicated Sisters continue to live and work in Nazareth Houses in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, the United States of America, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The Sisters provide housing, comfort, love and care for those most in need, many of whom have been rejected by society.



Nazareth House was established in Cape Town in 1880 when a small group of Sisters of Nazareth arrived, at the request of the Bishop of Cape Town, to care for the most impoverished, frail elderly and children of the city who had been orphaned and abandoned. Many of these children were also gravely ill. Some 131 years later, Nazareth House continues to provide quality residential care and nurturing for abandoned, orphaned children living with HIV and other mental or physical challenges as well as the very frail, needy aged.

Over the years Nazareth House has responded dynamically and effectively to the needs of the most vulnerable members of society who have no other refuge or source of support. In 1992 the Sisters rose to the challenge of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and Nazareth House in Cape Town became one of the first children's homes in South Africa to take in and care for an HIV-positive baby. He is still in our care today. In May 2003 St Michael's Hospice, a seven-bed facility at that time, opened its doors to provide specialist care and treatment for destitute adults living with HIV and other life-threatening illnesses.

## ***Vulnerable Children's Projects***

Nazareth House is committed to providing love, nurturing, care and protection for orphans and other vulnerable children and to ensuring the best possible quality of life and future for these children by rendering comprehensive, holistic services to address their physical, psychological, medical, educational, nutritional and social needs as effectively as possible.



Nazareth House is particularly well-placed and has a wealth of experience in caring for vulnerable, orphaned and abandoned children. It is one of very few specialist, dedicated facilities for children with very special needs. Although Nazareth House is registered to accommodate 64 children and can provide temporary, emergency care for up to 25 babies and toddlers each day, more than 6,400 children have already been loved and nurtured since the inception of our children's projects. Some

97% of all young beneficiaries come from previously disadvantaged and impoverished communities. Although the children in our care reside in the City of Cape Town itself and in the community cottage that is located in the Cape Town

suburbs of Mowbray, children are referred to the organisation from communities throughout the Western Cape and even further afield.

In the last year our young charges have originated from a wide range of Cape Flats communities as well as from the streets of the Cape Town city bowl. Communities of origin included Manenberg, Bonteheuwel, Phillippi, Joe Slovo, Langa, Factreton, Guguletu and Khayelitsha as well as several rural communities of the Western Cape such as the Winelands, Ceres, Wolseley, Worcester, Colesberg and Beaufort West. A number of children also hail from other African countries, mainly the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique and Angola.

### ***Our Special Needs Children***

Nazareth House provides long-term residential care to children who have very special needs and absolutely no other source of care and support. These severely physically and mentally challenged children, all of whom are young girls, live in a purpose-built, well-equipped cottage on the grounds of Nazareth House in Vredehoek, Cape Town. In addition to living with HIV, most are either mentally or physically challenged by a variety of disabilities such as Cerebral Palsy, Down's syndrome and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. Given their very special needs and challenges, they will remain permanently in our care.



### ***Community Cottages for Children***

We are firm in our belief that, where possible, every child should be raised in a loving family environment. In an effort to provide non-institutional care, healthier children living with HIV reside as a family, with housemothers and in the local community. The children, who are raised in a loving homelike setting, attend local mainstream schools, interact socially with their peers and enjoy all the advantages and opportunities of an ordinary child in a caring family home.

### ***Nazareth House Place of Safety***



Nazareth House also serves as a place of safety for children who have been abandoned, traumatised and abused or removed from their family for their own protection. This is a short-term, court sanctioned intervention providing interim emergency care for up to 25 children each day until these children can be returned to the community, reunited with their family, placed with other family members or in more suitable care elsewhere. The vast majority of our emergency placement

children and babies require intensive 24-hour care.

### ***Family Support Services***

Family support services include counselling, the provision of basic parenting skills training, referrals for grants and on-going supervision and general family support. Food and clothing for the children are frequently provided upon their discharge.

## ***Family Reunification Programme***

Our family reunification programme aims to return as many children as possible to their families and communities of origin, where this is possible and in the best interests of the child.

### ***A Success Story – One of Many***

Emily\*, a permanent member of our Nazareth House family, first came to us as a young baby aged 13 months. Doctors predicted that because of Cerebral Palsy, she would be deaf and blind, and would never be able to move about freely. Emily proved them all wrong. Emily is now 18 years old and fully mobile with the use of an electric wheel chair.

The Emily of today is a little miracle. She has achieved her full potential and has come to enjoy a very special life, thanks to Nazareth House and the generosity, kindness and encouragement of many caring supporters and valuable funders.

### ***Positive Results and Impact of the Children's Projects: April 2010 to March 2011***

- Nazareth House was designated as a central point for lost and abandoned children by the Department of Social Development during the 2010 World Cup;
- Nazareth House provided long-term residential care and special nurturing for 14 severely physically and mentally challenged, special needs children, some of whom are living with HIV, who are in our permanent care;
- Residential care was also provided for 13 healthier children living with HIV, who benefitted from being raised in a loving homelike setting (the community cottages), while attending local mainstream schools, interacting socially with their peers and enjoying all the advantages and opportunities of an ordinary child in a caring home;
- Interim emergency care was provided to 90 children who had been abandoned, lost, traumatised and abused or removed from their family for their own protection. Of the 90 children who were placed with us on a temporary emergency basis 84 were successfully reunited with their families, adopted by new caring families or placed in either loving foster or other more appropriate care, and one died`. This is considered a very high success rate and a special achievement.

### ***A message from Aunty Bonna***



It is my greatest pleasure and honour to work with the babies, toddlers and bigger boys. For me, it is a calling, I am dedicated to my children and my job. I pray to God to do my work to the best of my ability, therefore I am proud to be in partnership with Sister Margaret to work with the special needs children and have been doing so for 25 years this year!

It is also good to know and appreciate the good people far away from home who help us to maintain our work. I thank you for helping and will keep on trying to do the very best I can with the children.

Thank God that we only lost two very deformed babies this year. It is very sad, but they are angels in heaven.

Thank you so much for what you do for us. God bless you.

***A special thank you***

We are particularly grateful to Bushbaby Travel for providing much-needed funding to sponsor most of Aunty Bonna's (one of our housemothers) salary during the last financial year. We also thank each and every traveller who endeavoured to add a little on to their holiday costs to donate to Nazareth House so far away.

**1 Administrative and Contact Details**

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Name of Organisation	Nazareth House
NPO Registration Number	038-257 NPO
Physical Address	1 Derry Street, Vredehoek 8001
Postal Address	P O Box 12116, Mill Street 8010
Telephone Number	(021) 461-1635
Facsimile Number	(021) 465-6414
Email Addresses	fundraising@nazhouse.co.za
Sister Superior	Sister Veronica Murphy
General Manager	Rosie Whittaker
Contact Person	Janice Mulholland
Website	www.nazhouse.org.za

**2 Banking Details: Nazareth House Aids Project**

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Name of Bank	Standard Bank
Name of Account	Nazareth House
Account Number	70215936
Branch Name	Cape Town Branch
Branch Code	02-00-09
Physical Location	15 Adderley Street, Cape Town 8001
Postal Address of Bank	P O Box 57, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa