



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

Mama Ray: Nurturing Hearts and Shaping Futures at SOS Children's Villages



Florence Waithira, affectionately known as Mama Ray, has dedicated her life to nurturing and caring for children at SOS Children's Villages in Kenya. Her journey within the organization is a testament to her unwavering love and passion for guiding the next generation.

When Florence joined SOS Children's Villages, she immediately connected with a child named Ray, becoming the nurturing figure that he needed. From that moment on, she earned the nickname Mama Ray, reflecting her deep bond with the children she cares for. In her home at the Nairobi Village, she lovingly looks after nine children and supports seven youths living in the community.

Before joining SOS Children's Villages in Kenya, Florence worked as a Kindergarten teacher. When she saw the job advertisement for the position of an SOS Children's Villages mother, she knew it was an opportunity to continue her lifelong calling of caring for and guiding children. After undergoing comprehensive training, she became the devoted mother of House Number 9, where she has been providing a nurturing and loving environment for the past 14 years.

Florence's dedication and love as a mother are evident in the growth and achievements of her children. Her oldest child, now 25, has become a proud parent to five grandchildren. When asked about her secret to raising children, Mama Ray states, "Mama Ray emphasizes that a harmonious household relies on the understanding of each child individually."

For Florence, being an SOS Children's Villages Mother is not just a job but a deep passion that drives her daily. She cherishes the opportunity to shape the next generation's lives and instills the values of love, compassion, and resilience in them.

A typical day in Mama Ray's life starts before dawn as she prepares breakfast for the entire household. By 6:15 am, the school-going children have left for their classes. When they return at 4:00 pm, Mama Ray warmly receives them and assists them with their schoolwork while preparing a nourishing evening meal. By 10:00 pm, after ensuring everything is in order, the family settles in for a good night's rest.

During weekends, the whole family comes together to prepare meals, with Chapatis and Pilau being the favourite dishes that bring joy to everyone's hearts. Florence's commitment to creating a warm and loving home is felt by all who enter House Number 9.

As Mama Ray reflects on her journey, she expresses her gratitude to Herman Gmeiner, the visionary founder of SOS Children's Villages. His compassionate idea to support vulnerable children and youth has paved the way for countless lives to be transformed.

Florence Waithera, Mama Ray, is an inspiring example of dedication and love within SOS Children's Villages. Her commitment to raising the next generation is a beacon of hope for vulnerable children and youth. Together, let us honour her and continue to uplift those who need it most, shaping a brighter future for all.

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