



NEWSLETTER



ST. JOHN GIRLS' SHINES IN MALAWI NATIONAL BEE SPELLING COMPETITION FULL STORY ON PAGE 3



14th February, 2026

By Leon Nkhono | Form 4 Student

Many important things in life are often undermined because people consider them to be less relevant in everyday situations. Unfortunately, correct spelling is one of those things that is frequently overlooked. In today's world, where many people rely on technology such as phones and computers to correct their writing automatically, the ability to spell words correctly is slowly losing its value in the eyes of many learners. However, spelling

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VISITING DAY AT ST. JOHN GIRLS' SECONDARY SCHOOL

21st February, 2026

By Jenifer Nkhoma

FULL STORY ON PAGE 6

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KEY DATES

<div style="border: 1px dashed blue; border-radius: 50%; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">1</div> <p>3rd March, 2026 Martyr's Day Holliday Inter—Sports Competition</p>	<div style="border: 1px dashed blue; border-radius: 50%; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">2</div> <p>7th March, 2026 Motivational & Inspirational Talk</p>
<div style="border: 1px dashed blue; border-radius: 50%; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">3</div> <p>15th March, 2026 Director's Talk</p>	<div style="border: 1px dashed blue; border-radius: 50%; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">4</div> <p>19th March, 2026 End of term 2 examinations begin JCE & MSCE Premock Exams begin</p>



THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF—CARE FOR STUDENTS

By Talandira Lowe | Form 4 Student

Self-care is an important practice that helps students maintain their physical, emotional, and mental well-being. In the life of a student, there are many responsibilities such as attending classes, studying for tests, completing assignments, and participating in school activities. Because of these demands, students can sometimes feel tired, stressed, or overwhelmed. Practicing self-care helps students stay healthy, focused, and ready to learn.

One important aspect of self-care for students is maintaining good physical health. This includes getting enough sleep, eating balanced meals, drinking enough water, and engaging in regular physical activity. When students take care of their bodies, they have more energy to concentrate in class and complete their schoolwork effectively.

Self-care also involves caring for one's mental and emotional health. Students may face pressure from exams, expectations from teachers and parents, or challenges in friendships. Taking time to relax, talk to a trusted friend, teacher, or family member, and engaging in hobbies such as reading, drawing or listening to

music can help reduce stress and improve emotional balance.

Another important element of self-care for students is time management. Students who organize their time well can balance their studies with rest and recreation. Creating a study schedule, setting realistic goals, and taking short breaks while studying can help students remain productive without becoming exhausted.

In addition, students should remember that it is okay to ask for help when they are struggling. Seeking guidance from teachers, mentors, or school counselors is a healthy way to deal with challenges. Support from others can help students overcome difficulties and continue growing academically and personally.

In conclusion, self-care plays a vital role in a student's success and overall well-being. By taking care of their physical health, managing stress, and maintaining a balanced lifestyle, students can improve their academic performance and enjoy their learning journey. When students practice self-care regularly, they build confidence, resilience, and the strength needed to achieve their dreams.

ST. JOHN GIRLS' SHINES IN MALAWI NATIONAL BEE SPELLING COMPETITION



STORY FROM FRONT PAGE

remains a fundamental part of language learning and communication. Without proper spelling, it becomes difficult to communicate ideas clearly and effectively.

Many people spell words incorrectly for different reasons. Some learners confuse similar-looking letters such as b and d. Others struggle because they are unfamiliar with the origin and pronunciation of certain words. In some cases, people simply forget to include a letter in the middle or at the end of a word. Words like phoenix, for example, can easily confuse learners because of their unusual spelling patterns. These challenges show that spelling is not always as simple as it may seem.

"ANYONE WHO CAN ONLY THINK OF ONE WAY TO SPELL A WORD OBVIOUSLY LACKS IMAGINATION."

—Mark Twain

Perhaps this is one of the reasons why spelling bee competitions were introduced in schools. A spelling bee is designed to test students' ability to memorize the correct spelling of words from different languages and origins. It also helps to measure how wide a learner's vocabulary is and how well they can pronounce and understand difficult words. Through such competitions, learners are encouraged to read more books, practice spelling

regularly, and develop confidence when speaking in front of others.

In the Malawi National Spelling Bee Competition, schools first compete at the district level. At this stage, students from different schools gather to test their spelling abilities against one another. Those who perform well at the district level are selected to move on to the regional level, where the competition becomes even tougher as contestants face the best spellers from different districts. The best students from the regional level then qualify for the national level, and outstanding performers may even proceed to international competitions.

For many years, our school had never participated in this competition. However, things changed recently when St. John Girls' Secondary School decided to take part and give its learners an opportunity to showcase their spelling talents. This decision opened a new platform for students to challenge themselves academically and compete with learners from other schools.

At the beginning of the competition, about 30 contestants from our school participated at the district level. Each contestant showed great enthusiasm and determination to perform well. The competition was not easy, as many of the

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REV. FR. JOSEPH KIMU - DIRECTOR

Dear teachers, students, and cherished readers,

With profound joy and gratitude to our loving God, I welcome you to the February 2026 edition of St. John Girls' Secondary School Newsletter. As the Apostle Paul reminds us in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." This powerful verse encapsulates the spirit and vision that drives our school community forward as we journey through this academic year.

I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to our exceptional teaching staff and dedicated support personnel for your unwavering commitment to academic excellence and holistic education. Your tireless dedication is the cornerstone upon which our school's reputation is built. Together, we have set an ambitious yet achievable vision: to position St. John Girls' Secondary School among the top ten schools in Malawi. With your continued commitment and God's grace, I am confident we shall realize this noble aspiration.

To our beloved students, I encourage you to always aim high in all your endeavors. Excellence is a deliberate choice you make each day. Dream big, work hard, persevere through challenges, and trust in God's plan for your lives. You are here not merely to pass examinations, but to develop into well-rounded young women of character, competence, and compassion.

It gives me immense pride to congratulate our two brilliant students *Fantasia Manda* (Form 1) and *Ulunji Nundwe* (Form 2) who excelled in the Spelling Bee competition and have qualified for the National competition. You have brought honor to St. John's, and as you prepare for nationals, know that our prayers and support accompany you. Let this success inspire all students to pursue excellence in their own areas of giftedness.

I am particularly encouraged by students learning the guitar and keyboard. To those mastering these instruments, practice diligently and remain committed. We envision more women playing these instruments during church choirs across our nation. By developing these skills, you are preparing to serve the Church and



your communities in profound ways.

I must emphasize the importance of maintaining cleanliness in our classrooms, hostels, and toilets. Commit yourselves fully during manual work

sessions, approaching these tasks as opportunities to demonstrate stewardship and respect for our learning environment. A clean space promotes health, dignity, and conducive learning conditions.

Equally vital is your spiritual life. Cultivate a deep relationship with God through daily prayer, attend Mass with reverence, and read Scripture. St. John's is committed to integral education—developing you intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. We are forming you to be women of faith, integrity, virtue, and purpose.

As we journey through the holy season of Lent, I encourage you to embrace this time of reflection, repentance, and renewal through prayer, fasting, and acts of charity. Let this season prepare your hearts to celebrate Easter with profound gratitude.

I wish everyone a very happy and blessed Easter! May the risen Christ fill your hearts with hope, peace, and joy, reminding you that no challenge is insurmountable and no situation is beyond God's redemptive power.

May our Lord Jesus Christ continue to shower His abundant blessings upon St. John Girls' Secondary School, granting wisdom to our teachers, diligence to our students, and favor in all our endeavors.

With gratitude and blessings,

The Director
St. John Girls' Secondary School.

ST. JOHN GIRLS' SHINES IN MALAWI NATIONAL BEE SPELLING COMPETITION

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words presented were quite challenging and required careful listening, concentration, and confidence. However, our students showed courage and determination as they stood in front of the judges and audience to spell the given words.

Since not everyone can be a winner in a competition, only ten students from our school managed to emerge victorious at the district level. These ten contestants then qualified to represent the school at the regional competition. Reaching the regional level was already a great achievement for the school, considering that this was one of the first times St. John Girls' had participated in the spelling bee competition.

At the regional stage, the level of competition increased significantly. Students from many schools across the region gathered to compete, each one determined to progress to the national stage. The words became more difficult, and the pressure on the contestants increased as they had to spell unfamiliar words in front of a large audience. Despite the tough competition, our students tried their best and represented the school with great courage.

Out of the ten contestants who represented our school at the regional level, only two managed to qualify for the national level. Although the others did not make it to the next stage, their effort and bravery deserve recognition. Standing in front of many people and attempting to spell difficult words from different languages requires a great deal of confidence and determination.

The two outstanding students who successfully qualified for the national level are Fantasia Manda, a Form One student, and Ulunji Nundwe, a Form Two student. Their remarkable performance has brought pride and recognition to St. John Girls' Secondary School. For learners in lower classes to achieve such success in a national competition is truly inspiring to other students in the school.

Their qualification for the national stage is not only a personal achievement but also a milestone for the entire school community. It demonstrates that students at St. John Girls' Secondary School are capable of competing academically at higher levels and excelling in national competitions.

As a school community, we are proud of Fantasia Manda and Ulunji Nundwe for their hard work, confidence, and determination. Reaching the national level of such a competitive event is not easy, and their achievement shows dedication and commitment to learning.

We therefore wish Fantasia Manda and Ulunji Nundwe all the best as they prepare to represent St. John Girls' Secondary School at the national level. Whether they win the competition or not, they have already made the school proud by reaching this stage. We hope that their participation will inspire other students to believe in themselves, work hard, and take part in academic competitions that help develop their knowledge and confidence.



ST. JOHN INTEGRAL EDUCATION CENTRE
LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

05/30

PARTICIPATION

CURIOSITY

INTERACTION

VISITING DAY AT ST. JOHN GIRLS' SECONDARY SCHOOL



21st February, 2026

By Jenifer Nkhoma | Form 4 Student

Visiting day at St. John Girls' Secondary School is always a special and memorable occasion for all of us students. It is one of the most anticipated days of the term because it gives us the opportunity to reunite with our parents, guardians, and relatives after spending several weeks focusing on our studies and school activities.

