



EUROPE/GERMANY – From the Star Singers: "a blessing for refugee children in Malawi and around the world"

Aachen (Agenzia Fides) - For the 56th time, in the days leading up to January 6, 2014, 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 refugee children in Malawi and around the world!" is the motto for this year's campaign.

About 46 percent of the 45.2 million people fleeing their country are children under 18 years of age. In Africa, Asia and Latin America the Star Singers help refugee children from many countries. The children who fled the civil war in Syria receive medicines, food and blankets; in South Africa and the Congo they promote programs that allow refugee children to attend school in their place of destination. Overcoming traumatic experiences and peace education are at the core of the programs for children in countries emerging from civil war, such as Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka. Malawi was chosen as the Country symbol of this year's campaign, where programs of education are being promoted and how to overcome trauma for about 17,000 people who live in the refugee camp in Dzaleka.

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 18/12/2013)