DECEMBER 2017

NEWS from SACRED HEART SEMINARY
and ARCHBISHOP FLYNN SECONDARY SCHOOL

OPEN ARMS
OPEN HEARTS
OPEN MINDS

TOGETHER MAKING
A DIFFERENCE

# HOPE FOR UGANDA

## ENROLLMENT SNAPSHOT

- Sacred Heart Seminary: 142 students
- AFSS: 460 students
  259 boys / 201 girls

## DID YOU KNOW

- **AFSS** is ranked 18th nationally for School Effectiveness (Top 1%) and ranked 84th for Student Grades (Top 3%) out of of 3,235 schools
- **SHS** is ranked 125th nationally for School Effectiveness (Top 4%) and 153rd for Student Grades (Top 5%)

**School Effectiveness is the measured performance progress following Primary School*

{right}
Jimmy James Komakech

AFSS: TOP 100 SCHOOLS

## TOUCHED BY THE LOVE OF STRANGERS

**Jimmy James Komakech**, by his own admission, has defied the meaning of his name. In his mother's native tongue, Komakech means unlucky, but as his young life has unfolded, Jimmy feels very lucky instead. As one of five children, Jimmy knew his future was dark when his father was killed by Kony rebels in 2003, even before he started school. *"It was clear to me that my future was dark as I grew up without my father. My mother had a very humble education and did not have the means to provide for the basic things we needed to survive. I grew up in hardship, unable to blame anyone for my ordeals."*

Jimmy began his primary education in a Catholic school in 2004. Regular attendance in the early years was difficult because of the expense, but the seed had been planted for a brighter future by his parish priest, who inspired him to join the seminary.

*"From that time I wanted to become a priest and when the time came I applied to Sacred Heart Seminary. My mother managed to pay half of the first term fees but could not pay for the second term. After staying at home for the first month of the second term, Msgr. Matthew sent for my mother and me. He told us then that I would be supported by the benefactors of the seminary and encouraged my mother to raise the little*

*(Continued on page 4)*

# FROM THE DESK OF MONSIGNOR MATTHEW

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The students and staff at **SACRED HEART SEMINARY** (SHS) and **ARCHBISHOP FLYNN SECONDARY SCHOOL** (AFSS). join me in sending you our words of gratitude for your continued support of **HOPE FOR UGANDA**. This year marks 27 years since my visit to the US, when I first met Dan and Bobbi Vaughan. Inspired by the story I shared with them on the plight of my people, Dan and Bobbi decided to get involved and be part of the solution. **HOPE FOR UGANDA** was born of their generosity to meet the needs of my people.

Founders Dan and Bobbi Vaughan with Msgr. Matthew

Today, you and many other generous benefactors support SHS and AFSS, two boarding schools in Northern Uganda where students are given a faith-based education, fed and accommodated in a safe environment, and blessed with an opportunity for a future often not otherwise possible. Young men are being formed for the priesthood and boys and girls alike are becoming educated as good citizens of their own country and the world.

A total of 142 seminarians are enrolled Sacred Heart Seminary this school year, **and more than 60% of them are in need of financial support to continue their journey to priesthood.** Their lives are centered around prayer, study and work. We pray for our benefactors on a daily basis, that you will continue to support their education and formation. In 2017, there were three new priests ordained and two transitional deacons in our diocese. Forty of the current major seminarians are graduates of SHS. These are the students you have supported and prayed for in the past. Your support is working miracles for the Lord!

The enrollment this year at **ARCHBISHOP FLYNN SECONDARY SCHOOL** is 460 boys and girls! The school is doing very well and is considered among the best performing schools in all of Uganda. Because the school is in high demand and we have enough accommodation and teachers for up to 550 students, the school board is considering increasing enrollment in 2018. Only through your generosity are we able to offer tuition assistance to those in most need, so please consider contributing to this promise of a better tomorrow for these beautiful children of God.