On 21st February 2026, the excitement could already be felt from the early hours of the morning. As part of our usual routine, we woke up early and attended morning preparation before beginning our manual work. Even though we were eagerly looking forward to seeing our families, we still carried out our responsibilities to ensure that the school environment was clean and welcoming for our visitors.

After completing our manual work, we helped to organise chairs and prepare the surroundings where our parents would sit. Once everything was in place, we went back to the hostels to bathe and prepare ourselves for the arrival of our loved ones. The prefects were assigned the important duty of receiving the parents at the entrance and directing them to the appropriate places while also helping to call us when our parents arrived.

As the hours slowly passed, many of us waited nearly, watching the school gate with great anticipation. When our parents and relatives finally began to arrive, the school compound quickly filled with joy and excitement. Reuniting with our families felt very special, especially after being away from home for some time. We shared stories about our school life, our studies, and the experiences we had been having at school.

One of the interesting highlights of the day was the presence of representatives from NBS Bank, who gave

many students the opportunity to open student bank accounts. This initiative was very beneficial because it encouraged us to develop a saving culture and learn how to manage our finances responsibly.

As Form Four students, we also had a special meeting with our parents and the headteacher during the afternoon. During this meeting, we were given the opportunity to express some of the challenges and experiences we face in our academic lives. Our parents listened attentively and offered us valuable advice and encouragement on how we could improve our academic performance and behaviour. The headteacher later addressed the meeting, responding to the issues that were raised and assuring both us and our parents that the school administration would work towards finding solutions. We were also reminded about the importance of discipline, hard work, and determination as we prepare for our Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) examinations.

Throughout the day, we enjoyed spending time with our parents and relatives. They brought us various necessities and shared encouraging words that strengthened our motivation to work harder in our studies. The school grounds were filled with laughter, conversations, and moments of happiness as families spent time together.

However, as the day slowly came to an end, the joyful atmosphere began to change. Parents started preparing to return home, and the moment of saying goodbye arrived. For many of us, it was an emotional moment because it felt painful to part ways with our loved ones again after such a short time together.

Despite this, the strong spirit of unity within our school community was clearly visible. Those among us whose parents were unable to come were comforted and supported by fellow students. Our school director, Rev. Fr. Joseph Kimu, always encourages us to share with one another and support those in need, reminding us of the biblical teaching that a giving hand is always blessed.

In the end, visiting day was truly a wonderful and memorable experience for all of us. It strengthened the bond between us and our families and reminded us of the love, support, and encouragement that help us continue striving for success in our education. Indeed, it was a day we will always remember.

A GOOD HEAD AND A GOOD HEART ARE ALWAYS A FORMIDABLE COMBINATION—BY NELSON MANDELA



By Samuel Mpando | Teacher



Synopsis

"Nelson Mandela, a pivotal leader, championed the fusion of a sharp mind with a compassionate heart. His life exemplified this philosophy, guiding South Africa through apartheid's end. Mandela's legacy continues to inspire, emphasizing that true strength lies in balancing wisdom and empathy for societal transformation. His words offer timeless guidance"

Some quotes resonate across generations because they capture a simple truth about human character and leadership. Words spoken by influential figures often carry the weight of experience, reflecting lessons shaped by struggle, courage and perseverance. Among those voices, Nelson Mandela stands out as one of the most respected global leaders of the 20th century. His life and words continue to inspire conversations about justice, equality and moral strength.

Nelson Mandela quote: "A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination."

This brief but powerful statement reflects Mandela's belief that intelligence must be guided by compassion. A sharp mind can create ideas and strategies, but when combined with empathy and moral clarity, it becomes a force capable of transforming societies.

Mandela's quote about "a good head and a good heart" reflects his philosophy of leadership. A good head represents intelligence, knowledge and strategic thinking. A good heart symbolizes compassion, empathy and a commitment to justice.

For Mandela, real leadership required both qualities. Intelligence alone could create power, but without empathy it might lead to oppression. Similarly, compassion without clear thinking could struggle to achieve meaningful change. When wisdom and compassion come together, however, they create a powerful combination capable of guiding societies toward fairness and peace.

This philosophy shaped Mandela's own life. Despite spending decades in prison, he emerged with a message of reconciliation rather than revenge. His ability to balance reason with humanity allowed him to guide South Africa through one of the most delicate political

transitions in modern history.

Nelson Mandela's speeches and writings contain many lines that continue to inspire people around the world. Among his most memorable statements are:

"It always seems impossible until it's done."

"Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again."

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it."

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

"There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered."

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

These words reveal the guiding principles that defined Mandela's life—courage, resilience, compassion and a deep commitment to justice. Decades after his presidency, his legacy continues to shape conversations about freedom, equality and the responsibilities of leadership.

{ [Source—https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news) }

ST. JOHN INTEGRAL EDUCATION CENTRE

LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

07/30

YOU LOSE NOTHING IN DOING SOMETHING RIGHT



CLEMENT CHIGALAGALA

Headteacher

Dear Students,

As we continue with our academic journey this term, I would like to remind you that success is not built in a day. It is built daily—through discipline, respect, hard work, and moral choices. Allow me to share this short story with you.

At Chayamba Secondary School, there was a Form 3 student named Daniel. Daniel was intelligent, but he believed that rules were for people who were afraid to take risks.

"Why should I wake up at 4:30 for prep?" he would whisper to his friend. "Missing one study session won't change my life."

He came to class late, ignored parts of the school dress code, and sometimes copied assignments when he felt tired. To him, these were small things. After all, he still passed his tests.

In the same class was Ruth. Ruth was not always the top student, but she was known for her discipline. She attended prep, respected teachers, wore her uniform properly, and completed her work honestly. When she failed, she tried again.

One day, the school announced a scholarship opportunity for students who had shown both academic excellence and good conduct. Daniel was confident. But when the results were announced, Ruth's name was called.

Daniel later learned something important: excellence is not only about marks; it is about character.

That day changed him. He began attending prep faithfully. He stopped taking shortcuts. He chose honesty over convenience. When friends laughed at him, he simply said: "You lose nothing in doing something right."

Over time, his grades improved, his confidence grew, and

teachers began to trust him. He realized that rules are not there to limit us—they guide us. Hard work does not take away from us—it builds us. Discipline does not weaken us—it prepares us.

Dear students, remember this:

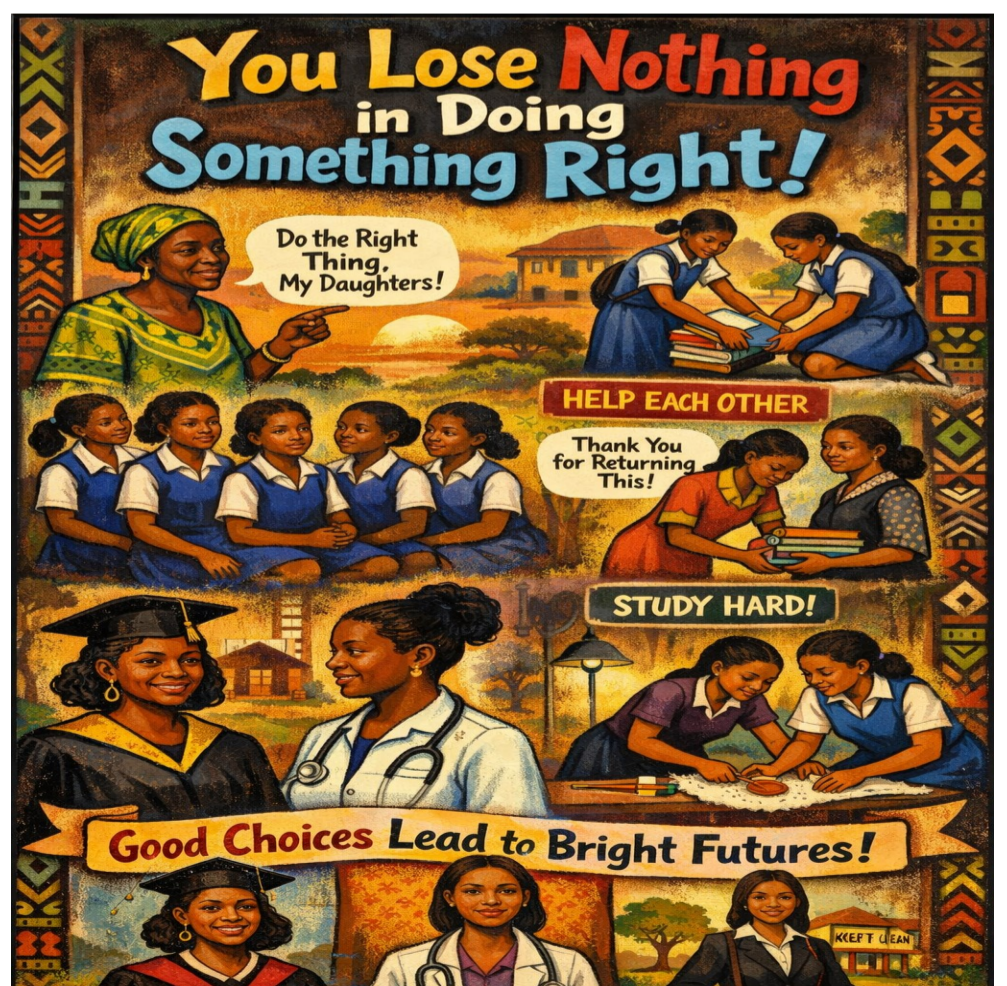
When you choose honesty over cheating, punctuality over laziness, respect over arrogance, and hard work over shortcuts—you lose nothing. Instead, you gain knowledge, trust, confidence, and a future you can proudly own.

Let us choose to do what is right—always.

Student Reflection Corner

1. What is one school rule I sometimes ignore, and why?
2. How can discipline improve my academic performance this term?
3. In what areas of my life do I need to stop taking shortcuts?
4. What practical step will I take this week to "do something right" consistently?

Take time to reflect honestly. The future you desire begins with the choices you make today.



