

From little things, big things grow

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AFRICA may be a long way from Australia geographically, but it is not so far that staff and students from St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Malvern are not willing to lend a hand.

Over the past two years, staff, students and parents have been sponsoring a little girl called Ellie, who attends the School of St Jude in Tanzania. The program has gone so well that they now sponsor another school called St Mukasa's, in Uganda, which is still being built.

Teacher Marta Lukaitis said, "What started in a couple of classrooms has now blossomed into a whole school initiative. It is now not the staff running the program, but the children.



"Our dream at St Joseph's is to instill a sense of compassion in our students and encourage them to get involved in helping others in need from a young age."

The students recently welcomed their own special guest from Uganda, Fr Goodwin, who is the founder of St Mukasa's in Uganda, which is much smaller than St Jude's in Tanzania.

"Fr Goodwin visited our school to say hello to the staff and students who have been so generous with their support and to meet the excited children who have been working hard to raise funds for his school," said Marta. "Fr Goodwin had a great time and enjoyed listening to lots of interesting questions around the needs of the school and the students. The children were amazed when Fr Goodwin explained that the school had no electricity and that lions roam around the outskirts.

"This visit was vital for the children to enable them to develop a meaningful relationship with his school. Due to all their wonderful efforts, we raised enough to replace a dirt-based basketball court with a new hard surface for St Mukasa school.

"It is a wonderful opportunity for students at our school to live out the true Gospel values and to really make a difference."

Photos: Top: Fr Goodwin arrives at St Joseph's Primary School with a big smile ready to meet the children who have been helping his school 'St Mukasa' in Uganda. Bottom: Fr Goodwin tells the children at Joseph's about life at his school in Uganda.

Photos by Gavin Blue.