This great success story of which you are a part is not without its challenges. Below and continued on the next page are some of the plans for the **FUTURE and CONTINUING NEEDS** of both schools:

1. **SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM** – So many children want to realize their potential by attending our schools, but cannot because of the expense. The cost is $900 for one full year of tuition, room and board at AFSS and SHS. You can give hope to a child by helping them attend one of the best schools in Uganda – a dream come true – inspiring them to become industrious citizens with a bright future.

2. **AGRICULTURE SUSTAINABILITY** - Because of the dependency on contributions for operational expenses (and food being a major component of that), the HFU board is supporting the move for both schools to create programs for sustainability through agriculture as a way to encourage self-reliance. At AFSS, land has been acquired for the Rural Development Education Center, where students, staff

and surrounding community will learn modern agriculture first hand. To achieve this goal, AFSS will need a tractor, plow, planter, harvester, sprayer and milling equipment to raise and process the harvest and a truck to transfer the crop from the farm to the market. Fr. Paul Peter Rom has been given the leadership role for this important program. If you would like to help us acquire some of this equipment, please contact Todd Ziesmer for details.

3 **MASS INTENTIONS** – Priests in Uganda are not paid monthly salaries. Instead, they depend on Mass intention donations from people like you. Our priests are committed to fulfilling the Canonical obligations attached to all Mass offerings. Donations provide opportunity for the priests to pray for your loved ones, living and dead, and for your own personal intentions. Please consider donating to support our priests in their ministry.

In September of this year I had the joy of reuniting with many of my friends and benefactors in Minnesota. Fr. Paul Peter Rom and I were hosted by **HOPE FOR UGANDA** and were able to meet with many of our old and new friends in parishes, schools and homes. We also had the privilege of visiting Archbishop Harry Flynn at his place of retirement near Albany, NY. He was very happy to receive an update on the excellent performance of the school named after him. He expressed gratitude and appreciation to the American people for their support of our people.

Left to Right: Bill & Jean Kottemann, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Bobbi Vaughan, Marie & Todd Ziesmer, Bill Sutherland

America is a great country, a land of freedom and opportunity for prosperity. Personally, I'm convinced that the greatness of the United States can be fully understood by the faith and values held by the founding fathers, whose motto and legacy read "In God we trust...One nation under God." It is these words which, I believe, make America great, prosperous, and generous because God is the foundation and God is love. Americans are lovely, friendly, hardworking and generous people. May God continue to bless the United States of America.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools. May God reward you abundantly for your generosity. Here's wishing you a fruitful Advent Season, a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year 2018. **CHEERS!**

Msgr. Matthew Odong
Rector, Sacred Heart Seminary

# TOUCHED BY THE LOVE OF STRANGERS

*(Continued from page 1)*

*she could afford as a contribution towards my education. I could not believe I was given an opportunity to pursue my dreams once again. For the last five years I have been the beneficiary of the generosity of people I have never seen! Thanks to the goodness of the Lord."*

Jimmy is determined to dedicate his life to the service of his people, responding to the call of God. *"I want to be a priest and be a generous one. I am so grateful to the benefactors of Sacred Heart Seminary and for the sponsorships of all who are needy, with no hope for a bright future. May God bless and reward your generosity, for you lifted me from despair to great hope for a bright future In the Church."*

**Ferdinand Okidi Kabila** is the first born in a family of four children from Pajule Parish in Northern Uganda. From a very early age Ferdinand admired the priests in his parish and wanted to be like them. He shared that dream with his father who encouraged him to study hard and promised to take him to Sacred Heart Seminary when it was time to apply. In 2014 his dreams were shattered when his father died of throat cancer, leaving his mother alone to care for the family. His father had been a teacher and the sole source of income.