ST. JOHN INTEGRAL EDUCATION CENTRE
LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

08/30

AN INSPIRING TALK THAT MOTIVATED US TO STUDY SMARTER



14th February, 2026

By Patience Chimbiya | Form 4 Student

On Friday, we had the privilege of attending an inspiring talk led by Madam Magret Mshani, who warmly asked us to call her Aunt Magie. From the moment she began speaking, she captured our full attention with her confidence, encouraging words, and engaging gestures. Her message was clear and powerful, leaving many of us motivated to improve our study habits and approach to learning.

One of the key topics she addressed was how to study smartly. She reminded us that learning is not just about reading books passively but about understanding what we read. She encouraged us to summarize our notes and recall information after studying so that we can better remember it when answering questions. She also advised us to test ourselves regularly, as this helps strengthen our understanding and memory.

Another interesting method she introduced was the Pomodoro Technique. At first, many of us thought the word Pomodoro sounded like a language from another country, but we soon learned that it is a simple and effective study strategy. It involves studying with full concentration for 25 minutes, followed by a 5-minute break. This method helps students stay focused while also preventing mental exhaustion.

“EDUCATION IS NOT THE LEARNING OF FACTS, BUT THE TRAINING OF THE MIND TO THINK.”

—Albert Einstein

Aunt Magie also spoke about the importance of effective study skills. She encouraged us to survey our work, review it carefully, explain what we have learned, and read actively so that we truly understand and remember the material.

On the second day, Saturday, the focus shifted to examination strategies. She advised us to practice with past examination papers so that we become familiar with the types of questions that may appear in exams.

She also reminded us that maintaining our well-being is important during exam preparation. Getting enough rest and managing stress are essential for good academic performance.

She further guided us on how to answer multiple-choice questions effectively. She advised us to read every question carefully before selecting an answer and to choose which questions to start with wisely. She also warned us against changing answers repeatedly unless we are certain they are incorrect. After completing the test, we should return to the difficult questions we marked earlier and attempt them again.

“READ NOT TO CONTRADICT AND CONFUTE, NOR TO BELIEVE AND TAKE FOR GRANTED, BUT TO WEIGH AND CONSIDER.”

—Francis Bacon

Most importantly, Aunt Magie reminded us to always understand the instructions given in each question. If a question asks for a short answer, we should keep it brief. If it requires an explanation or discussion, we should provide a detailed response. She also emphasized that time management during examinations is very important.

By the end of the inspiration talk, many of us realized how much we had learned. The session helped us understand better ways to study, manage stress, and approach examinations with confidence. We also learned simple techniques such as deep breathing, mindfulness, and taking short walks to help reduce stress.

We are very grateful to our Head Teacher and our parents for supporting such programmes that help us grow academically and personally.

Aunt Magie concluded her talk with powerful words that will remain with us for a long time:

“NEVER GIVE UP. CLAP YOUR HANDS WHEN YOU FAIL, BECAUSE FAILURE IS THE FIRST STEP TO SUCCESS.”



By Carol Njolomole— Form 2 Student

A PROMISE BROKEN

I was outside the house busy sweeping and enjoying the cool breeze early in the morning. I could hear the birds singing from afar. Suddenly, I heard a very deep and dangerous voice—the voice of my father, the bitter herb



doctor—calling out my mother's name, "Nabengo!" My mother went to him and asked peacefully, for the reason he had called her. He then accused her of being rude to him. He chased my mother away from his home, along with her belongings. I tried to follow, but he told me to stay, saying, "I want you to stay here, my dear. I really love you, my daughter, and I will take care of you properly. I will do everything you ask for. And you must also do what I ask of you." He said this while smiling. I was happy that my father had promised me those words. I was ready to obey him as his only daughter, "Chikondi."

Days danced into weeks without my mother, with only my father and me. It was indeed pleasant, as he would buy everything I asked for. And since he had told me to obey his orders, I did my part by doing the household chores. We were both happy together—until that one evening he came into my room around 10:00. I was asleep and woke up when I felt someone touching my bare thighs. I was startled to see a man at the foot of my bed.

I was scared, and then I realized it was my father. He smiled at me, and I asked him, "Why are you here at this time?" "I am here to see my daughter," he answered. I was surprised, because we had been together the whole day.

"IF YOU ARE NEUTRAL IN SITUATIONS OF INJUSTICE, YOU HAVE CHOSEN THE SIDE OF THE OPPRESSOR."

—Desmond Tutu

He came closer and told me not to be afraid that I was old enough—I was 16 by that time. I was about to scream, but he covered my mouth. I tried, but it was useless. He raped me. I could not believe that this was the same man who used to tell me sweet tales. I then realized that all those good things he had done for me, I would have to pay for in this way. He

He threatened me not to tell anyone, or else I would have to give back everything he had given me.

I was deeply saddened and disappointed in him. I truly remembered my mother's love. I missed her so much. He kept coming to my room. I grew tired of keeping this secret to myself, and I was also restricted from being around other people, even at school. He was afraid of the consequences, so whenever I was in a group, he thought I was telling them about the issue.

I was tired of staying indoors. One day, he went out, and I found a chance to tell my friends. They came home to chat



with me and noticed a change in my face, though I tried to give them a fake smile. They asked many questions and gave me hope. I finally revealed the truth. They promised to help me by informing the organizations that protect children's rights.

Weeks passed as I waited for a response from my friends. I was having lunch with the rapist—my father—when I heard a knock. I went to see who it was. I was surprised and happy to see my friends, other people, and policemen outside. They called us all outside, where we talked about my father's behavior. In the end, he was arrested, and I was examined by doctors to see if I had contracted any disease. I was relieved to find out that I was healthy.

I thanked them, especially my friends. They left, and I stayed behind with my friends. I cried for my mother, and tears of joy also overflowed down my cheeks because I had been helped. Then I heard footsteps from behind. I stood up and was amazed to see my mother. She had also been involved in helping me. I returned to school, and I was very happy. I worked hard, and now I am a midwife at the Capital City hospital, and I am also one of the most respected blood bank donors.

"YOU MAY ENCOUNTER MANY DEFEATS, BUT YOU MUST NOT BE DEFEATED."

—Maya Angelou



By Doreen Mhango— Form 1 Student

THE LONELY GIRL

Once there was a girl named Lily. She lived in a small but busy town called Louzille, a place where the streets were always filled with people walking to and fro, where children played and laughed together in the neighborhoods, and where everyone seemed to know everyone else. But despite all the activity around her, Lily felt completely alone. She was enrolled in a prestigious academy on the edge of town, a school known for its high standards and bright students. Because she was new to the academy and came from a different background than most of the other learners, Lily struggled to fit in. She never had friends, not because she was unkind or unfriendly, but because she was simply too shy and too nervous to reach out to anyone. Every morning, she would walk through the school gates with her head down, hoping no one would notice her, and every afternoon, she would walk home the same way, alone with her thoughts.

"BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO START A CONVERSATION THAT MATTERS."

—Roy T. Bennett

Even though she was shy and nervous, Lily was a very hardworking girl. She loved learning and took her studies seriously. In class, she would listen carefully to every word the teacher said, and she would complete all her assignments on time, often staying up late to make sure her work was perfect. Her exercise books were always neat and organized, and her marks were among the best in the class. But



academic success did not fill the empty space in her heart. She longed for companionship, for someone to talk to during break time, for a friend to walk home with, for a person who would understand her and accept her just as she was. She would watch the other learners laughing and playing together in the schoolyard, and a deep sadness would settle in her chest. She wondered what it would feel like to be part of a

group, to share secrets and jokes, to have someone who would miss her if she were absent from school.

One day, as Lily was walking along the dusty path that led to the academy, she noticed three girls walking ahead of her. They were laughing and chatting animatedly, their voices carrying through the morning air. Lily recognized them as learners from her school because they wore the same uniform she did. They seemed so happy and carefree, and Lily felt a pang of envy mixed with longing. She walked behind them for a while, listening to their laughter, and then something stirred inside her. She realized that if she wanted things to change, she had to do something different. She could not continue being the lonely girl who walked alone every day. So, she took a very deep breath to calm her racing heart, gathered all the courage she could find within herself, and made a decision. She quickened her pace until she caught up with the three girls, and then she walked straight up to them.

Her hands were trembling slightly, and her voice felt small inside her

"IT ALWAYS SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE UNTIL IT'S DONE."

—Nelson Mandela

throat, but she pushed through the fear. She looked at the three girls with hopeful eyes and said, "Hi, my name is Lily. I see you at school sometimes, and you seem really nice. I was wondering... do you want to be friends?" For a moment, there was silence, and Lily's heart pounded so loudly she was sure they could hear it. But then the three girls looked at one another and smiled. They looked back at Lily, and one of them said, "Of course we can be friends! The more, the merrier." Lily could hardly believe her ears. A wave of relief and joy washed over her, and she broke into a genuine smile, the kind of smile she had not worn in a very long time.

From that day onward, Lily's life began to change in wonderful ways. The three girls—whose names were Mercy, Thandi, and Grace—welcomed her into their circle with open hearts. They became good friends, the kind of friends who share everything with one another. During break time at school, Lily no longer sat alone under the tree reading a book; instead, she sat with Mercy, Thandi, and Grace, laughing and talking about everything and nothing. They shared their secrets with her, telling her about their families, their hopes, their fears, and their dreams. Lily, in turn, opened up to them about her own life, about how lonely she had been before meeting them, and about how grateful she was to have them as friends. They walked together along the path to and from school every day, their voices blending in cheerful conversation, and Lily realized that the walk, which had once felt so long and lonely, now felt short and delightful because she was surrounded by friendship.

They did everything together. On weekends, they would visit one another's homes, sharing meals and playing games. They helped one another with schoolwork, studying together for exams and celebrating one another's successes. When Lily felt sad or worried, her new friends were there to comfort her and lift her spirits. And when they were sad, Lily was there for them too. She learned what it meant to be a true friend—to listen, to support, to care, and to be present. The bond they formed grew stronger with each passing day, and Lily felt as though she had found sisters she never had.

