

Kellogg's **StarInU club**



in association with
100 RAND WATER



WELCOME TO SA: The Kalubi children (from left to right, back row: Flora, 14, Harmony, 10, and Basi, 16; middle row: Marvin, 9, Steve, 7, and Lablonde, 6; and front: Benedict, 5) from the Democratic Republic of Congo have been 'adopted' by Lotus Gardens Primary School, outside Pretoria.

Home is where the heart is

PUPILS and teachers from Lotus Gardens Primary School outside Pretoria really know how to care about others, just like real stars! These kind-hearted souls have embraced a family, the Kalubis, from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Kalubis have been struggling to make ends meet since arriving in South Africa two years ago. With the help of the Jesuit Refugee Service, the school organised clothing, bedding, pots, plates, utensils and a television set for the family. They also admitted seven of the

kids to their school and sent one to a neighbouring high school. Every day, the primary school learners receive bread and soup from the school's feeding scheme. The eldest daughter, who is 18, is the family's only breadwinner and braids hair for an income.



Starting over

IN honour of World Refugee Day on Friday June 20, I hooked up with two boys who fled their homes to start life anew in South Africa. Here are their stories.

ROBERT BAGIRA, 17, from Burundi: "Two years ago I fled my country because there was a lot of crime happening. My uncle and father ran away with me, but we lost my father in Zaire... he was also killed. I've lived in Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire and other countries. Each time I leave because people are getting killed. My uncle and I are being helped by the Jesuit Refugee Service. I'm in Grade 8 now and would like to be a politician one day, so that I can understand what is going on. I also want to go home to Burundi when there is peace."

MANUEL GOMES, 15, from Angola: "I lived in a nice house once, with my parents

and baby sister. One day, my mother decided to vanish because my dad was beating her. We came to Johannesburg. Life became hard, but I never asked my mom about my dad, even though I missed him. My mom started a business buying things in South Africa and selling them in Angola. We were living with her boyfriend then. Twice she went for months to Angola and left us with the man. The third time was in 1996, when I was nine. She went to sell goods in Angola and never came back. No letter, no phone call, nothing. I don't know what has happened to my mother, whether she is dead or alive."

Manuel's sister now lives with a friend of their mother, while he stays at a JRS hostel. The "stepfather" is no longer part of their lives. Manuel is back in school thanks to the JRS and he would like to get in touch with his baby sister, "the only family I have".



I'm bowled over by our Star Buddy this week. Marco Harvey from Eerste Rivier was born in the same hospital, on the same day, as his best friend, Kyle Foulman! Marco loves watching Kyle play cricket and has even given him a book about the sport. Now that's what I call a Star Buddy. Marco wins himself a Bilabong backpack full of goodies from Edgars. If you want to be a winner, send in a "star buddy" letter. E-mail shotab@sundaytimes.co.za, fax (011) 280-5151 or write to PO Box 1742, Saxonwold 2132. Mark your correspondence for Babalwa's attention.



Vote for your favourite star in the 2003 Star-In-You Kids Choice Awards on the  hotline 086 22 33 456