

A DETERMINED STUDENT

Success Story

Holy Trinity Peace Village



My name is Joyce Natabo. I am a Toposa girl and I was born in Nakumaro village about 6 hours walk north of Kuron Village. Both of my parents are alive and my father is very poor. My father doesn't have any cattle and in Toposa culture this is seen as bad. My mother works hard in the home cooking, cleaning, cultivating and taking care of children. She has a little garden to feed us in the family. We are four in the family, three girls and one boy. I am the youngest and the rest of my siblings are married. I am not sure of my age as we Toposa don't take care of those things. I think I am about 16 or 17 years now. I am in P3 because I am a late starter.

I can't really remember anything from my childhood. I played and ran like the other children. I was always busy fetching water, collecting firewood, and grinding the millet.

Joyce Natabo Primary 3

Some time ago, my friends attended the St. Thomas Primary School. They told me stories about it. I wanted to go to school myself. When I talked with my parents they were very much against it. They wanted me to get married so I could bring in some cows for the family. I didn't want that.

My friends told me school was good. They said it would help me in the future. So I decided by myself to go to school. But my parents wanted to marry me then. So, I ran away from home and came to the school.

I explained to the Head Master and he allowed me to enter on a scholarship basis. I have no money. I have no clothes. I have no shoes. Everything was given to me here. When I entered it was in Primary 2 but then the Covid 19 pandemic made the school close. I was very disappointed. My parents came and forced me to go back home. I went along unwillingly. But I am a head-strong girl and I ran away again. They came to find me the second time but I fought against it. The teachers at the school took my side. My parents left but they were not happy. My father won't talk to me because I prefer education to marriage. He is not happy about that.



Sharon and Joyce with Matron Immaculate

I do communicate through friends with my mother. She always tells me to come home and get married like my other siblings. I am always afraid they will come back and take me by force. My siblings keep quiet and don't get involved.

I want to learn to read. I want my life to be better than just in the village. After P8 I want to attend the Secondary School. Math is my favorite subject. I scored quite high on the last exam. Everyone congratulated

me. I am thinking of becoming a teacher or a doctor. When you teach others you feel good about yourself. You can earn a good salary. As a Doctor I will come back and treat my people who have so many diseases.

As I am Catholic, I pray to God to help me. No one else will help me. I give thanks to God because God is the one to bring me here and I must do the right thing. I hope I can make my dreams come true.

(Sharon from P8 translated and Gabe edited: 03.Oct.2021)