And so, from then on, Lily never had to be alone again. She never had to walk with her head down, hoping to be invisible. Instead, she walked with confidence and joy, surrounded by friends who loved her for who she was. The shy, nervous girl who once had no friends had taken a leap of courage, and that leap had transformed her life. She carried that courage and bravery with her always, and she shared it with the three girls who had changed her world. Lily learned that sometimes, the most important step is simply to reach out and say, "Hi, do you want to be friends?" And she knew that no matter where life took her, she would always be grateful for the day she found the strength to ask that question.

"DO THE THING YOU FEAR, AND THE DEATH OF FEAR IS CERTAIN."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson



By Clara Rashid— Form 1 Student

ANOTHER SIDE OF HELP

Once upon a time, in a small village surrounded by green hills and tall maize fields, there lived a girl named Oprah. Oprah was a young girl with a bright face and a curious mind, but there was something she lacked deeply. She had never been trained or taught by her parents on how to take care of other people, especially those who were in need of help. In her home, she was the only child, and her parents gave her everything she wanted without ever teaching her the importance of sharing, kindness, and compassion toward strangers or even neighbors. Because of this, Oprah grew up thinking only about herself, her needs, and her desires. She did not understand that there were people in the world who suffered, who went to bed hungry, who had no warm clothes to wear when the cold wind blew, and who begged along the roads just to survive another day. Her heart had not yet learned the language of empathy, and her eyes had not yet seen the pain of others as something that concerned her.

One sunny morning, the sky was clear and the birds were singing sweetly in the trees. Oprah's mother asked her to go to the nearby market called Maonga to buy some vegetables and fish for the family meal. Oprah agreed, took the money her mother gave her, and put on her favorite yellow dress. She walked along



the dusty path that led to the market, humming a tune she had heard on the radio. The path was long and winding, passing through patches of tall grass and clusters of village huts. As she walked, enjoying the warmth of the sun on her skin, she noticed an old man sitting beside the road under the shade of a large baobab tree. The old man looked tired and weak. His clothes were torn and dusty, and his eyes were sunken with hunger and sorrow. He had a small clay pot in front of him, hoping that kind passersby would drop a few coins or some food to help him survive.

**"NOT ALL OF US CAN DO GREAT THINGS.
BUT WE CAN DO SMALL THINGS WITH
GREAT LOVE."**

—Mother Teresa



When the old man saw Oprah approaching, he gathered whatever strength he had left and called out to her in a gentle, trembling voice. "Young girl," he said, "may you please share some food with me if you have some? I have not eaten in two days, and my body is growing weak. Please, help an old man who has no one to care for him." Oprah looked at the old man for a brief moment. She saw his outstretched hand, his pleading eyes, and his frail body. But instead of feeling pity or compassion, she felt annoyance. She did not want to be bothered by a beggar. She had money in her pocket, but it was for the vegetables and fish her mother had sent her to buy. She could have bought a small piece of bread or a banana to give to the man, but the thought never crossed her mind. She simply ignored him, turned her face away, and walked on as if he did not exist. She continued her journey to Maonga market, leaving the old man sitting there, disappointed and hungry.

**"THE PURPOSE OF HUMAN LIFE IS TO SERVE,
AND TO SHOW COMPASSION AND THE WILL
TO HELP OTHERS."**

—Albert Schweitzer

What Oprah did not know was that all of these things were being watched by a rich man who lived in that same village. His name was Mr. Mwale, and he was known throughout the village as a generous and wealthy businessman. He owned large fields of tobacco and maize, and he had many workers who helped him farm his land. That morning, Mr. Mwale was riding his bicycle along the same path to check on one of his fields. He saw everything that happened between Oprah and the old man. He saw how the young girl had ignored the beggar's plea and walked away without a second thought. His heart was moved with compassion for the old man, and he decided that he would not let the man continue suffering alone.

Mr. Mwale stopped his bicycle beside the old man and greeted him warmly. "Greetings, my friend," he said. "I saw what happened with that young girl. Do not be discouraged. Come with me to my home, and I will take care of you." The old man could hardly believe his ears.

STORY CONTINUED TO PAGE 13

ST. JOHN INTEGRAL EDUCATION CENTRE

LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

12/30

ANOTHER SIDE OF HELP

STORY FROM PAGE 12

Tears welled up in his eyes as he struggled to stand. Mr. Mwale helped him onto the bicycle and slowly rode with him to his large house at the center of the village. When they arrived, Mr. Mwale called his wife and instructed her to prepare a warm bath and a hot meal for the old man. He gave the old man clean clothes to wear and a comfortable bed to rest on. He did not stop there. In the days that followed, Mr. Mwale gave the old man everything he needed—food, shelter, medical care, and even some money to help him start a small business. The old man was overwhelmed by such kindness and thanked Mr. Mwale every day, praying that God would bless his generous benefactor.

After some days had passed, Oprah was once again walking through the village, this time on an errand to deliver something to a friend. As she passed by a big, beautiful house with a painted gate and a well-kept garden, she noticed the gate slowly opening. To her great surprise, she saw the very same old man she had ignored at the roadside walking out of the compound. He was dressed in clean, new clothes, and he looked healthy and strong, nothing like the weak beggar she had seen



before. Oprah was shocked and confused. She could not understand how a poor beggar could be seen coming out of such a wealthy home. Her curiosity got the better of her, and she opted to run after the man to ask him what had happened.

"I HAVE DECIDED TO STICK WITH LOVE. HATE IS TOO GREAT A BURDEN TO BEAR."

—Martin Luther King Jr

She caught up with him and said breathlessly, "Excuse me, old man! Do you remember me? I saw you begging by the road some days ago. How come you are here, coming out of this big house? What happened to you?" The old man turned and looked at her with calm, knowing eyes. He remembered her clearly—the girl in the yellow dress who had ignored his plea for food. But he did not speak harshly to her or scold her for her selfishness. Instead, he simply replied with a peaceful smile, "This is what God does, my child. When people refuse to help, God raises others who are willing. A kind man took me in and gave me everything I needed. Now I am on my way to thank him again." He then continued his journey toward the rich man's house, leaving Oprah standing there with a troubled heart.

When the old man arrived at the home of Mr. Mwale, he found a surprising and troubling scene. Many people were standing outside the rich man's doorstep, shouting and waving their hands angrily. They were creditors—people whom Mr. Mwale owed money due to some business deals that had gone wrong. The rich man had invested heavily in a new farming project, but the harvest had failed because of unexpected drought, and he had lost a great deal of money. Now these people were demanding their money back, and Mr. Mwale did not have enough to pay them. He stood at his door with a worried face, trying to explain his situation, but the crowd would not listen. They wanted their money, and they wanted it now.

The old man watched all of this and understood that the man who had helped him was now in great trouble. Without hesitating, he stepped forward and approached Mr. Mwale. "Sir," he said, "I see that you are in difficulty. Let me help you." He then took out the money that Mr. Mwale had given him to start his business, along with some savings he had managed to accumulate, and he began to pay back some of the debts the rich man owed. He gave generously, helping to calm the angry crowd and reduce the burden on his benefactor.

Unfortunately, Mr. Mwale did not immediately recognize the old man's face. In the stress of the moment, and because the old man was now clean and healthy, he looked quite different from the frail beggar he had rescued. Mr. Mwale turned to him and asked, "Who are you? Why are you helping me like this?" The old man looked at him with a warm smile on his face and said, "I am the man whom you helped when no one else would. You took me in, fed me, clothed me, and gave me a new start in life. Now you seemed to be in quite a pickle yourself and needed a lending hand. I am simply returning the kindness you showed me."

When Oprah, who had followed the old man out of curiosity, heard these words from a short distance away, she felt a deep shame wash over her. She realized that her selfish behavior had not only hurt the old man but also revealed the emptiness in her own heart. She thought about how she had ignored someone in need, while the rich man had shown compassion, and how that same compassion had now come back to help the rich man in his own time of trouble. She understood that kindness is a circle—what you give to others often returns to you when you least expect it.

Soon, the whole village heard about what had happened. Word spread from hut to hut, from the market to the well, about how Oprah had ignored the begging old man and how the rich man had helped him, and how the old man had later helped the rich man in his time of need. Everyone talked about Oprah's unpleasant behavior, and she became an example of what happens when selfishness rules the heart. Oprah hung her head in shame and promised herself that from that day forward, she would learn to see the needs of others and to offer help whenever she could, so that she would never again be remembered as the girl who walked past suffering without a second glance.



By Zanele Lwanda— Form 1 Student

XHOSANI'S FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

Once upon a time, in a small village nestled between rolling hills and tall swaying trees, there lived a young girl named Xhosani. Xhosani was not like many other children her age, for she had no parents to call her own. Her mother and father had passed away when she was very young, leaving her in the care of her loving aunt, whose name was Atipatsa. Aunt Atipatsa was a kind and hardworking woman who did everything she could to provide for Xhosani, even though life was not always easy. She worked in the fields during the day and sold vegetables at the local market to earn just enough money to buy food and clothes for them both. Despite the struggles they faced, Aunt Atipatsa made sure that Xhosani felt loved and cared for, and she always dreamed of giving her niece a better future.

One quiet evening, as the sun was setting and painting the sky in shades of orange and pink, Aunt Atipatsa sat down with Xhosani under the shade of a mango tree near their small home. She looked at Xhosani with gentle eyes and took a deep breath before speaking. "Xhosani, my dear child," she began softly, "I have something important to tell you. On Monday, you will be going to school." She said these words with hope and excitement, believing that education would open doors for her beloved niece. But Xhosani did not share her aunt's enthusiasm. In fact, her heart sank the moment she heard the word "school." She lowered her head and stared at the ground, feeling a heavy knot forming in her stomach.



their names, Xhosani had never been taught these things. She did not know how to read even the shortest sentences, and when it came to writing, her hands felt clumsy and unsure. The thought of sitting in a classroom full of children who already knew these things made her feel small and afraid. She worried that the other learners would laugh at her, that the teacher would be disappointed, and that she would feel foolish and out of place. All these fears swirled around in her mind like a dark storm, and she could not find a way to calm them.

