



## HELP THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS TO WELCOME LONELY CHILDREN FROM CONGO BRAZZAVILLE TO THE FATHER REDAELLI CENTER

### The mission of the Franciscan friars in Congo Brazzaville

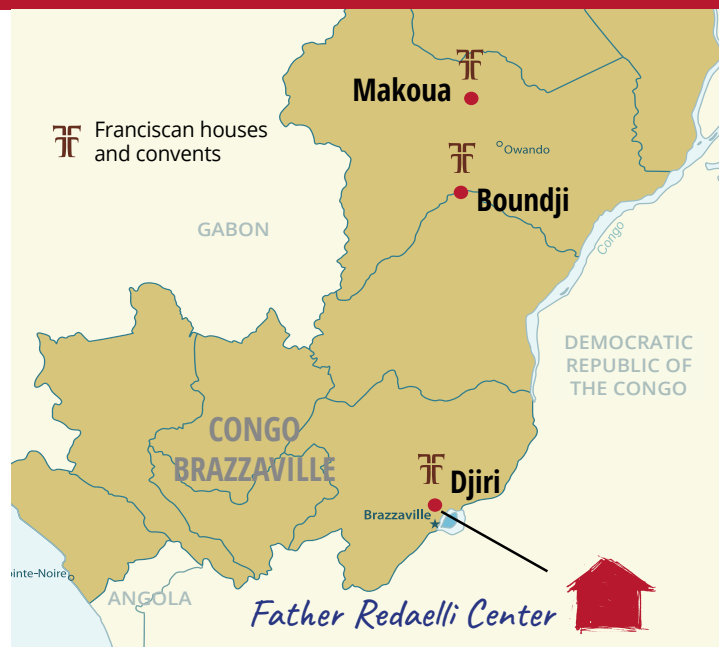
The Franciscan missionary fraternity of "Notre Dame d'Afrique" in Congo Brazzaville was born in 1991 on the initiative of the Friars Minor of Italy with a **twofold objective: the proclamation of the Gospel and service to the poorest.**

After a short period, the Franciscan presence also extends to the **capital Brazzaville, where there are many children and young people, abandoned from an early age, who live alone, defenseless, invisible in the streets.**

For them, the friars have given life to the "Ndako ya Bandeko", project, which in the local language means "house of the brothers". At the beginning, **the Franciscan friars welcomed street children and adolescents only for the night, to keep them away from the dangers of the street but the real need was to offer these little ones a real home in which to grow up.** Among the friars who took care of the children there was also Father Angelo Redaelli, who died as a missionary in Congo Brazzaville in 2005.

Thus, the **Padre Redaelli Center**, was born, named in his memory, **a shelter where children and young people can live in a family environment,** receive the affection they have never had, study, learn a trade and build a better future.

**Today, to continue their mission of charity and hospitality, the Franciscan friars need help.**







Br. Italo with Emmanuelle and Martin at the Padre Redaelli Center.

**“We need your support to take care of these children and young people who have no one in the world.”**

Dear brothers, dear sisters,

My name is Br. Italo and I have been a missionary in Congo Brazzaville for over 20 years.

I am writing to tell you about our **Padre Redaelli Center in Djiri**, on the outskirts of Brazzaville, a shelter where we Franciscan friars take care of 21 children and young people between the ages of 5 and 21. Many are so-called “invisible” children, abandoned at birth, others have lost their families during the war, still others have been abused or driven away from their families of origin. Many of them, in the early days, slept under the bed for fear that someone might hurt them.

Among the latest arrivals, there are a brother and sister whom the police brought to us during the



A moment of prayer together in the chapel of the Center.

## A DAY WITH THE CHILDREN OF THE PADRE REDAELLI CENTER

**a.m. 5.30** The alarm clock rings. The older kids help the little ones get ready and then we all have breakfast together.

**a.m. 7.15** Primary school children and high school students start lessons at school.

**a.m. 12** The youngest children come home from school, always very hungry: it's time for lunch!

**a.m. 14** Secondary school students start lessons because they attend school in the afternoon. The children, on the other hand, do their homework, followed by the educators.

**a.m. 17** Time to rest and play. Even the older kids come home from school.

**a.m. 19** In the chapel we recite prayers together and then... everyone at the table! Usually our talented cook prepares it, but on Sundays, which is her day off, the older kids cook for everyone and look after the younger ones. **For them, it is an opportunity to grow and learn to live together as brothers and sisters!**



Children and teenagers eat together with the friars in the refectory.

**lockdown** after their family abandoned them. Before, the *Center* only welcomed boys, but we certainly couldn't exclude this little girl, only 5 years old. So we organized ourselves to meet this new need: today there are 5 girls welcomed and they are the princesses of the house.

Here at the *Padre Redaelli Center* the youngsters experience, often for the first time, what it means to have a **family that welcomes, feeds, takes care of and loves disinterestedly.** All this, together with the testimony of the life of a Christian religious fraternity, the loving presence of volunteers and the possibility of studying provides children with a **fruitful environment in which to learn to let themselves be loved and to love, in order to grow and flourish.**

We have also recently opened a **medical dispensary to be able to offer medical care and medicines,** both to our children and to the local population. It is an important work, which improves and saves the lives of many.

The costs and needs of the *Center* and the dispensary, however, are really many and we Franciscan friars cannot do it alone. That is why today I ask you to support this work of charity. **Help us to welcome and take care of these children** who can only count on us to grow up.

Thank you with all my heart

*Br. Italo*

*P.S. I thank you in advance for your generosity, also in the name of all the little ones who, thanks to you, will finally find a safe home in which to grow up.*



The entrance to the Center dedicated to Father Angelo.



The brother and sister welcomed to the Center during the lockdown.



A mother with her baby at the dispensary.

**Your generosity is home, care and hope for the lonely children of Congo Brazzaville**







## Help street children and adolescents welcomed by the Franciscan friars at the *Padre Redaelli Center*

Donate now and guarantee **food and shelter for the children**, contribute to the payment of **school fees and materials** and help to offer **treatment and medicines to children and the local population**.

And if you want to make a **SPECIAL gesture of charity** you can guarantee **the reception of a child at the Center for an entire year**.



## How to support the Franciscan friars in Congo Brazzaville



### BANK TRANSFER

Bank: Intesa Sanpaolo  
Branch: 09606, Piazza della Libertà, 13 00192 Roma - Italia  
Account Name: FONDAZIONE OFM FRATERNITAS ONLUS  
Account Holder Address: c/o Casa Generalizia OFM,  
Via di Santa Maria Mediatrice 25, 00165 Roma - Italia  
EUR ACCOUNT IBAN: IT15T0306909606100000168958  
USD ACCOUNT IBAN: IT22V0306909606161009304690  
SWIFT: BCITITMM  
REASON: PADRE REDAELLI CENTER



### ONLINE

at [www.ofmfraternitas.org](http://www.ofmfraternitas.org)



If you would like to support our Franciscan activities and projects or have further information to get to know us better, you can call us on **06 92917107** or cell phone **+393207135875**.



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