

Mission Connections

Volume # 75

Season, Year



Prayer for Peace

My dear Lord, it seems that it is far too easy these days to look around and see Sadness, Despair, Injury, Doubt, Hate & Darkness. Please help us to live & love as you have created our souls to do. Please help us to see that you have a plan, that every single one of us has been specifically and especially designed by you. You make no mistakes. It will be with that faith and that knowledge that we can all learn better to love as you love.

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon, where there is doubt, faith, where there is despair, hope, where there is darkness, light, where there is sadness, joy
-St. Francis of Assisi*



From Whom and Where in the World do our stories come from?

Those who are called—Mission Around the World

A letter from Fr. Gabriel Joseph Ssenkindo—Egypt

In September 2023, my superior from Germany was visiting our community in Tororo and he asked me whether I thought could help to grow our new Coptic Benedictine community in Egypt. At the age of over 60, the body is slowing down but the spirit is great, so “will do” I answered in the affirmative.

After a number of visits to the Embassy of Egypt and Interpol in Kampala, I was granted a one-month Visa. and arrived in Ismailia on December 31, just in time for my second Christmas celebration.

Egypt with a population of over 100 million, is a lot different from Uganda. The people, land, weather and language. Of the over 100 million people, only about 10% are Christians, mostly Orthodox. There are about 200,000 Catholics, the majority of whom are Coptic. Only about 20,000 Catholics of the Latin rite, mostly foreigners (just about 2000 Egyptian Catholics of the Latin rite). 2 Calendars are followed, Orthodox and Latin.

Christmas and Easter are celebrated at different times (can be very confusing). There is only one Catholic bishop of the Latin rite in Egypt and of course the Papal Nuncio.



We are a community of 5. One from Germany, 2 from Egypt, 2 from Kenya and 1 from Uganda. Our neighboring village is 100% Muslim. Our apostolate is primarily to minister to a couple of catholic families living and working in the city of Ismailia about 30 minutes' drive away. We celebrate Sunday Mass for them on Friday. Sunday is a normal working day while Friday is a day of rest. Very strange for me at first. But I had to let go my mind (rationality) and let faith flourish. The Supernatural (spiritual) is not limited to time and space.

Having visited a couple of Biblical sites (the place where Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus stayed while in exile here, the place where Moses and the Israelites gathered before embarking on the Exodus and climbing Mt. Sanai, made lent and the celebration of Easter so special for me. The Lord is Risen indeed, we are an Easter people and ALLELUIA is our song. To the staff of the Missions office, people of St cloud Diocese and beyond who generously support is in the Missions, Thank you very much, Asante sana, Shukran. Blessings & Best wishes from the Desert of Ismailia, Egypt.



Greetings everyone, from our (somewhat) small village in the Southern Province of Rwanda. Things are going well. We had a good and much needed break after Christmas, not getting back into the field until February. We added another missionary, Alice, who was one of the people we spent time with last year. It is nice to have folks with us who are “paying it forward” as it were, especially now that we have added a few people that we minister to; a young couple, two single mothers, and a young man at the hospital who has some significant respiratory issues. We also want to let you know about an addition to our website. As you may or may not be aware of, the second part of our mission is to transform the way this part of the world and the people in it are viewed. I don't know what your experience has been, but ever since I was a young child in the 1970's most of what I remember seeing about Africa has been of starving children, lions (or your favorite safari animal), shamans, warriors with facial tattoos and spears, and minimally clad men and women (thanks National Geographic). The list is seemingly endless of such stereotypes. Those things do exist of course, as they wouldn't be shown if they didn't, but I can honestly say that in the almost four years since I have been here that I have not seen any of that. What I have seen is a bounty of beauty in both land and people.



I have experienced graciousness, warmth, and kindness. And I have seen a level of gratitude, joy, and faith that is lived out day-to-day despite what some may call meager or so-called “poor” conditions. While we have produced and published a certain amount of media content meant to combat such stereotypes (blogs, videos, social media posts, etc.), it has been somewhat of a secondary focus. That is changing with the initiation of starting ‘Ntwali Lane Productions,’ which is now part of the website.

<https://www.ntwalilanefoundation.org/> We are not simply calling it ‘media’ as we feel that what we are producing is unique in its approach, method, and content. It will include links to various videos on our YouTube Channel, a gallery that will be updated regularly, and a blog page that we will post from time to time about any and all things related to life in rural Rwanda and the people we spend time with. We have no doubt you will find all of it interesting, educational, and enjoyable. One last note, and a very important one. By the time you read this, we are expecting that the Foundation will have been officially registered. We are very excited about that, to say the least. It will open up doors and give us a level of legitimacy in the Rwandan community that we might not otherwise have. Thanks again to my now pregnant (!!) wife Nathalie, as she was the one who had the initial idea of starting a foundation when we were in Kenya last year helping a young girl get a prosthetic for her amputated leg. Thank you for all your interest and support, and by that we always mean prayer first. – Alan Lane



Hello from Ecuador



Missions from Ecuador

From the month of January to April in the Vicariate of Agua Rico, in the province of Orellana, we have been carrying out the following missionary activities: Attention to the Río Coca neighborhood, here we have visited families, visited the sick, especially from the Kiwcha indigenous ethnic group, as well

We have given catechesis, spiritually attended to families. Every week we celebrate the word, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. We celebrate with them the holy days of

Easter. We have also served by helping to raise awareness about the need to eradicate violence against women and girls in this area of Ecuador that has very high incidence rates. We organized the pre-congress of Pontifical Mission Societies of the Vicariate which was an event to celebrate the Joy of being missionaries. We have been delegates to the National

Missionary Congress where we celebrated together with all the missionary delegates of the country the Joy of the Service we provide. Happy Easter to all!!

