School Sisters of Notre Dame *Province of Africa*

GOOD NEWS FROM AFRICA

Spring 2019



WHO WILL ROLL BACK THE STONE

Having just celebrated the Triduum and begun the Easter season this question continues to haunt me. ***Who will roll back the stone?*** It's the question uttered in the Gospel story by the women who wanted to bring spices to the tomb of Jesus on that first Easter morning. When they arrived at the tomb they found the stone already moved and an angel there who announced to them the good news of the resurrection. From that time the Good News is being announced.

In our world today we still have many stones to roll back so that all people can celebrate good news. Some of the stones we encounter in our ministries in Africa are illiteracy and lack of education that hinders development and especially affects so many women. There is the stone of AIDs that has orphaned so many children. There is the stone of poverty that denies many the food and medicines they need. The work continues!!

Many of you have partnered with us to help move some of these stones in Africa. You are the angels that announce the Good News! You help to roll the stone back! Sometimes this is as simple as providing some basic necessities like school fees for school girls in the countries where we serve. Other times it is helping to provide for the formation of our Sisters as they enter the congregation or to provide support for their education as they prepare for a life time of ministry. At other times it is helping us to reach out to those children who have lost their parents to AIDs. **Together we can make a difference!**
Together we can move some stones.

by Sr. Rosanne Rustemeyer, SSND

In this issue of Good News from Africa, we want to share with you some of the new works the Sisters in the Province of Africa have begun in recent months as well as enhancements to already strong ministries.



NEW MISSIONS Opened in the Past Year

NIGERIA

JOS: At a recent gathering of Sisters for the Provincial Assembly held in Ghana in February, Sister Victoria began her report by reminding Sisters that the Jos community had been closed some years back due to lack of personnel. The Archbishop has written a number of times requesting for the return of the sisters to Jos. In 2017, after communication with the Bishop there was a strong feeling among the sisters of the Area of Nigeria and affirmation by the Provincial Council to reopen Jos. In January 2019, Sisters Bessey Eze and Uzoamaka Moneme moved into Jos convent to form community.

ANWULE: Three sisters (Dorothy Enang, Monica Benedict and Esther Peter) moved to Anwule community on August 2018 and were officially welcomed on September 2018 by the parish community and the Bishop of Otukpo Diocese. The sisters are teaching in the primary school and Sr. Monica Benedict is the headmistress.



Sisters Monica-Headmistress in Anwule and Uzoamaka in Jos

At the beginning of the school year in September, 2018, the number of the pupils registered was 68 and by the end of the term, the number had increased to 202 students.

The convent is well furnished through the help of a local donor though there are challenges of getting teachers, water and internet. The ministry seems viable and consistent with our educational outreach.

KENYA

LIKUYANI: Sister Joyce, the Provincial Leader brought to the attention of the Sisters that it is two years since the community at Likuyani was established. Having recently met with the bishop about the status of the sisters in Likuyani, the bishop acknowledged that the living conditions of the sisters are not acceptable but he is making every effort to ensure the sisters are catered for. There was a fund raising event on March 10th, 2019 for the construction of the convent.

ST. PETER'S MAGWAGWA: The sisters arrived at the seven-bedroomed convent in Magwagwa on 18th December, 2018. On 23rd December, the parish welcomed the sisters. Two sisters, Merceline Anyega and Beatrice Chepngeno and two affiliates are slowly settling in at Magwagwa convent.

On 23rd February, 2019, the bishop, a number of priests and Christians from neighboring parishes welcomed the sisters officially to Magwagwa parish and to their ministry, St. Kizito Parish School. Because the convent was not quite ready, the bishop will be returning for its blessing. In January 2019, the sisters officially began their school ministry with the admission of 78 pupils. By mid-February, the pupils had grown to 182.



Sisters Terri and Rose helping children study in Nyalieng'a.

NEW EDITIONS in Soma and Nyalieng'a

SOMA



Sister Terngu Sule, headmistress at Notre Dame Primary

SOMA IN THE GAMBIA: Notre Dame Primary School was begun ten years Ago. Now there is a request for the expansion to upgrade the school to a Primary School with grades 1-9. The need to expand required additional classroom. The work officially began in the second week of February. The work is going on and is anticipated to be completed before the rainy season.

