

## Uganda Mission in Father Eamon's Own Words from Bulletin Columns

Bulletin Column December 9, 2018

Interested in going to Uganda  
next summer on a mission trip?  
June 23 to July 7, 2019

For 14 years, Fr. Pat Sheedy, Pastor of Blessed Trinity Parish in Ocala (in our Diocese) has been taking about 20 of his parishioners and some non-parishioners on a mission trip to a sister parish in Nalweyo in central Uganda.

14 years of mission trips have resulted in the creation of 30 sub-parishes or 30 villages. With the help of the locals, they have built or renovated 30 churches. They have established grade schools, a high school, and a *boarding* school for almost 1,000 children. Parishioners in Ocala sponsor many of the children in the grade schools and high school. Below is how you can be involved in sponsoring a student. This certainly would be a lovely way to include the less fortunate in your Christmas budget. Blessed Trinity Parish has also built clinics, including a maternity facility where mothers can give birth to their babies.

The mission has created about 30 water wells and over 11,000 solar lamps and computers for the school labs. These are just some of the wonderful things Blessed Trinity has done for thousands of families and children in a faraway place.

### The Trinity Triangle

After each mission to Uganda, the Parish publishes a beautiful magazine with many photos and reports of the trip. Following are some photos and excerpts of the reports. In the next column is a picture of the 2018 Team. More than half the group had been on a mission before.



### St. Mary's Maternity Ward Blessing

This was truly a big, big occasion because the nearest hospital is 26 miles away for babies to be born in. Now 15 to 20 moms can have babies born locally in relative safety.



### A peek into student life

Last summer, volunteer Jessica Baker writes:

After spending so much time with the students at the high school, I was very curious what their entire school day entailed. I noticed when waking up in the mornings around 7am for morning Mass that the students would already be at the school for their preps. Preps entail studying and reviewing all of their notes to prepare for upcoming tests. The students at the high school are so intelligent and love to talk about what they are learning. I love spending my days in the classrooms just observing how intrigued the students are when learning new material. At 4pm on Wednesday, the students have a debate on a specific topic chosen by the teachers. On Thursdays at 7:15, the students attend Mass. On Fridays, the students enjoy sports and games on the soccer field. Saturdays and Sundays are not quite days off for these students! They attend Mass both days and still attend preps. One of my favorite things to do while in Uganda is to play sports with the children. They are all so athletic and are the best team players. The students' days are long, but never have I heard one complaint about how early they have to wake up to go to school!



## **Each missionary pays his/her own way**

The cost of the mission is \$2,500 which covers the two-day flight and all expenses for the *two-week* mission trip. Those who cannot afford the travel expenses are helped by parishioners. Money is *not* a reason for not going.

## **Are you interested in going next summer?**

I have sent Fr. Sheedy \$25,000 from our parish tithe for his work in Uganda and I plan to send him \$25,000 more in the next few months. All money donated to this mission work goes directly to various projects. Fr. Pat and his team do a great job of making sure that the money goes where it is supposed to go. Father plans on assigning Ascension one of the villages. I am praying about going this summer. I would love to have several other Ascension parishioners join me. If interested, please contact one of the Blessed Trinity parishioners (see names/email addresses below). They can answer any questions you may have. Let me know if you are interested. Also, I can share with you the Trinity-Triangle report on last summer's trip. Please pray about this mission opportunity.

## Bulletin Column June 23, 2019

This Sunday, I will leave with eight other Ascension parishioners for Uganda, namely:

- ◆ George & Terri Cornelius-Moore
- ◆ Dr. Francisco & Margi Ruiz and their 17-year-old daughter Victoria
- ◆ Rob & Christina Light
- ◆ Sue Pickles

We will be joining missionaries from Blessed Trinity in Ocala. Fr. Sheedy (Pastor) and Sr. Juliet (a sister from Uganda) will be leading all of us. They have been going to their Sister Parish in Nalweyo for 13 years. At this time, they have 30 sub-parishes (villages). They have built churches, schools (one boarding high school) and clinics, and done many other things during their 13 trips. During my one-week trip, I plan to visit some of the sub-parishes or villages.

We are all excited about this trip. Here's our itinerary:

- ◆ Depart from Orlando this Sunday at 2:15pm
- ◆ Stopover in Washington, DC, and depart at 4:25pm
- ◆ Stopover in Brussels and depart for Entebbe, Uganda, arriving at 10:25am Monday.
- ◆ 8-hour bus trip to our Mission area Gifts from Ascension

We are taking with us:

- 137 Ascension Catholic School uniform tops
- 11 tablets/iPads
- 8 smartphones
- several hundred pencils, pens, glue sticks
- hundreds of rosaries

Also the following items made by Anne Reynolds, Patsy Audie, Valerie Harrison and Dottie Weed: • 151 book bags • 100 pencil pouches • 50 smaller elastic closed bags

The following are bits and pieces from Blessed Trinity's newsletter on their 2018 Summer Mission trip to Uganda. For more on the work of Blessed Trinity in Uganda, google Blessed Trinity Sister Parish, Nalweyo, Uganda.

