



RAFIKI

FOUNDATION
MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

March 2019 – Shakiyla Solomon

Dear friends and family,

As always, I am excited to give y'all an update. Yes, I still say y'all, the kids love it! Honestly, I am just filled with thankfulness that God continues to use me despite my lacking. I noticed that in my last newsletter, there was only one picture, so I was intentional about taking more and saving them specifically for my partners. I love sharing things on social media and even more on Shakiyla.com, but I think this is a unique space for us, and I would like to keep it that way.

As some of you may know, Nigeria is currently undergoing their election period. We just finished the Presidential election, and thankfully, no one was hurt, and there were very few problems in Plateau State. *Please be in prayer for Rivers and Lagos State, as they have had many attacks, burning of ballots, and social turmoil.* On Saturday, March 8, we will have ended the election period with the Governor's election, and we pray that God's peace continues to cover us all. People stood outside for hours, waiting for their voices to be heard. I am not sure many people in the U.S. would even bother if it took that much time and energy. It reminded me of the small blessings we take for granted.

On a lighter note, our Home Office visited recently, and the Head of Communications was able to get some beautiful shots of the place. I know that not all of you are on social media, so I snagged a couple. Here is one of a family headed home after school. They generally fit as many as possible on a bike, and head out! These babies were more than excited to take a picture for Karen.



Before the electoral break, the students and I had been spending time together on the weekends. We generally find things to do that can cultivate their spiritual, emotional, and overall growth. In January, we did vision boards. This was something very special to me because my vision board for 2017 has a Nigerian flag on it, and at the time, I did not know why this country was so heavily on my heart. The kids had a blast preparing them, and I loved being able to spend time with the Mamas while the children let loose their creative juices!



The next image was another beautiful shot taken. That is Jason. He is one of the day students, which means he does not live on the Rafiki grounds. Jason was a part of the students' recitation this year, and he is one of the shyer and reserved children. He and I have had long talks about the power in our voices, and that being quiet is okay, but when it is time to speak up in godliness and truth, we must be bold. I was able to meet some of his family, and I am

thankful for the relationship that is blossoming. To his right, is Anna, she was in my very first newsletter! She is one of the Derbe Cottage girls.



This past weekend I was able to have dinner with what I consider my Nigerian family. Ahinche is like the saving grace for everyone in the Village. He knows where everything is in town, how to make things happen, and is just a gleaming example of God's love and compassion. He has been working with Rafiki for over fifteen years, and I am sure I am only beginning to know the depths of how God uses him. He asked me if I would join him and his family for dinner and I just cried. More than anything, I miss my family and friends back home. I am learning that everybody sees family differently. Everyone expresses that love differently. It is likely I will not get a replica of Louisiana-loving, but the Ahinches were more than I could have ever asked God for. His wife, Ruth, has already promised to teach me her favorite local recipes during breaks and I cannot wait to start! Family is important, and as much as we like to think it comes naturally, it takes much effort and sincere devotion to one another. The Ahinches have been such beautiful examples of family and I am more than grateful.



I recently studied the Psalms with the university students who were on break. We studied Psalm 1 for two weeks, and to my surprise, they hardly wanted to move on. There is so much depth in God's Word, and He continues to speak volumes to us through His scriptures. Psalm 1:3 says a blessed man is "like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers." We discussed that "prosperity" is not what the world says it is, but our ability to dwell within the will of such a loving Father. I hope this gives you an even more in-depth look at what God is doing as I serve in Nigeria. Please feel free to write, email, or message me if you have any questions. I will continue to post different content on my website, so feel free to subscribe there, too! If you or someone you know are interested in financially supporting me, please go to the website, www.rafikifoundation.org, search my name, and prayerfully go forth!

With love,

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