The days passed quickly, and before Xhosani knew it, Monday morning had arrived. The sun had just begun to rise, casting soft golden light through the small window of their home. Xhosani woke up slowly, her heart already beating faster as she remembered what day it was. She put on the clean uniform Aunt Atipatsa had washed and ironed for her, and she ate a small breakfast of porridge, though she could barely swallow because of her nerves. As they walked together along the narrow path that led to the school, Xhosani's legs felt heavy and her hands were trembling. She could hear the sounds of children laughing and playing in the distance, and the noise only made her more anxious.

Aunt Atipatsa noticed how quiet and tense Xhosani had become. She reached out and gently took her niece's hand, giving it a reassuring squeeze. "Xhosani, my child," she said in a warm and steady voice, "I know you are nervous. I know you are afraid. But you must remain strong. You are braver than you think, and you are capable of learning just like everyone else. Do not let fear hold you back. Go into that classroom with your head held high, and do your best. That is all anyone can ask of you." Her words were like a soothing balm to Xhosani's troubled heart. She looked up at her aunt and saw nothing but love and belief in her eyes. In that moment, something shifted inside Xhosani. She took a deep breath and felt a spark of courage begin to grow within her.



"CHILDREN ARE LIKELY TO LIVE UP TO WHAT YOU BELIEVE OF THEM."

— Lady Bird Johnson

Xhosani was not happy about the news because she carried a secret fear deep within her. Unlike other children her age who had already learned to read simple words and write

"COURAGE IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF FEAR, BUT THE TRIUMPH OVER IT."

— Nelson Mandela

STORY CONTINUED TO PAGE 15

ST. JOHN INTEGRAL EDUCATION CENTRE

LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

14/30

ANOTHER SIDE OF HELP

STORY FROM PAGE 14

When they finally arrived at the school gate, Xhosani paused for a moment. She looked back at her aunt, who smiled and nodded encouragingly. Then, with renewed determination, Xhosani walked through the gate and into the school compound. She made her way to the classroom where other children were already gathering. Some of them stared at her curiously, but Xhosani remembered her aunt's words and found a seat near the window. She sat up straight and waited for the teacher to arrive.

"THE SECRET OF GETTING AHEAD IS GETTING STARTED."

— Mark Twain

Soon, the teacher entered the room. She was a kind-looking woman with a warm smile and gentle eyes. Her name was Mrs. Banda, and she greeted all the children with enthusiasm. She began the lesson by teaching them the alphabet, showing them how each letter looked and what sound it made. She wrote the letters on the chalkboard in big, clear strokes, and she asked the children to repeat after her. Xhosani listened carefully, her eyes fixed on the board, her lips moving silently as she practiced the sounds. She was determined to learn, and to her surprise, she found that she was able to remember the letters and their sounds quite well.



Mrs. Banda then taught them how to write their names. She walked around the classroom, helping each child hold their pencil correctly and guiding their hands as they formed the letters. When she reached Xhosani's desk, she knelt down beside her and said softly, "Let me help you, dear. Watch how I move my hand." She gently guided Xhosani's hand as they wrote the letters

X-H-O-S-A-N-I together on the page. Xhosani's eyes widened with wonder as she saw her name appear on the paper. For the first time, she felt a sense of accomplishment and pride. She practiced writing her name over and over again, each time improving just a little bit more.

The morning passed quickly, and before Xhosani knew it, it was time for a short break. She stepped outside and stood under a tree, watching the other children play. She felt different now—not so afraid, not so alone. She had learned something new, and that knowledge filled her with hope. When the bell rang, she returned to class with a lighter heart. Mrs. Banda announced that they would have a small test to see what they had learned. Xhosani's heart fluttered for a moment, but then

she remembered all that she had absorbed that morning. She took the pencil in her hand and carefully wrote her name at the top of the paper. She identified the letters the teacher pointed to, and she even managed to write a few simple words. When she finished, she felt a sense of calm she had not expected.

"IT DOES NOT MATTER HOW SLOWLY YOU GO AS LONG AS YOU DO NOT STOP."

—Confucius

The next day, Mrs. Banda stood in front of the class with a big smile on her face. She held up a stack of papers and announced, "I am very proud of all of you. You worked hard, and many of you did wonderfully on the test." She began calling out names and handing back the papers. When she called Xhosani's name, she added, "Xhosani, you passed with flying colors! I am so impressed by how quickly you



learned. Keep up the good work." Xhosani could hardly believe her ears. She took her paper and stared at the marks at the top. Tears of joy welled up in her eyes, and she clutched the paper to her chest as if it were a precious treasure.

After school, as Xhosani walked along the path toward home, she spotted a familiar face in the distance. It was her old childhood friend from the village, a girl named Anele. They had played together when they were younger, but they had not seen each other in a long time. Anele waved excitedly and ran over to greet her. "Xhosani! It's so good to see you!" Anele exclaimed. "How was your first day at school?" The two girls walked side by side, chatting happily about everything that had happened. Xhosani told Anele about her nervousness, about how kind Mrs. Banda had been, about learning to write her name, and about passing the test with flying colors. Anele listened with genuine interest and shared her own stories about school. The walk home felt short because they were so lost in conversation, and by the time they parted ways, Xhosani felt as though a heavy weight had been lifted from her shoulders.

"WALKING WITH A FRIEND IN THE DARK IS BETTER THAN WALKING ALONE IN THE LIGHT."

—Helen Keller

STORY CONTINUED TO PAGE 16

ST. JOHN INTEGRAL EDUCATION CENTRE
LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

ANOTHER SIDE OF HELP

STORY FROM PAGE 15

When Xhosani finally arrived home, she found Aunt Atipatsa sitting outside, shelling peas and waiting for her return. As soon as Xhosani came through the gate, her aunt looked up with eager eyes. "Well, my dear? How was it? Tell me everything!" she said, setting aside her bowl. Xhosani sat down beside her aunt and began to share the events of the day. She told her about the letters she had learned, about writing her name for the first time, about the test, and about meeting Anele on the way home. She spoke with enthusiasm and joy, her eyes shining brightly

as she recounted her achievements. Aunt Atipatsa listened to every word, her heart swelling with pride and happiness. When Xhosani finished her story, Aunt Atipatsa opened her arms wide and pulled her niece into a warm, tight hug. She held her close and whispered, "I always knew you could do it, my brave girl. I am so proud of you." In that moment, surrounded by love and accomplishment, Xhosani felt truly happy, and she knew that school was not something to fear, but a place where she could grow, learn, and become the person she was meant to be.





EDUCATION LIFE

By Annabel Balaka
Form 1 Student

Education life
It does not call anyone,
But everyone runs to it.
It is a key to success.

Even if we run
Away from it,
We will still
Come back to it.

Life in it is like
Weather: it changes
Every single day,
Filled with experience
And hardships.

One has to study
Hard and be disciplined
Enough to enjoy life
In it and also
To survive in that place.

If one takes it seriously,
It will help us succeed
In the near future.
It is just education life.



OUR SCHOOL

By Erica Makawa
Form 1 Student

St. John girls' secondary school
Is the name of our school,
But we nicknamed it JIZZO.

It is a beautiful school.
Everyone there is beautiful too.
I cannot explain everything about it
It is just the best.

At this school we have
Hard-working teachers
Who try their best to help the students
For them to pass with flying colours.

If you want to be a top student,
Go to
St. John girls' secondary
The integral education for girls.



HOPE

By Sharon Makoto
Form 1 Student

As one fell down,
Never lose hope.
That should be the
Beginning of the journey.

Where there is darkness,
Make it be light.
Never lose hope
Something is still
Waiting for you out there.

It starts with pain,
Then success.
There is no sweet
Without sweat.



THE GOSSIPERS

By Angella Kafunya
Form 1 Student

They sit in a circle,
ears almost touching,
ready to receive the latest news
about their neighbour.

The storyteller coughs,
clearing his throat,
ready to prick the ears.

"Have you heard?"
is their starting point.
Then when the neighbour comes,
one member starts another story.



DICTIONARY

By Hilda Banya
Form 4 Student

All the words you want are in me.
I am smarter than you,
Whether you like it or not.
Well, let me not be proud
Yet there is more about me.
I also got help to be like this.
I thank all those who feed me.
Even I had to eat to be this intelligent.
I am used everywhere and
I am well known in all countries.

Known in all professions,
Known in different denominations
And in different religions.
I sometimes bring bad behaviors.
I am a teacher myself.
I even teach the teachers.
And if you want to find me,
I am not expensive.
Easy access,
Even by the internet you can access me.
Go to my sister Google and ask for me.
Simply type dictionary!



BLOW THE WIND AWAY

By Jennifer Nkhoma
Form 4 Student

Blow the wind away,
A wind which brings
Suffering and pain,
Surrounded by evil and cruelty.
Looking both sides,
I see pain.

Blow the wind away,
Wind which
Only carries the seed of sorrow.
Heavy winds which
Sweep away my happiness
And bring bad luck.

Blow the wind away
So that I can see light
And a way through all
These barriers which
Cover my life.

**"A POET IS, BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE, A PERSON WHO IS PASSIONATELY
IN LOVE WITH LANGUAGE."**

—W. H. Auden



LONELY

By Doreen Mhango
Form 1 Student

Here I am alone.
All friends are gone.

Oh! I am so lonely
I and my shadow only.

I fear the empty space.
The real me I dread to face.

Is it me?
Could I be?



POERTY

By Zodwa Chinyama
Form 1 Student

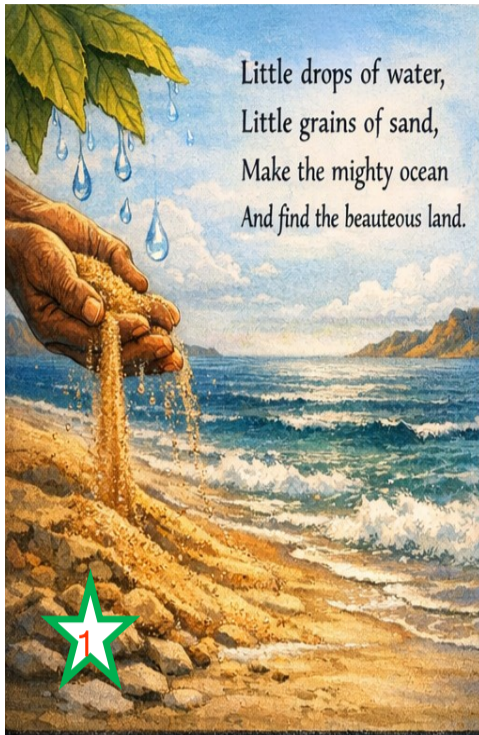
Poetry is a whisper
of the heart,
A quiet song made out of words.
It paints the sky with simple lines
And lets our hidden feelings be heard.