### The Sick

Every year we are requested to pay medical bills of individuals with a medical problem that has a solution if money was available. Here are three examples from this year:

- Hip surgery for our old former driver \$220.00 total
- Child born with one eye closed \$12 a shot for 40 shots
- Girl with cleft palate - second operation \$30 a shot for 6 months

### Blessing new or renovated buildings

We blessed Our Lady of Fatima Church and also St. Ann's Church. Now there are 26 blessed—with four more to go—over the next two years.

We blessed St. Mary's newly renovated maternity ward. This was truly a big, big occasion because the nearest hospital is 26 miles away for babies to be born in. Now 15 to 20 moms can have babies born locally in relative safety.

We also blessed Trinity Catholic High School's new administration wing. It is very attractive.

And we blessed the new boys' dorm where 150 high school boys sleep.

### Angela Schreiner writes:

It has been a huge blessing from God to spend another summer together in Nalweyo, working with the children enrolled in Our Lady of Mercy Children's Home. In 2017, my cousin Joy Bleiker and I spent our summer working as God helped us transform a run-down local home for orphans into a safe place for needy children in the community. Sister Juliet, Bernadette Bleiker, and many other missionaries were our partners in answering that call of God.

Joy and I returned this past summer to continue the work. We took major steps to upgrade and begin the legalization process of the home. We were able to install a new latrine, update each child's educational plan, and clean and paint the building.

Through saying "yes" together in this endeavor, Joy and I have grown closer to Christ and have watched Him do great things! We are so thankful for the support of Fr. Pat, Sister Juliet and the entire parish! Lives are being changed!

### Farming has changed over the years at Blessed Trinity, Nalweyo - Stacey Wood

The area where pineapples, bananas and nuts used to grow has been replaced with dorms and classrooms. As BT Nalweyo continues to grow, more of the food production has been moved to the farm.

Father John Paul has big ideas on utilizing the farm. He would like to upgrade the quality of the cattle either by artificial insemination or purchasing better quality bulls. He is also considering planting sugar cane.

Around the orphanage are sixty-three acres that can be used to grow additional crops. They are already growing maize and sunflowers on some of the land. This is where I used the tractor the most on this trip, clearing and plowing to get the land ready for the August planting season. Because of issues with the tractor I felt I did not get enough land prepared, but Father Pat reminded me that every acre plowed was one less they had to do by hand! The people at the orphanage were very happy, so they obviously shared Father's point of view!

The soil in this area is amazing and with the proper amount of rain almost anything will grow. Many people think of Africa as being hot and dry like a desert, but that is not true of this area. It is a tropical climate with mild temperatures - a welcome relief from our Florida heat and humidity! The farm has a few pigs left, but once again swine flu has gone through the area and killed most of them. There is currently a quarantine on moving or selling animals. That did not, however, keep the parishioners from giving animals as their stewardship offerings. Father Pat received many goats, chickens and even two good-sized calves! Father Pat's visits help to keep everyone fed and the farm herds increasing.

**While the rest of the world still struggles to achieve the equality among the genders, recent reports from Uganda show more positive steps to improvement.**

Research done by MasterCard found that 34.8% of businesses in the country are owned by women, and 90.5% of women are borrowing and saving money to start a business, therefore making Uganda the top performing country in Africa. Nalweyo, a small, impoverished community, is not an exception. Nalweyo has two outstanding places where handmade, unique items can be found, made by the hands of talented and creative women entrepreneurs!

**Jessica Baker writes about life in a boarding High School.**

A peek inside students' life After spending so much time with the students at the high school, I was very curious what their entire school day entailed. I noticed when waking up in the mornings around 7am for morning Mass that the students would already be at the school for their preps. Preps entail studying and reviewing all of their notes to prepare for upcoming tests. The students at the high school are so intelligent and love to talk about what they are

learning. I love spending my days in the classrooms just observing how intrigued the students are when learning new material. At 4pm on Wednesday, the students will have a debate on a specific topic chosen by the teachers. On Thursdays at 7:15am the students attend Mass. On Fridays, the students enjoy sports and games on the soccer field. Saturdays and Sundays are 3 not quite days off for these students! They attend Mass both days and still attend Preps. One of my favorite things to do while in Uganda is to play sports with the children. They are all so athletic and are the best team players.