NYALIENG'A

NYALIENG'A IN KENYA: This year, Notre Dame Children's Outreach is ten years in existence. It has been the custom for a sister working in the program to go to Canada every year to update sponsors on the progress of the orphans and the progress of our future sustainability plan. At this point the plan for establishing a Boarding School has been developed and it has actually started to generate some funds. Proposals for grants are in the process of being written by the NDCO sisters and the Area Development committee.

Currently the sisters are living in a rented house but the convent is under construction. A total of US $38,000 has been spent ($32, 000) from sponsors and $6000 from a sister's family. We have an additional $7,250 by a sponsor and $550 through local fundraising in Kenya. Works yet to be done include floor, doors and windows, ceiling, electrical wiring, plumping, external landscaping, furnishing, water harvesting and storage.

RARUOWA IN KENYA: A new and urgent ministry that leadership was requested to respond to in September of 2017 by the Bishop of Homa Bay Diocese, is St. Lucy Raruowa Girls Secondary School. It is located about 20 minutes by car from the community at Nyalieng'a. The council affirmed and supported Sr. Terri to help administer the school for one year.

The poverty of the area is high and is marked as a hardship area by the Kenyan government. The plight of the girl child is evident with few girls from this area making it past primary school.

St. Lucy Raruowa has a good 8 - bedroomed convent (6 spacious and 2 small ones). The diocese furnished the convent (bedrooms, kitchen, dining and sitting room) before Sr. Terri arrived there in October 2017. In early September 2018, a recommendation came from the Kenya Area, asking the council to consider taking St. Lucy Raruowa as an SSND corporate ministry in light of possibilities for future growth.

In October, a formal request came to the council from Bishop of Homa Bay asking the congregation to take over full administration of St. Lucy Raruowa. The council is in favor of staying on in Raruowa as we believe that the school is a viable ministry. The school as we see it has a huge expanse of land for farming and sports (8 acres); farming in a variety of crops and animals is already being practiced (they slaughter their own animals e.g. pigs for the students); drilled solar-powered borehole and the school sells water to neighbors; electricity connected with a standby generator; well-maintained buildings; a fully equipped computer and science labs with potential for growth.

School Sisters of Notre Dame
Province of Africa
PO Box 16415 St. Louis, MO
63125

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Publisher: Rosanne Rustemeyer, SSND
314-633-7051 ssndafrica@gmail.or

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gcassani@ssndcp.org



Sr. Lilian Gor's Profession, December 29,2018. Pictured with Sr. Joyce, Provincial Leader and Fr. Mwenda.

Sisters in the Province continue to be in solidarity with all the women in initial formation in the spirit of mentoring/ nurturing and affirming the call they hear deep within them.

The Province of Africa Continues to Welcome Young Women Interested in Religious Life

Because the province continues to attract young women due to God's grace and the efforts of the vocation and affiliate directors, there are about 100 young women interested in the SSND way of life. 20 young women have requested to be admitted to the affiliate stage, the beginning of discernment. Sierra Leone –1, The Gambia–4, Nigeria–5, Kenya–8, Ghana – 5.

As of October 15th, 2018, 12 women have requested to join the postulancy. Since then, the Formation House in Kisumu, Kenya has been filled with life. The Postulancy program comprises many activities, classes, experiences, community dynamics, personal deepening of faith and relationships with God and one another. Sisters in the postulancy community work together as a team in coordinating various classes. Postulants are also involved in activities outside the formation house as well as various ministries once a week. There are 23 temporary professed Sisters in the Province; Ghana: 3; Kenya: 6; Nigeria: 6; Sierra Leone: 4; Gambia: 4; Five of these sisters are getting ready for perpetual profession on May 25th and July 6th of this year.

In Rome 12 novices are part of an intercultural and international community of 18 members from 11 countries. The 10 novices from Africa will be received back in the province from Rome on August 8, 2019 to begin their 7 months' apostolic phase of formation.