In gentle rhythm,
thoughts take flight,
Turning silence into art
For in the beauty of a poem,



LITTLE THINGS

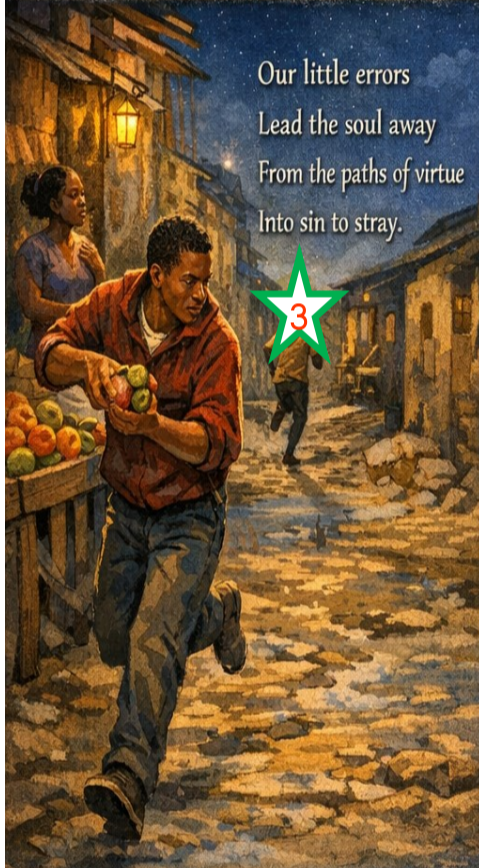
By Takondwa Chamanza
Form 1 Student



Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean
And find the beautiful land.



Little moments,
Humble though they be,
Make the mighty
Ages of eternity.



Our little errors
Lead the soul away
From the paths of virtue
Into sin to stray.



Little deeds of kindness,
Little words of love,
Make our earth an Eden,
Like the heaven above.



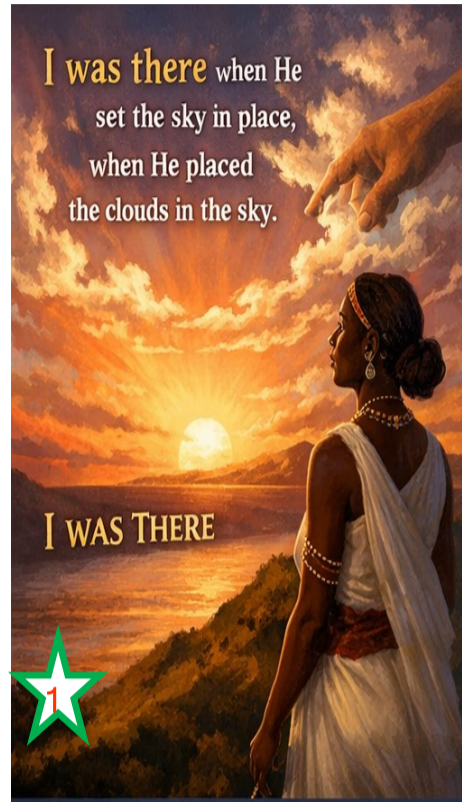
“POETRY IS THE LANGUAGE IN WHICH MAN EXPLORES HIS OWN AMAZEMENT.”

—Christopher Fry



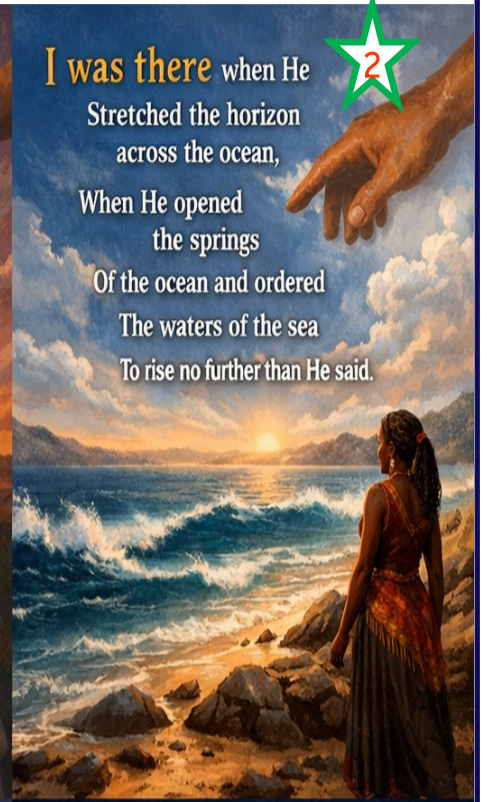
I WAS THERE

By Lucy Mbite
Form 1 Student

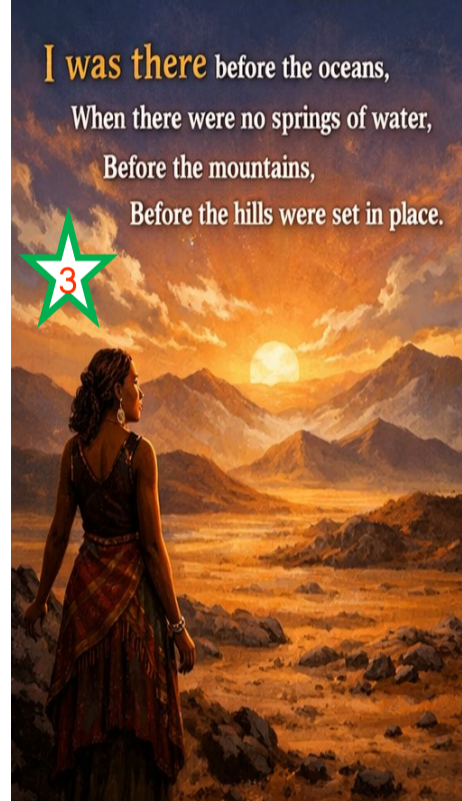


I was there when He
set the sky in place,
when He placed
the clouds in the sky.

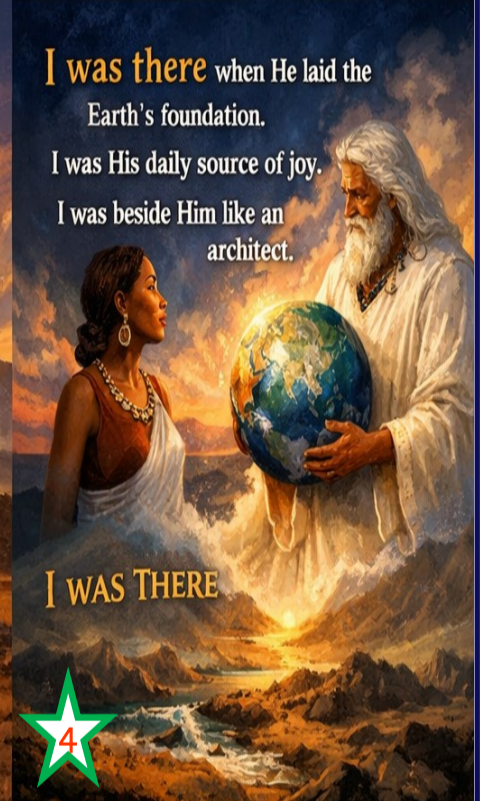
I WAS THERE



I was there when He
stretched the horizon
across the ocean,
When He opened
the springs
Of the ocean and ordered
The waters of the sea
To rise no further than He said.



I was there before the oceans,
When there were no springs of water,
Before the mountains,
Before the hills were set in place.



I was there when He laid the
Earth's foundation.
I was His daily source of joy.
I was beside Him like an
architect.

I WAS THERE



“GENUINE POETRY CAN COMMUNICATE BEFORE IT IS UNDERSTOOD.”

—T. S. Eliot



I WILL BE RICH WHEN I DIE

By Zainab Mdala
Form 1 Student

I will be rich when I die.
Now I am still alive,
But I am poor.
Not only poor,
But I cannot manage to find goods.
People were laughing at my food,
People were laughing at my dress,
Some are laughing at my home.
But I will be rich when I have died.

I will be rich when I have died.
I was sick,
But no one came to see me.
Once I had died,
Many people came to see me.
Some came to cry,
Some came to eat,
Some are holding different foods,
But cook and eat like celebration.
I will be rich when I have died.

I will be rich when I have died.
My relatives and others bathed my body.
My dead body was put in a gold box,
A gold box bought with much money,
An expensive box when I have died.
Many people escorted me
As if I am a king on the journey
To the graveyard.
I will be rich when I have died.

I will be rich when I have died.
My relatives lost money when I died.
They lost their ties while I have died.
They killed big cows and ate while I died.
Now I am rich because I am dead.
I will be rich when I have died.



THIS LOVE

By Judith Maniya
Form 1 Student

On my own I stand
Because you endured with
Courage, pain,
And sweetness.
You brought me up
With all your love and care.
Only this love is so special,
So unique and lovable.

My first doctor is you,
Who knows my sickness,
Hunger, anger,
And my weakness.
You did much for us and
Taught me how to love and care.
Oh! Mama, I will
Always remember you and love you.

Oh! Mama,
You didn't bear me only,
But also my brothers.
You care and treat us equally,
And we say thank you for that.
May God bless you and
Give you a long life.
I love you, Mama,
Because of this love.

**"POETRY IS WHEN THE
HEART SPEAKS IN WAYS
THE MIND CANNOT."**

- Unknown

**"A GOOD POEM IS A CONTRIBUTION TO REALITY. THE
WORLD IS NEVER THE SAME ONCE A GOOD POEM HAS
BEEN ADDED TO IT."**

- Thomas Merton



BORN BLACK BUT BEAUTIFUL

By Glory Banda
Form 1 Student

Born black but beautiful,
With little cute eyes,
Always shining bright
Like diamond in the sky.
Born black but beautiful.