The students' days are long, but never have I heard one complaint about how early they have to wake up to go to school!

**Typical School Schedule for TCHS Nalweyo Students**

4:00-5:00am Students wake up and prepare for the day

5:00-7:00am Morning Preps

7:30-10:10am Classes in session

10:10-10:30am Snack (usually eat porridge)

10:30-11:50am Classes in session

11:50am-2:00pm Lunch / Break (can return to dormitories)

2:00-4:00pm Classes in session

4:00-7:00pm Events vary by day

7:00-8:00pm Evening prayers

8:00-10:00pm Evening Preps

11:00pm Bedtime

## Reflections and Photos of our Mission Trip to Uganda

For those of you who may not be aware, eight Ascension parishioners and I joined with 20 Blessed Trinity parishioners and their pastor, Fr. Pat Sheedy, along with Sr. Juliet (a Uganda sister) on a two-week mission trip to Uganda, June 23-July 7. I only went for one week.

Each of the 30 missionaries was asked to bring the bare minimum so that their checked and carry-on luggage would have clothes and other items that could be left behind in Uganda. In addition, at the airport, Sr. Juliet handed each of us Ascension travelers an additional 50-lb suitcase of God knows what to take with us. So all 30 of us checked in two 50lb suitcases each of “stuff.”

Fr. Pat and parishioners of Blessed Trinity Parish in Ocala have been traveling to Uganda for the past 13 years. This outreach mission started when Sr. Juliet asked some children at Blessed Trinity to help some people in her native land to build a church. When Fr. Pat heard about Sister’s request, he felt that the effort should be a parish outreach. Thus began a marvelous and most wonderful story. During the 13 years, this outreach has led to a beautiful Central Campus called Blessed Trinity parish. The home campus in Nalweyo has:

- ◆ a beautiful Church that can seat about 800 people
- ◆ a *boarding* primary and secondary school with about 1,200 students, grades 2-12
- ◆ a beautiful Adoration Chapel (see photo pg. 7)
- ◆ facilities to house and feed the boarding school Students. Our team stayed in the teachers housing area
- ◆ facilities to house many of the teachers
- ◆ a rectory for four priests

### 30 Sub-parishes

In addition to all of the above facilities at the Central Campus, there are 30 sub-parishes, or outstations. Each of the 30 sub-parishes has a Church and some kind of a school. One of the sub-parishes is now called Ascension Parish.

In addition to the churches and schools in the 30 sub-parishes, there is also an orphanage for about 35 children, as well as a clinic where, amongst other things, mothers can give birth.

At this weekend’s Masses, you heard from one or more of those who traveled with me to Uganda. In addition to their witness, I asked my fellow pilgrims from Ascension to share some of their reflections with you.

### Reflections of George & Terri



During our time in Uganda, we experienced the incredible beauty of the country during our two-day Safari Trip and the incredible poverty of the families whom we visited with.

We all know that one key to lifting children out of extreme poverty is education. As educators we spent most of our time in the high school on the main campus which in many ways looked like our schools here. This, of course, was not the way with the “schools” in the sub-parishes.

Ascension parishioners gave us over 40 electronic devices to take with us to share with the high school on the main campus. The teachers and students received their electronic gifts with much gratitude and enthusiasm.

We were overwhelmed by their requests to try the electronic devices and learn how to use them. We spent days working to train them on how best to use these devices for the good of all. We were blessed to accompany a woman from the Ocala parish who has gone on three of these missions as the IT person. Spending several days in their very rudimentary technology lab at the Blessed Trinity School, we saw students and teachers mastering new technology so rapidly it stunned us. Their hunger to learn, to grow, to become was humbling.

In contrast to the boarding school on the main campus, the schools at the sub-parishes were very

sad to look at (see photo of a mud school on page 7). This “school” only had a blackboard on the wall. But the handwriting on the board was beautiful.

We also visited our newly adopted Ascension parish which also has a “school” of about 200-250 students. This mud-walled school had poor facilities and a few teachers with, at best, a high school education. It was a very joyous day when we took our 200 Ascension T-shirts to our sister school. Both teachers and students were very excited. The T-shirts gave the children and teachers a new sense of identity.

Some wonderful women of our parish feverishly stitched over two hundred colorful bookbags with pencil holders and change holders. We gave both of these to the school children and made sure the children of the orphanage in the Ascension Parish had a bag. We were able to fill their bags with a few toys, dental care tools, pencils, pens, and a little candy.

