



CORONAVIRUS IN THE CONGO: THERESA'S HOUSE UPDATE

Dear Friends of Theresa's House,

We feel so blessed to have you as friends. Your support and generosity never cease to amaze us. It was such a blessing to see and celebrate with many of you at our recent banquet.

We hope you are all remaining healthy and that attempts at social distancing are working for you and your family. Last Friday, the Congolese president, Félix Tshisekedi, ordered that all schools in the Congo be closed through May due to the coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools in the Congo don't have resources (Chromebooks, computers, books, etc.) for the students to take home in the event that schools would need to be closed for an extended period of time. This current health situation has placed all of us in a position most never thought possible just two weeks ago.

The children at Theresa's House are at home (the orphanage) now, just as we are here in the United States and around the world, and uncertain to when this will end or what will come next. Never in our lifetime have we seen prosperous countries like Italy, the United States, and the United Kingdom express the fear that millions of health care workers would be in danger of being infected. Our safety and the safety of others must be a priority, and we must continue to do what needs to be done and fix our eyes on our Lord Jesus.

The uncertainty we are now facing is the uncertainty that our children faced when they lived on the streets. You may have experienced a little of the anxiety that plagues them because of their past. Research shows that providing consistent structure to the children who experienced trauma and helping these children master both academic and social skills is the key to the healing process. The aim is to keep the structure in place such as learning and prayer time to reduce the amount of time spent doing nothing.

There are many companies that are providing free online learning in French and other languages to every teacher, and we can have access to these learning materials. Other companies are offering free licenses to schools or parents regardless of whether their schools have closed because these companies want teachers to have certainty about the resources available as they develop and execute plans to teach students remotely.



Our children at Theresa's House need your help in order to continue to receive educational opportunities. Their learning and healing depend on our love and generosity. The following are the resources we need to allow our children to continue to learn from home in the event of a long-term closure:

1. Three **computers**—one for our elementary school children, one for our middle school children, and one for our high school girls (\$1,050)
2. A **printer** (\$75) and a box of **paper** (\$50)
3. A **magnetic dry-erase board** (\$60) and **dry erase markers** (\$45)
4. We need to hire one **teacher** to come to the house and teach our middle and high school children from April to June and in the event of a long-term closure (\$250/month)
5. **Sanitizing and disinfecting products** and **deep cleaning** of two houses (\$500)
6. **Internet access** (\$60/month)
7. Three round **tables** and 12 **chairs** (\$450) and **transportation** (\$50)

We need a total amount of \$3,150. Together, we can meet this unexpected need. This is an urgent need, so please give any amount you can if you are able so we can continue to educate and keep the children safe and busy. This will keep their anxieties at bay and provide the structure and support they need during these uncertain times.

We are following the World Health Organization and the CDC guidance on frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Last week, a cleaning company came to do a deep cleaning of all areas of the two houses and will be continuing all of our aggressive sanitizing and disinfecting efforts throughout the two houses.

We continue to monitor the situation and are aware that 34 COVID-19 cases have now been confirmed in Kinshasa. As you can guess, many cases will go untested and unconfirmed. Theresa's House has a great relationship with the local Congolese government and is in close contact with the local authorities as the situation unfolds. We even helped provide educational posters for the local hospital.

Though these children are far away, you, like the good Samaritan, have chosen to consider them your neighbor. That is truly a fulfillment of Jesus' desire for us: to be a good neighbor and show compassion on those who are different from us and yet share the same human needs. As we struggle with our own change in circumstances, thank you for being a good neighbor to the children at Theresa's House (Luke 10:25-37).

Blessings!

Theresa Kashale-Scholten

HOW TO DONATE

Please help us reach our goal of \$3,150 to keep these children engaged and learning during this difficult time.

Donations can be made via PayPal, credit card, or direct contribution at **theresashouse.org**

Cash or checks made payable to Theresa's House can be mailed to:

**P.O Box 701
Sioux Falls, SD 57101**

For questions, contact our Treasurer, Jeff Kogel, at **(605) 361-3617**