



**St. Joseph's Home R.C. Primary School, Cape Town, Western Cape
Classroom Handover
25 August 2017**

Since 1935, St Joseph's Home for chronically ill children has been supporting children and families from poorly resourced areas by providing free paediatric intermediate healthcare (a step-down facility between acute hospital and home). School is a key part of this process, and the St. Joseph's Home R.C. Primary School was established in 1979 to meet this need.

On Friday, 25 August 2017, St. Joseph's Home R.C. Primary School received a new 60m² prefabricated classroom, which has enabled the separation of grades four and five into two separate locations, offering a more appropriate learning environment for each group.

Since its inception, the activities of the school have focused on the struggling, chronically ill children with cancer (30%), childhood diabetes, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis and HIV/Aids (25%). Some children have acute medical conditions and are on dialysis, suffer from heart and lung diseases among other ailments. The school also includes cognitively impaired children and is now home to 223 children who need special support.

As part of the celebration, founding principal, Mrs Winnie Mercuur addressed the children and told them that they should be proud of their school. "You should have love and respect for each other ... You have the potential to reach your dreams." Dr Evona Rebelo (Director of the Catholic School's Office) told a lovely story about how pearls are found in oysters and start with just one grain of sand, and how every child at St Joseph's, is like a bright, shiny pearl.

Breadline Africa's Director, Ms Marion Wagner thanked everyone for making the team feel so welcome, but added that this day is really to acknowledge the children and the staff – each child is truly special and in their own way, can change the world. She wished them every success and said that she looked forward to working with the school in the future.

The ribbon was cut by Principal Clara Palse and two of the children who will be using the new classroom; Mario Michaels and Michelle Motibi.