**Visit to orphanage.** The children in the orphanage approached us with such deep need in their eyes, looking for acceptance and love, few with shoes, most with deep wounds on their feet. Two of our nurses spent a day washing small feet and dressing so many unnecessary and infected wounds.



As I (Terri) watched on handing them dressing and ointments, I saw Jesus, right there in that tiny sad place in Uganda. I know the children were hurting from the measures the kind hands were taking to address horrendous wounds, and yet they never squirmed or made a sound other than to gaze at the heads and hands who were offering comfort, saying to them, “You matter, just as you are.” I have wept into my pillow many nights remembering that scene. Our group was moved to go to town with a collection we took up to buy shoes for those little feet. We were able to buy each child two pairs of shoes.



In the picture, I (Fr. Eamon) am speaking to some of the orphans. In the background is the beginning of a facility for which we gave \$25,000 from our last fiscal year’s tithe. Some of the adults present, like the young man in the background, was an orphan at this place, and is now, I believe, a worker at the new facility.

We can do so little in the face of such overwhelming need. We could do so very little to make a difference, but we did what little we could. We had to remind ourselves over and over that we might not be able to make a huge difference in the face of all the need, but what we could do in that time and space might make all the difference to that one child, teacher, or parent. I will forever remember small injured feet as my call to be Jesus.



### Reflections of Rob & Christina Light

Simply stated, the Uganda Mission was extraordinary! From our perspective, the tone and tenor of our entire experience were set during the first real “work” day when we both accompanied and assisted Father Eamon on his mission travels to three sub-parishes and an orphanage. A pastor from Blessed Trinity Nalweyo, Fr Henry, escorted us in a small sedan. At every stop, we were greeted with the congregation lining the road, singing and dancing until long after we entered the parish and began Mass. The parishioners receive the Eucharist only once every four to six weeks. At the end of each Mass, a parish leader and school Principal gave a detailed report of their *Achievements* for the past year and *Challenges* for the coming year. *Achievements* consisted of pastoral achievements (number of marriages in the Church, numbers of Baptisms and

First Communion, etc.), and a detailed account of how they used the money received in the past year. The *Challenges* part of the Report consisted of a request for more financial aid to do some more things, e.g., buy musical instruments. When Fr. Eamon announced that Ascension would give them a \$1,000 for some requests, all present broke into great applause. The sense of accountability for financial assistance was wonderful to behold. Finally, the parishioners sang and danced as they brought forward their gifts for the poor, the second collection of the day, and received a blessing from Fr. Eamon. These gifts included avocados, mangos, maize, eggs, coins, banana stems, chickens, and a goat!

The third sub-parish of the day was Ascension, named for our beloved Ascension Parish of Melbourne, FL. Ascension (Uganda) is a humble campus, even compared with the two previous stops, consisting of a basic church and a small mud hut enclave for a school with a borehole for a well. Many of the children had typhoid, malaria, or parasites. Despite the poverty and male dowry requirement, 56 percent of adult parishioners are married couples. We have never witnessed the pride in adults and excitement in children just to hear we're a married couple. This sentiment was prevalent in everyone we encountered for the rest of the Mission. The smiles, singing, dancing, charitable giving, and reverence during Mass were beyond humbling ... all evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence at work with love immersing us all!

The Holy Gospel of 14 July 2019 (Luke 10:25-37) focused on the parable of the Good Samaritan and the commandment to love thy neighbor as thyself. Loving our neighbor (humanity) is only possible through loving God and vice versa. The power of this commandment was manifest while sharing in Holy Communion with, performing acts of mercy for, and living faith in action among our Ugandan brothers and sisters. This mission was truly a holy experience that left an indelible mark for love of charity on our hearts, minds, and souls forevermore. Thanks be to God!

**Reflections of Ruiz family (Francisco, Margi & daughter Victoria) Margi writes:**

I feel blessed that I was able to spend two weeks in the presence of two saints! What Father Patrick and Sister Juliet have accomplished with God's grace and the support of so many is absolutely mind-blowing! They are completely changing the future of so many in Nalweyo, Uganda, and doing it all for God's glory!



The trip was long...but we arrived to a very warm welcome. Kids were running alongside the bus singing and dancing and holding signs for all of us, "YOU ARE MOST WELCOME." There was not a dry eye on the bus. The great thing about the mission trip was that there were many different activities going on every day, and you could participate in any of them and learn different aspects of the mission. Victoria and I were able to participate in some of these activities, and Francis spent most of his time at St. Mary's Health Centre Kakindo.

