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EUROPE/GERMANY - From the Star Singers: a blessing for Tanzania

Aachen (Agenzia Fides) - For the 55th time, in the days leading up to January 6th, the "Star Singers" (Sternsinger) of the Holy Childhood Association in Germany will be on the country's street-corners singing Christmas carols. "Bringing the blessing, to be a blessing: for health in Tanzania and around the world" is the motto for this year's campaign which in the German dioceses will witness nearly half a million children goung door-to-door dressed as Magi, bringing the Star with them.
In Tanzania, this year's Country campaign symbol of the Star Singers, about half of the 44 million inhabitants is under 15 years of age, but in the whole Country there are only 100 pediatricians. "The number of hospitals is insufficient and the distances are too long and means of transport for the sick are not suitable or are even non-existent - this is the reality we found in Tanzania," says Msg. Klaus Krämer, national director of the Holy Childhood in Germany, "for these reasons, we chose Tanzania as the Country symbol of this year's campaign."
On January 1, 2013 there will be 20 Star Singers from the Archdiocese of Cologne attending the celebration presided by Pope Benedict XVI in St. Peter's Basilica for World Peace Day. Two of them will be dressed in the traditional costumes of the Magi, they will participate in the offertory procession. On January 4, German Chancellor Angela Merkel will receive four girls and boys from each of the 27 dioceses in Germany in her offices of Berlin on behalf of their peers participating in the Campaign.
Dressed in their costumes of Magi, with their Star and their songs during Christmas time and in the early days of the new year the "Star Singers" go around visiting German homes. About half a million children from Catholic parishes in Germany will carry the "C+M+ B" blessing ("Christus mansionem benedicat - Christ bless this house") to the families, collecting donations for other children their age who suffer throughout the world. The "Star Singers" collection in Germany has become the largest solidarity initiative in the world, allowing children to help other people their age who are in need. (MS) (Agenzia Fides 20/12/2012)

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