Born black but beautiful,
Small black and pink lips,
Lips that always look good
When she applies lip gloss
And Vaseline.
Born black but beautiful.

Born black but beautiful,
Black-brown skin coloured,
With small ears that make her
Look young and new.
Fluffy and soft cheeks
I have fun when playing with
The born black but beautiful.



ON THE RUN

By Laureen Menyere
Form 1 Student

Haunted by my own shadows,
Haunted by piercing arrows.
Away from myself I ran,
Facing myself,
Hardly fun.

Pretending to be
Whom I am not,
Fooled by the knowledge
I have got.

Other people's lives I try to live,
Hoping this would keep me alive.
Keeping myself very busy,
Convincing myself life is easy.
Still the abyss grows wider,
Trapped like a tomb rider.



I WILL BE WITH YOU

By Doreen Mhango
Form 1 Student

I will be with you
When you laugh,
Helping you laugh louder.

I will be with you
When you cry,
Drying up your tears.

I will be with you
When you smile,
Making you smile wider.

I will be with you
When you are in pain,
Swallowing the bitter pills.



GOD'S LOVE

By Eunice Maonekedwe
Form 2 Student

Human love is imperfect.
Only God's love is perfect.
Such love let us yearn.
From God's love let us learn.

Human love is conditional.
Only God's love is unconditional.
For such love is inspired,
from God's love that has never expired.

Human love is limited.
Only God's love is unlimited.
For such love is motivated.
May God's love in us be cultivated
And stuck in our hearts.



MY BEAUTIFUL YOU

By Ruth Malitino

Form 1 Student

My beautiful you,
The way you smile
Cools me down,
Your eyes all over my face,
Your lips black as
Golden charcoal.

My beautiful you,
My all concentration
Is on you in class,
The way you put your
Lip balm on
As if you are
Eating bubblegum.

When your face is down,
I feel hell in my heart,
Wondering when
You are going to smile.

Your cool,
Soft heart
Bouncing in my head,
Making me redeemed.
The priest fails to
Remove my love for you.

My beautiful you,
Scratching your head,
Eating a pencil in class.
I imagine you eating me,
Not the pencil.
The rubber fades
Away with kisses
Me on the line,
Waiting for my turn

**"POETRY IS THE RECORD OF
THE BEST AND HAPPIEST
MOMENTS OF THE HAPPIEST
AND BEST MINDS."**

—Percy Bysshe Shelley



SHATTERED PROMISES

By Tadala Nteteka

Form 3 Student

There was a time
When there was
No soul to turn to,
But you gave me hope.

There was a time
When words of discouragement
Filled a room,
But only your words
Meant the opposite.

There was a time when
Reality shattered me,
But you collected all
The pieces together,
Then you put them in order.

Now all is well,
But I hear that
You have faded.
You helped me too much,
Too much to make me blind.

Never saw that
You struggled,
Never saw the
Pain you held.
Your smile erased it all,
Making it too
Unnoticeable to all.

Just a hint you
Should have shown,
But all you said was,
"I will always be
By your side."

I trusted you.
But what now?
You have shattered
A golden promise.



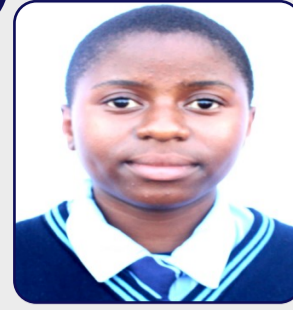
GOODBYES

By Karen Maluku
Form 3 Student

It was a dream
Where you and I
Had to say goodbye.
But now I have realized
That dreams come true.

The day is today to
Say goodbye,
Which is really
Hard for me.
That is when life
Has its twists.

Aaah!
I sigh once again,
Believing that this is happening.
I have no choice but
To say goodbye.
Goodbye,
My favorite person.



A BUTTERFLY

By Karen Maluku
Form 3 Student

You were once called ugly,
And you shed your skin to
Reveal a chrysalis.

Inside your silky pad,
You start to change
From caterpillar to butterfly.
You take eight weeks in all
To be a butterfly.

Once you free from the shed,
You use your long thin tongue
To drink the sweet pollen from
Different flowers.

A butterfly up in the sky
Watch it as it flutters by
With its colorful wings.

***"A THING OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOR EVER:
ITS LOVELINESS INCREASES; IT WILL NEVER PASS
INTO NOTHINGNESS; BUT STILL WILL KEEP A BOWER
QUIET FOR US, AND A SLEEP FULL OF SWEET DREAMS,
AND HEALTH, AND QUIET BREATHING."***

—John Keats



***"POETRY LIFTS THE VEIL FROM THE HIDDEN
BEAUTY OF THE WORLD, AND MAKES FAMILIAR
OBJECTS BE AS IF THEY WERE NOT FAMILIAR."***

—Percy Bysshe Shelley



TIZABELLA MBEWE

Future Musician

My name is **Tizabella Mbeve**. I am 15 years old, and I am a Form 1 student at St. John Girls' Secondary School.

When I grow up and finish my education, I wish to become a **Musician**—a famous singer here in Malawi. I admire artists like Cardi B, Nicki Minaj, Ayra Starr, and Tyla because of their talent, confidence, and the way they express themselves through music.

I know that becoming a successful musician requires dedication and practice, so I will continue working hard every single day to make my dream come true. I believe that with passion and persistence, I can one day stand on big stages and inspire others with my voice.



LETICIA MATEWERE

Future Judge

My name is **Leticia Matewere**. I am 13 years old, and I am in Form 1 at St. John Girls' Secondary School.

My dream job is to become a **Judge**. I want to sit in a courtroom and judge different cases fairly, listening carefully to both sides to determine who is wrong and who is right.

I believe that justice is the foundation of peace, and I want to use my voice and knowledge to promote peace and fairness throughout the country. I know that everything is possible the moment we dare to dream it, and those dreams become reality through hard work, perseverance, and a commitment to doing what is right.

“ONE CHILD, ONE TEACHER, ONE BOOK, AND ONE PEN CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.”

—Malala Yousafzai



MADALITSO BANDA

Future Rapper

My name is **Madalitso Banda**. I am 16 years old, and I am a Form 3 student at St. John Girls' Secondary School.

When I grow up, I would like to become a **Rapper**. I want to be an artist because I want to make Malawians enjoy the energy and rhythm of rapping songs on stage. I love the way words can flow together to tell stories, express emotions, and get people moving.

With God's guidance and hard work in everything I do, I believe that even the biggest dreams can become reality. I am ready to put in the effort to develop my talent and share it with the world.



PEACE MWANGO

Future Lawyer

My name is **Peace Mwango**. I am 14 years old, and I am a Form 1 student at St. John Girls' Secondary School.

In the future, I would like to become a **Lawyer** who is also a musician. I know that it is possible to have two careers, and I want to pursue both because they are my passions. I want to make my mother proud by achieving great things.

I am drawn to music because I love to play the guitar, and I can already imagine myself strumming and singing on stage while also standing in a courtroom defending justice. Everything is possible with determination and hard work—because hard work always pays off in the end.



QUEEN NGWIRA

Future Computer Engineer

My name is **Queen Ngwira**. I am 17 years old, and I am in Form 4 at St. John Girls' Secondary School.

My dream is to become a **Computer Engineer**. I am working hard every day so that I can be enrolled at the Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences to pursue my career.

I know that this field is challenging, especially for a girl, but I am determined to succeed. I believe that with hard work and the help of the living God, I will prosper greatly in life. As Rev. Fr. Joseph Kimu always says, "Today's sweat is tomorrow's Fanta." I am willing to sweat now so that I can enjoy the sweet rewards of my efforts later.



ANGELLA KAFUNYA

Future Lawyer

My name is **Angella Kafunya**. I am 14 years old, and I am a Form 1 student at St. John Girls' Secondary School.

When I grow up, I would like to become a **Lawyer**. I admire the female lawyers I see on television and in the news—women who speak boldly and fight for justice. I want to change people's minds and show them that law is not only for men. Girls can become great lawyers too.

I believe that with hard work and perseverance, I will achieve my dream of becoming a lawyer one day and make a difference in my country.

"WE CANNOT ALL SUCCEED WHEN HALF OF US ARE HELD BACK. LET US MAKE OUR FUTURE NOW, AND LET US MAKE OUR DREAMS TOMORROW'S REALITY."

—Malala Yousafzai



DOREEN MHANGO

Future Military Doctor

My name is **Doreen Mhango**. I am 13 years old, and I am a Form 1 student at St. John Girls' Secondary School.

When I grow up, I want to become a **Military Doctor**. I want to serve my country by helping fellow soldiers when they are hurt in battle or attacked by goons and raiders. But beyond that, I also want to save the lives of ordinary people. I admire people who are willing to help their friends and even strangers in times of need.

I hope and believe that I will achieve this dream when I grow up. I will always put God first in everything I do, because I know that with Him, all things are possible.



VICTORIA JIM

Future Surgeon

My name is **Victoria Jim**. I am 13 years old, and I am a Form 1 student at St. John Girls' Secondary School.

When I grow up, I aspire to become a **Labor and Delivery Surgeon**—a doctor who helps women in hospitals give birth easily and safely. There is something beautiful about bringing new life into the world, and I want to be part of that miracle.

I know that I may meet many harsh challenges before I reach my career, but I will not give up. I will work hard and keep pushing forward until I reach my destination. I will always put God first in everything I do, trusting that He will guide my steps.



JACQUELINE MATEMBA

Future Community Developer

My name is **Jacqueline Matemba**, and I am a former student of St. John Girls' Secondary School.

I am passionate about helping vulnerable communities and promoting social justice. This drive inspired me to pursue **Social Work** at **DMI-St. John the Baptist University**. I am committed to gaining the skills and knowledge needed to empower individuals and improve societal wellbeing.

With dedication, hard work, and God's guidance, I hope to make a meaningful contribution to my community.



MARY CHITSAKAMIRE

Future Public Health Specialist

My name is **Mary Chitsakamire**, and I am a former student of St. John Girls' Secondary School.