The *clinic* is small but offers many services to the people of Kakindo. While they do not have doctors, they have very smart and talented nurses and medical assistants. They have a couple of rooms to see patients, a laboratory and a pharmacy. They also have several rooms to admit patients, if needed. The most exciting part of the clinic is the new maternity ward. It is beautiful and it is run by three midwives who rotate to have someone available 24 hours a day. They can only do natural births right now, but they are hoping that when construction is over, they can have a doctor who can perform C-sections in the new surgery room.

Francis really enjoyed his time helping the patients. He saw many cases of malaria, typhoid, tumors, and even helped deliver babies!



Here are some of the things that we accomplished this year: visited all 30 sub-parishes for missions, supported two medical clinics, took pictures of all students at Blessed Trinity School, built tables and benches, and visited the orphanage. As a team, we pooled money together and went shopping for orphans. Each orphan received two pairs of shoes, socks, and some clothing. The Ascension team went back to Ascension sub-parish and handed out uniforms and took pictures of all the kids there to start a sponsorship program, and Father blessed a new Church. A group of us went on a Safari (amazing!). We also broke bread and worshipped together every day. But the main thing we did was love the people of Uganda—to let them know that we see them, and we are sisters and brothers in Christ and will continue to love them even from the other side of the world.

We felt very grateful and extremely blessed to have been a part of this team and I pray that God will allow us to go again. Victoria Ruiz and children. Ascension Chapel in the background.



## Reflection of Sue Pickles

Each of us took turns visiting several of the 30 sub-parishes with Fr. Eamon or Fr. Sheedy over the course of the two weeks. What we found there was both uplifting and humbling.

The joy of the children and the adults as we drove up to each Church radiated through their beautiful smiles.



We were greeted with joyful welcoming songs, chants, and dances as we drove up to the parish. Their phrase, spoken in carefully rehearsed English, "You are most welcome," proved to be more than just words. We felt welcomed from the moment we arrived. At one Church, we were greeted with the tossing of flower petals, at another, palm fronds.

We then had the honor of celebrating Mass with them in their native language. Mass was filled with beautifully harmonizing vocals and drums, the perfect complement to the celebration of the Eucharist. The Churches Fr Sheedy has assisted them in building were both simple, yet beautiful, with concrete floors, high ceilings, and open stained glass windows to let in the breeze and the light.

After the Eucharistic celebration, dozens of Christians lined the center aisle with gifts for the visiting priests. These gifts ranged from avocados and mangoes, to chickens and the ultimate gift, a goat. We were humbled by their generosity. I was reminded of the story of the poor widow in the church whom Jesus commended for giving all she had (Mark 12:41-44).

I've never felt more at one with the Holy Spirit than during these celebrations. We were truly in the presence of holy people and learned so much by their joyful celebration. We truly felt "most welcome" by our brothers and sisters in Christ. "



*A Long Journey.* It took us three days to get to our destination. We left Orlando on Sunday at 2:30pm, flew to D.C. and then to Brussels, arriving in Kampala (Capital of Uganda) Monday at midnight. As you might imagine, it took us a good while gathering together 60 suitcases. We then went on a short trip to a Bed & Breakfast Retreat House run by Sisters as their way to make a living. After a midnight meal, we were all ready for bed.

Tuesday morning began with a 7:00am Mass followed by breakfast. We then started our eight-hour trip to Nalweyo arriving about 5:00pm to a most wonderful welcome. You would think the Pope was on the bus! The students at Blessed Trinity lined the road the last half mile of our journey running and singing alongside the bus.

All 30 of us would have seen a card with our name and with the words  
"YOU ARE MOST WELCOME."



The children welcoming us





Children at Ascension School Uganda, wearing the uniform tops donated by our Melbourne Ascension School. One of the teachers exclaimed with joy, *“Now we are a real school!”*



The teachers at Ascension School. Probably, no one has more than a High school education. One of our goals is to get these dedicated teachers more training and do a total make-over of their school.



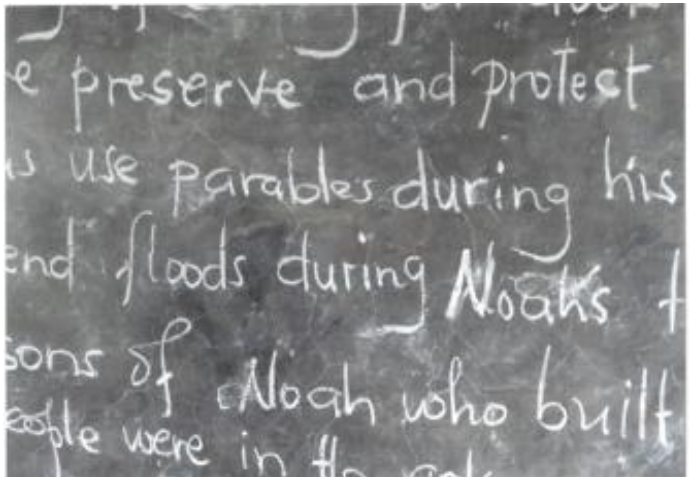
Getting a photograph and name of each of the children at our Sister parish school. Hopefully, we can start a sponsor program for these children. More on this at a later time.