*"My mum has no special education and does unprofessional subsistent farming. I knew I could no longer join the seminary, and yet I still applied. Rev. Fr. Okello, the Vice Rector at Sacred Heart Seminary, helped me access the sponsorship program, for which I am so grateful. My dreams came true when I joined Sacred Heart Seminary in 2016. I am learning to pray, study, and work. I am determined to carry on with my journey to the priesthood with the support of our benefactors. I want to work hard in appreciation of the support of people I have not met or may never meet. The scholarship has brought great joy to my mum who can now struggle to raise money for other needs.*

*The support to me has become a support to the entire family. I hope that one day I will be able to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass for you, our dear benefactors, and for my dear dad whom I love and miss very much. May the good Lord reward your generous hearts and bless all your intentions."*

Once again, these stories reach across thousands of miles, written by kids who laugh and cry, tell jokes and pull pranks on their classmates, but who also truly understand the meaning of gratitude. We don't have to touch the face of God to know the power of his love. **You are instruments of that love.**

Ferdinand Okidi Kabila

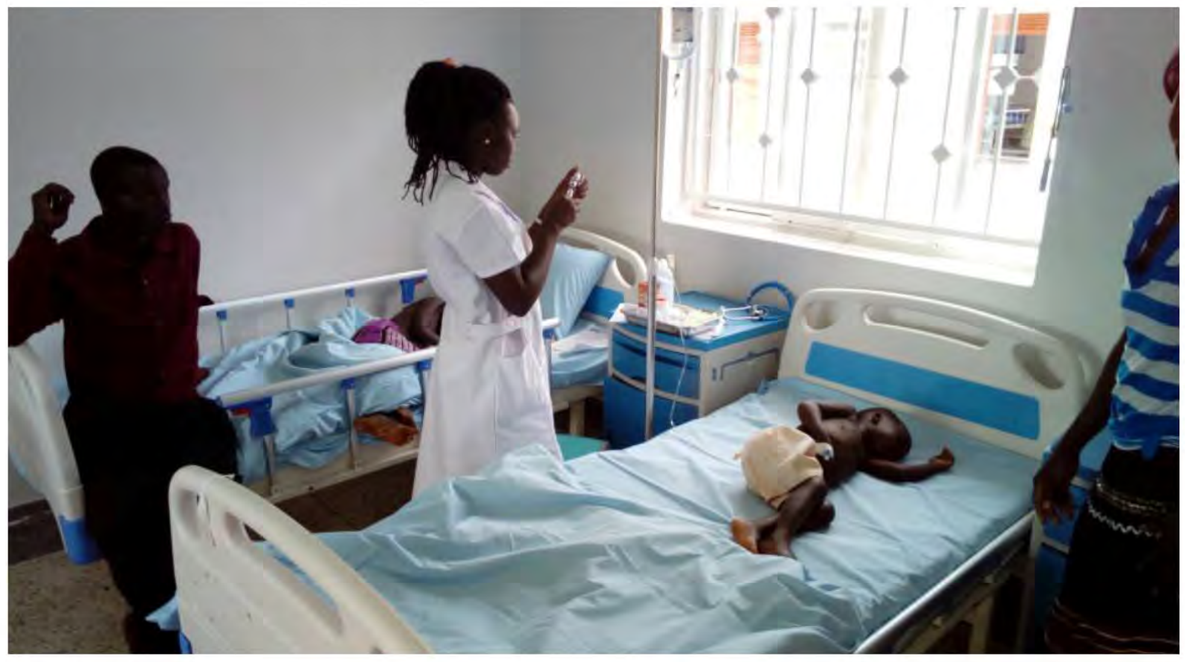
# DAVID FAGERLEE MEDICAL CENTER UPDATE

The successful opening of the David Fagerlee Medical Center (DFMC) in Northern Uganda is a dream-come-true for longtime benefactor and board member, David Fagerlee and his wife, Vicki. Their dream began with the mission to "transform the health care experience by giving hope to the most vulnerable with love and dignity" in the very rural community of Adilang and surrounding area of about 160,000 people. Today the 10,000 sq. ft. level 3 facility has 20 beds, employs 19 medical personnel, and offers 24-hour care. The center began accepting patients in June of 2017 and by the end of October had treated 1551 people, for services ranging from child birth to malaria, respiratory infections, typhoid fever and many others.