I have always been inspired to care for the sick and vulnerable. This passion led me to pursue **Nursing and Midwifery** at **Nkhoma University**. I am committed to developing the skills and knowledge needed to provide quality healthcare.

Through hard work, dedication, and God's guidance, I hope to make a lasting difference in the lives of those I serve.

"DON'T LET ANYONE ROB YOU OF YOUR IMAGINATION, YOUR CREATIVITY, OR YOUR CURIOSITY. IT'S YOUR PLACE IN THE WORLD; IT'S YOUR LIFE."

—Mae Jemison



MEMORY LANGSON

Future Public Health Officer

My name is **Memory Langson**, and I am a former student of St. John Girls' Secondary School.

I have always been passionate about healthcare and supporting patients through nursing and midwifery. This drive inspired me to pursue **Nursing and Midwifery** at **St. Luke's College of Nursing**. I am committed to gaining the skills and knowledge needed to provide compassionate and professional care.

With dedication and God's guidance, I hope to make a meaningful impact on the health and wellbeing of my community.



TAYAMIKA CHIGUMULA

Future Business Developer

My name is **Tayamika Chigumula**, and I am a former student of St. John Girls' Secondary School.

I have always been interested in business management and entrepreneurship. This interest led me to pursue **Business Administration** at **CUNIMA**. I am committed to gaining the knowledge and skills required to manage and grow successful businesses.

With dedication, hard work, and God's guidance, I hope to contribute meaningfully to Malawi's business sector.



A BLUEPRINT OF A FATHER'S WISDOM

By Samuel Mpando | Teacher

Ever wonder why some people just seem to carry themselves differently? That quiet confidence, that grace under pressure, that ability to make everyone feel comfortable in their presence. We've spent years thinking about this, especially after losing our fathers. Going through their things, we would find ourselves hearing their voice in our heads—all those phrases they used to say that shaped who we've become.

Growing up, we didn't realize how lucky we were. Our fathers had a way of teaching life lessons without making them feel like lectures. They would slip wisdom into everyday conversations, planting seeds of character that would bloom years later. Looking back now, especially as we watch our own children raise theirs, we can see how those simple phrases shaped not just our manners, but our entire worldview.

If our fathers used these phrases with us growing up, chances are they were teaching us something far more valuable than just good behavior. They were showing us how to move through the world with class.

1. **How do you think that made them feel?**

A simple 1. This one hit differently every single time. Whether we had said something thoughtless to a sibling or forgotten to thank someone properly, our father would pause, look at us with those knowing eyes, and ask us that question. He never told us we were wrong. He just made us think.

The genius of this phrase is that it builds empathy from the inside out. You can't answer that question without putting yourself in someone else's shoes. And once you start doing that regularly as a kid, it becomes second nature as an adult.

2. **If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all**

Classic? Yes. Cliché? Maybe. But this phrase taught us more about social intelligence than any book ever could. Our fathers lived by this rule, and they expected us to do the same.

What made it powerful was that they modeled it. We never heard them gossip about the neighbors or badmouth relatives behind their backs. When drama unfolded around us, they would simply

change the subject or find something positive to focus on.

This doesn't mean being fake or never addressing problems. It means choosing our words carefully and understanding that our opinion isn't always necessary or helpful.

"MY FATHER DIDN'T TELL ME HOW TO LIVE; HE LIVED, AND LET ME WATCH HIM DO IT."

— Clarence Budington Kelland

3. **Money talks, wealth whispers**

Some of us might not have had much money growing up. But our fathers managed the household budget with precision—stretching every dollar during some pretty tight times. Still, they taught us that true class had nothing to do with how much we had in the bank.

They would say this whenever we saw someone flashing expensive things or bragging about possessions. The message was clear: people with real substance don't need to announce it. They let their character speak for itself.

This phrase has saved us from so many poor financial decisions over the years. It taught us to value quality over showiness, substance over flash.

4. **Always leave a place better than you found it**

This applied to everything. Public restrooms, friends' houses, parks, even our own spaces. Our fathers would have us straighten cushions before leaving someone's home, pick up litter that wasn't ours, and always clean up after ourselves, plus a little extra.

But they meant it metaphorically too. Leave people better than you found them. Leave situations improved by your presence. Add value wherever you go.

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ST. JOHN INTEGRAL EDUCATION CENTRE
LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

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A BLUEPRINT OF A FATHER'S WISDOM

STORY FROM PAGE 27

It's such a simple concept but imagine if everyone lived by it. Our fathers understood that small actions create ripples, and they wanted our ripples to be positive ones.

5. Thank you notes are not optional

Our fathers were serious about thank you notes. Birthday gift? Thank you note. Dinner at someone's house? Thank you note. Someone did you a favor? You guessed it.

At the time, it felt excessive. Now we understand they were teaching us to acknowledge kindness, to take time to appreciate others, and to never take generosity for granted. In our digital age, this might seem antiquated, but the principle remains golden.

The act of writing that note forces us to slow down and really think about what someone did for us. It's mindfulness and gratitude wrapped into one small gesture.

"AS WE EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE, WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT THE HIGHEST APPRECIATION IS NOT TO UTTER WORDS, BUT TO LIVE BY THEM."

—John F. Kennedy

6. Stand up straight—it shows respect for yourself and others

Posture was big in our house. Not in a military way, but our fathers believed how we carried ourselves sent a message to the world. Shoulders back, head up, purposeful movement.

They would remind us that good posture showed we were engaged, present, and confident. Slouching, they said, made us look like we didn't care about ourselves or the people around us.

The older we get, the more we realize they were teaching us about presence. How we show up physically affects how people perceive us and, more importantly, how we perceive ourselves.

6. Being on time is a sign of respect

Our fathers treated punctuality like a moral imperative. If we were supposed to be somewhere at 3:00, we were in transit at 2:45. Running late wasn't just inconvenient; it was disrespectful to

other people's time.

This has served us incredibly well throughout our lives—in our careers, in relationships, with our kids. When we show up on time, we are telling people they matter to us.

They also taught us that if we are going to be late despite our best efforts, we call ahead. No excuses, just acknowledgment and a sincere apology.

8. Kill them with kindness

When dealing with difficult people, this was our father's go-to strategy. Someone rude at the store? Extra politeness. A nasty neighbor? Warm greetings and occasional cookies.

They believed that kindness was the ultimate power move. It disarms people, makes you untouchable, and often transforms situations entirely. Plus, they would add with a wink, it really annoys the people who want to get under your skin.

This phrase taught us that we always have control over our response, regardless of how others behave.

9. Always make people feel welcome in your home

"No" 9. Some of our houses weren't fancy, but everyone felt comfortable there. Our fathers had a gift for making people feel special, wanted, and seen. They would remember how people took their coffee, ask about their sick parents, notice new haircuts.

They taught us that hospitality wasn't about having the nicest things or serving elaborate meals. It was about genuine warmth, paying attention, and making people feel they belonged.

WHAT TO LEARN

These phrases weren't just words; they were a blueprint for living with dignity and grace. Our fathers understood that true class isn't about money or status. It's about how we treat people, how we carry ourselves, and the energy we bring into a room.

If you recognize these phrases from your own childhood, you were given a gift. And if you didn't hear them growing up, it's never too late to start living by them now. After all, the best way to honor the wisdom of classy fathers everywhere is to pass it forward.

MR. CLEMENT CHIGALAGALA - HEADTEACHER

Dear Students, Esteemed Members of Staff, Parents and Guardians, and Valued Readers,

As we journey through the first weeks of the term, we thank God for His mercy and guidance as we continue sailing through the academic year. I am filled with gratitude and pride for the spirit that continues to define our school community. At St. John Girls' Secondary School, we remain committed to our motto, "Integral Education for Girls", nurturing not only academic excellence but also character, discipline, and resilience.

To our dear students, I encourage you to remain focused, determined, and disciplined. Success is not accidental—it is the result of consistent effort, obedience to school regulations, and a positive attitude towards your studies. As we approach the Mid-Term Examinations, I urge you to work extra hard. Use your time wisely, consult your teachers, revise thoroughly, and support one another academically. Remember, every test is a stepping stone toward your greater goals.

To our examination classes, Form 2 and Form 4, time is not waiting. It is cruising faster than we often realize. Your preparation must be intentional and serious. Form 4 students, you are the flag bearers of St. John Girls. The image, pride, and academic legacy of this institution rest significantly on your shoulders. Lead by example through discipline, hard work, and determination. The future you desire begins with the effort you invest today.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to our two outstanding stars who have qualified for the National Finals of the Spelling Bee Competition. Your achievement is a testament to hard work, courage, and excellence. As you proceed to the finals, carry with you, confidence and the prayers of the entire St. John family. We believe in you, and we encourage you to aim even higher.

To our beloved parents and guardians, thank you sincerely for your continued support and cooperation. Your partnership strengthens our mission. We deeply appreciate those who made time to attend the Term II Visiting Day. Your presence demonstrated commitment to your daughters' academic and personal growth. Together, we are shaping responsible and successful young women.

To our dedicated members of staff, both teaching and support staff, I extend my profound gratitude for your unwavering commitment and hard work. Your dedication, often beyond the call of duty, ensures that our school operates smoothly and effectively. Let us continue to serve with excellence, unity, and professionalism as we guide our learners toward success.

As we move forward, let us all remain united in purpose. With discipline, teamwork, prayer, and determination, there is no limit to what we can achieve.

May this February be a month of renewed energy, focus, and success for us all.

May this February be a month of renewed energy, focus, and success for us all.

Headteacher

St. John Girls' Secondary School



1

FANTASIA MANDA (THIRD FROM LEFT) AND ULUNJI NUNDWE (THIRD FROM RIGHT), THE TWO ST. JOHN GIRLS' STUDENTS WHO QUALIFIED FOR THE NATIONAL STAGE OF THE MALAWI SPELLING BEE COMPETITION



2

FROM LEFT: THANDIE, TINASHE, AND TADALA PAUSE FOR A GROUP PHOTO DURING SPORTS TIME, UNITED BY THEIR SHARED LOVE FOR TENNIS

30/30

ST. JOHN GIRLS' SECONDARY SCHOOL
INTEGRAL EDUCATION FOR GIRLS

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