This is a beautiful Adoration Chapel on the main campus. Parishioners from all the sub-parishes are expected to help keep vigil with Jesus 24/7.



During my short time, I visited six parishes. Here I am with Fr. Henry who was my driver and translator. As you can see from the pictures, some of the schools were very sad to look at. The one below had nothing in it but a chalkboard. But, amazingly, the chalkboard had beautiful hand writings on it.





**Computer lab at Blessed Trinity High School, Uganda. Teachers learning how to use the technology donated by Ascension and Blessed Trinity Churches.**



**The first graduating class from Blessed Trinity High School. They all began here as primary students. They achieved some of the highest scores in the country on their qualifying exams for universities. Two of the graduating students spent the last school year at Blessed Trinity High School in Ocala**



We had a most glorious three-hour Liturgy on the one Sunday we were there. We celebrated, amongst other things, the first graduation of their new high school, with robes from Blessed Trinity High School in Ocala. During the Mass, the graduates came forward with a lovely dance. Two of the graduates carried a basket. When they arrived up front, a little child emerged from the basket. I forgot to ask *why* they brought forward a small child in the basket. Perhaps it meant that the child and all children are dedicated to God.



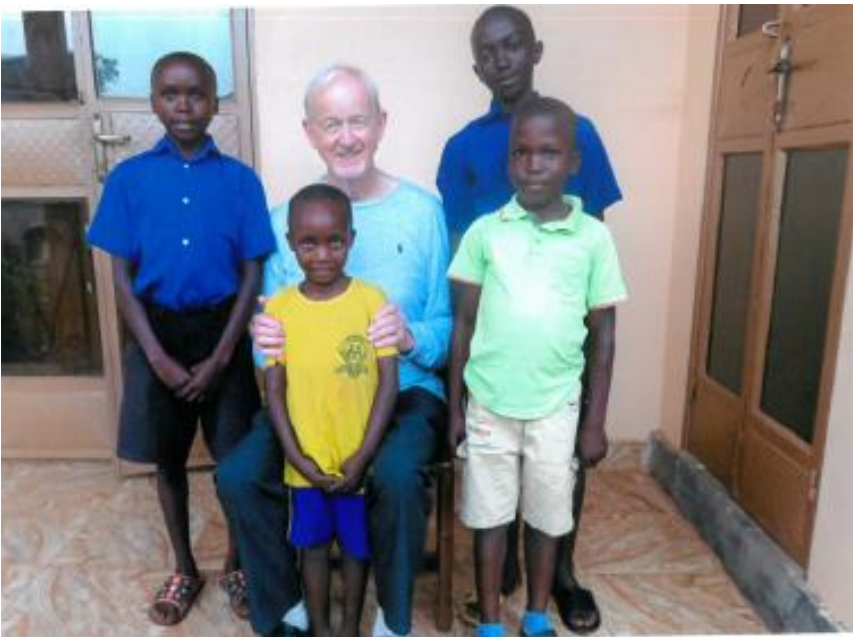
Each sub-parish we visited gave us a huge welcome.

Looking into the eyes of children like this little girl was *one* of the many blessings we received.





Fr. Henry is one of the associate pastors at Blessed Trinity. He is only ordained two years. At the end of our second day together, he showed me a letter from his bishop stating that he was being moved and made a pastor about one hour away from his current parish. I told the young priest that I would like to see his new parish. He told me that he was not sure *where* it was located. But he called the priest who was currently in charge of what was about to become a new parish. So on my way to the airport, Fr. Henry took me to his new parish. It had a Church with no pews, just some benches. It had a priest's house that had no one living in it for years. The photo above was taken in the school of Father's new parish. It was, if I remember correctly, a one-room school with a few benches. Father asked if we could help him get started. I told him we would. How could I say 'No' to this very young priest who was being asked at a very young age to take on a lot of responsibilities.



Last year when I announced that I planned to travel to Uganda in June, I also put in the bulletin information about Blessed Trinity's Sponsor Program. At that time I decided to join the sponsor program. \$200 for an elementary student, \$250 for a High School student. During my visit, I was introduced to the five students that I sponsored.



During our time in Nalweyo, Fr. Pat dedicated and blessed a new church at St. Rita's parish (Rita was his mother's name). The excitement of the children and the adults on this occasion was huge.

