

Muziki Wanafunzi wa Hanga

In April 2009, our students were given a rare opportunity to sing and record their songs. From traditional Tanzanian vocal styles to gospel to bongo flava, we heard all different types of music. In all, the students sang in four different languages! Beautiful voices, catchy melodies, and some very socially conscious lyrics showcase the talent of Hanga's students. The following songs are just a sample of our students' musical lives.

- 1. Good Morning, St. Laurent**
St. Laurent primary school students start every day with exercise – running through the village streets, singing songs along the way. Standing at attention during the morning assembly, the students pray and perform the Tanzanian national anthem (in Kiswahili, the national language) before classes begin.
- 2. Florida Moses – Faraja**
Florida is a talented student in her third year at St. Benedict Secondary School. Her dream is to become a musician and one day live and study in London.
- 3. Cyprian Komba & Lameck Komba – Tanzania**
Cyprian and Lameck are in their first year at St. Benedict. Through their song, they ask “Tanzania, I love you, but my heart hurts – why are you doing these terrible things, like killing albino people?”
- 4. Faustina Msomi – Vijana**
Faustina is in her final year at St. Benedict. Her song challenges the youth (“vijana”) who only think about smoking, prostitution, and fighting. She points out that they only remember their creator when someone dies of AIDS.
- 5. St. Laurent Standard VII Girls – We are Coming Now**
After seven years at St. Laurent, the students are fluent in English as their second, or even third, language. The girls of Standard VII have bright futures ahead of them.
- 6. Salma Mohamed – Teachers Anne and Ben**
Salma is in her fifth year at St. Laurent. She wrote this song for the volunteers Ben and Anne, whom the students will all miss very much.
- 7. Magreth D. Moyo – Ewe Yesu**
Magreth will be graduating from St. Benedict this year. “Oh Jesus, take me to your father in heaven so I may rest” is Magreth’s plea in her gospel-style song.
- 8. Hanga Religious Seminary Men and Hanga VTC Women – Palm Sunday Processional**
On April 5, 2009, students gathered together at Hanga Abbey to celebrate the Christian holiday of Palm Sunday. Monks, students and villagers honored Jesus’ journey by processing through the village streets into the abbey church. April 5 also marked the celebration of World Youth Day.
- 9. Hanga Religious Seminary Choir – Mateso ya Bwana Wetu Yesu Kristu**
The singers of the Hanga Seminary prepared this song for the Palm Sunday mass. “Mateso Ya Bwana Wetu Yesu Kristu” means “The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ” in Kiswahili.
- 10. Baby Mkwawa – Good Morning Jesus/Shikamuu Yesu**
Baby is only in her first year at St. Benedict, but she’s already a proficient Kiswahili to English translator.
- 11. Epiphania Tito – From my Heart**
Studying to become an electrician, Epiphania is excelling in her first year at the Hanga Vocational Training Center. Hanga VTC is one of the rare trade schools in Tanzania where women teachers and students are warmly welcomed.
- 12. Loveness Mwamwenda – Ni Nini?**
Loveness is a first year student at St. Benedict. In addition to being a talented young singer, she enjoys painting and helping in the school library.
- 13. Florida Moses & Agnes Mpwapwa – Dear Mama**
Florida wrote this song in honor of her mother.
- 14. Salma Mohamed – Qaswida**
“Qaswida” is a Muslim prayer in Arabic. As a Muslim student in a predominately Christian school, Salma says it is no problem. In fact, over a third of Tanzania’s total population is Muslim.

15. St. Laurent Standard VII Girls – Our Teachers

As per tradition at all Hanga Schools, the St. Laurent girls sent off their beloved teachers with a song.

16. Onesmo Mkinga – Napagawa

Onesmo is in his last year at St. Benedict. He and some friends have formed a hip-hop group called “Man 2 Man.”

17. Taj Ponera feat. Bernard Mchafu – Mapenzi Kwenye Foni

Taj and Bernard will be graduating from St. Benedict this year. Their song can be called bongo-flava, which is Tanzanian-style hip-hop.

18. Venant Mnali – Barua Yangu

Venant is a first year student at the trade school studying masonry. The title of his song means “My Letter.”

19. Robert Ponera, Mustapha Jawadu, Venant Mnali, Innocent Mhagama – Ugali Ugali na Mandondo Kunogo

With Robert on drums, these guys from Hanga VTC let loose with a traditional Ngoni tribal song. This song is in their mother tongue, and its title describes the traditional Tanzanian food of stiff porridge and beans.

20. Victor Haluni, Fadhili Mgaya, and St. Laurent Standard VII Boys – Goodbye

The boys at St. Laurent couldn’t let their teachers get away without a goodbye song.

21. Irene Msuha & Faustina Msomi – Africa

Irene is in her final year at St. Benedict. Her song describes the change in Africa from beautiful rivers and oceans to destruction, from peace and unity to war. She calls God to help restore Africa to its original beauty.

22. St. Laurent – Mungu Ibariki Tanzania

After a long day of classes, St. Laurent students lower the Tanzanian flag and sing their hearts out in their national anthem.

*Special thanks to the Noack Family and Fr. Robert Koopmann, O.S.B.
Recorded by Charlie McCarron, St. John’s Benedictine Volunteer Corps.
charliemccarron@gmail.com*