A water pump is a huge blessing anywhere in Uganda - but especially in a remote area. This water pump is on the main campus.



Ascension Chapel  
Uganda

## Closing Comments

During my 47 years of priesthood, I have been on a lot of mission trips, twice to our Sister Diocese in the Dominican Republic, twice to Haiti, twice to Lima (Peru) and once to Guatemala and Calcutta. What made this mission trip special and unique was witnessing upfront the HUGE difference one parish is making in one area of our worldwide Church.

I am glad I volunteered to “go and see” what Fr. Pat and his wonderful people are doing in Uganda. I know that the eight Ascension parishioners are also delighted that they went.

During my visits to the 6 sub-parishes, I promised the people that we would help each of them in some way. Frankly, it was almost impossible to visit a parish and school and *not* promise to help. In the coming months, I will let you know some ways you can join in this wonderful outreach to a church family in a faraway place. I am especially drawn to help Fr. Henry get started in his new place.

With my other travelling companions, I am very grateful to all of you who contributed in any way to the gift-giving that we took to Nalweyo.

Glad to be back with my church family,

*Fr. Aaron*



23 OF THE 30 MISSIONARIES WHO TRAVELLED  
TO UGANDA



**From August 25, 2019**

**Ways to Financially Support Sub-Parishes in Uganda**

A few weeks ago, I (and my co-travelers) shared with you our reflections on our mission trip to Uganda. Since then, some of you have expressed interest in donating to this mission field. Fr. Sheedy, who has been going to Uganda for 13 years and who travelled with me sent me the ‘wish list’ below. Recall Fr. Sheedy’s parish has 30 sub-parishes; hence, the high quantity needs. I also want to help the young new pastor, Fr. Henry (see story below). Please share this list with anyone who may have a heart for helping impoverished brothers and sisters.

<b>Uganda Needs List</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Quantity needed</b>
<b>Bicycle for catechist</b>	<b>\$ 100.00</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Sponsor primary student</b>	<b>\$ 210.00</b>	<b>Several hundred</b>
<b>Sponsor High School student</b>	<b>\$ 240.00</b>	<b>Several hundred</b>
<b>One monstrance</b>	<b>\$ 300.00</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Paint for one Church</b>	<b>\$ 1,500.00</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Sound system per Church</b>	<b>\$ 1,500.00</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Paint for one school</b>	<b>\$ 2,000.00</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>One water tank installed</b>	<b>\$ 2,500.00</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Build one classroom</b>	<b>\$ 5,000.00</b>	<b>Countless</b>
<b>One deep water well</b>	<b>\$ 7, 500.00</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Our Lady of Angels Orphanage</b>	<b>Any donation towards Phase II of the construction of a new multi-purpose building will be appreciated.</b>	
<b>Build one village school</b>	<b>\$55,000.00</b>	<b>10</b>

**First Uganda ‘Miracle’ Donation**

Fr. Henry, 4 years ordained, drove me around while I was in Uganda. At the end of our time together, he had just received a letter from his bishop appointing him to be the first pastor of a new parish. I went to see his new place which has *a lot* of needs—like all parishes there. I asked him to send me a dollar figure for some needs. He sent me info on 3 projects costing \$28,000. The next day I received an email from a parishioner I did not know. She had read our bulletin on Uganda the week before. This parishioner, who prefers to remain anonymous, said she wanted to donate \$28,000 to Fr. Henry’s new parish. When I met with this lovely lady and asked her what moved her to such generosity, she said she was prompted by the Holy Spirit. She also said she reads my Morning Prayer each day. One line in the prayer speaks about “hearing and responding to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.” I am praying that the Holy Spirit will lead many of you to help our brothers and sisters in a faraway place.

**From November 24, 2019**

### **Update on Outreach to the Church in Uganda**

Since some of you have recently returned from up north to spend the winter with us, you may not be aware that this past summer I traveled to a parish in Uganda with eight other Ascension parishioners. We joined the pastor of Blessed Trinity, Ocala, and some of his parishioners. They have been going to Uganda for 13 years and have done wonderful work there. They are partnering with a sister parish in Uganda. The sister parish has 30 sub-parishes. We have adopted one of them. It is called Ascension Parish and School.

Currently, we are looking to build a school in our adopted sub-parish and are seeking sponsors for the children who will attend the school this coming school year which begins in January 2020.

I have been inviting parishioners to *sponsor a child* for a school year, which is **\$210**. To date we have received 166 sponsorship gifts. Thank you, sponsors. We have also received **9 sponsorship** gifts of **\$250** for **High School** students. There is only one High School which is at the main campus. We plan to oversee the elementary school sponsorships, but will forward the money for High School sponsorship to Blessed Trinity Parish in Ocala.

**Classrooms - \$5,000.** We are in the process of building additional space for our Ascension School. In conjunction with the labor of the local parents and parishioners, they are able to build 9 classrooms for \$5,000 each. Thus far, we have received eleven \$5,000 gifts. Thank you, donors. See photo of the locals helping out with the foundation work on next page.



### **Helping Fr. Henry at his Parish**

Last summer, Fr. Henry, a 32-year-old Associate Pastor at Blessed Trinity, Uganda, was my driver when I visited Uganda and said Masses at some of the 30 sub-parishes. On our last day together, Fr. Henry informed me that the Bishop had appointed him Pastor of what was formerly a sub-parish, located about one hour from Blessed Trinity. On my way to the airport, I visited Fr. Henry's new parish (he was also seeing it for the first time). He asked if I could help him fix up his rectory, a building that had not been lived in for several years.

When I told this story in our bulletin last September, a parishioner was moved to help this young

priest and gave us a \$30,000 Life Insurance gift. This gift has enabled Fr. Henry to:

- ◆ Fix up his rectory (where I hope to stay for a few days next summer)
- ◆ Construct water wells
- ◆ Get some pews for his church

### **A School for Fr. Henry's Parish**

Like so many parishes and sub-parishes we visited, each has some form of a church and school—often the school is a **“Stick Mud Block”** building. See picture below.

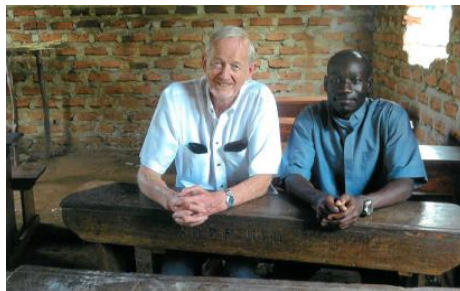
I have already obtained four gifts of \$5,000 to help Fr. Henry with his school. As you can imagine, the needs are endless. But we help bit by bit, and please, God, in a few years, we will together make a *very significant difference* in a very faraway part of our universal Church. Pope Francis calls us to go to the ‘peripheries.’ Our mission in Uganda is certainly one of the many peripheries in our worldwide Church.



### **Five people have told me they want to join me next summer in Uganda**

Next summer, God willing, I will return to Uganda with Fr. Pat Sheedy (Pastor of Blessed Trinity in Ocala) and some of his people. Last year, 30 of us went.

Thus far, five people have told me that they would like to travel. They include a doctor, a videographer, two former Ascension parishioners now living in Merritt Island, and one other Ascension parishioner. If interested in joining us, let me know. Our departure date is June 21, 2020.



**Fr. Henry and I  
in a school room in  
Uganda**

If you can sponsor a child (\$210), please consider doing so. If you can donate \$5,000 for a classroom, please consider doing so. If you can gift \$60,000 that would build a school or church, please consider doing so. Some at Blessed Trinity in Ocala have done that. Some do it over a

three-year period. Supporting a foreign mission is a long and wonderful tradition in our church.

Finally, as we support the church and poor in Uganda, we have not taken our eyes off those in need in our own backyard. Last weekend, as I announced at the Masses I presided at, this calendar year our Social Concerns office alone will give out over \$400,000 in aid—nearly all of it to non-parishioners.

### **Uganda Mission Final Update**

As indicated above, a second mission was planned for June 2020. Unfortunately, that mission trip was cancelled due to the covid pandemic. Father Eamon passed away on January 1, 2021, however his mission to Uganda continues. He left a tremendous legacy gift to Father Henry's parish to continue to develop parishes and schools. Many people still continue to support children, students and teachers there.

Terri Moore – she and her husband George were on the first mission trip - established a facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/fathereamonuganda>

And Rob and Christina Light also on the first mission trip joined Blessed Trinity's Mission Trip in June 2022. Following is their photo report of all that has been accomplished at Ascension Parish, Nalweyo and Our Lady of Mercy Orphanage as well as Father Henry's Sts. Peter and Paul Parish which is now functioning like Blessed Trinity Parish with 7 sub-parishes where only Sts. Peter and Paul existed in 2019.

<http://eamontobin.com/wp-content/uploads/Uganda-2022-Ascension-Parish-and-School-Our-Lady-of-Mercy-Orphanage-and-St.-Peter-and-Paul-Parish.pdf>

The work is truly a testament to the love of one pastor and his parish on the other side of the world. Thank you Father Eamon for your witness and legacy of love.