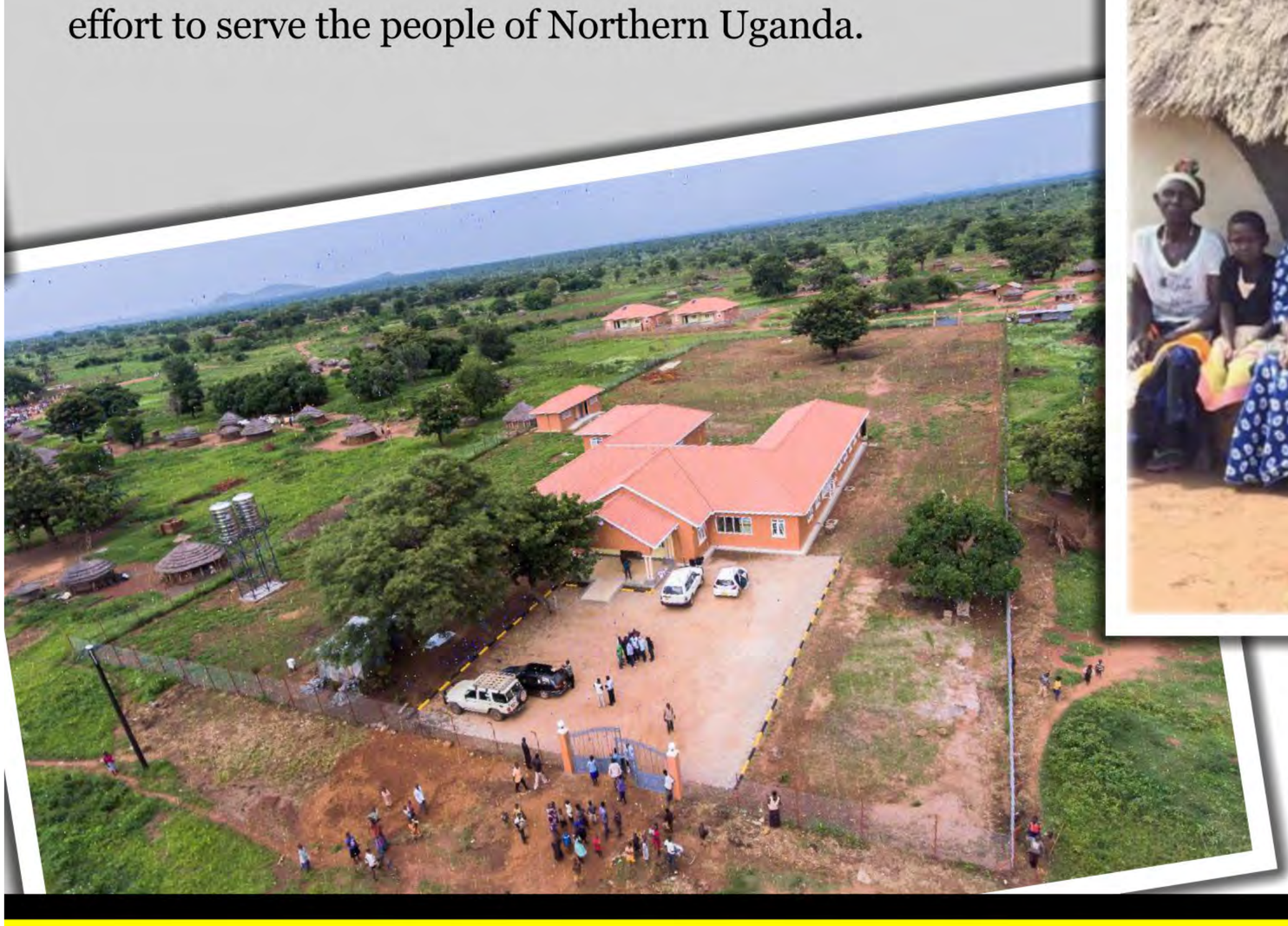
The new medical center celebrated its Grand Opening on July 22, 2017. The President of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, was an honored guest along with many other high level government officials, dignitaries, and thousands of local citizens. It was a proud moment for Ugandans and a great testimony to the power of love and compassion.

Congratulations to David and Vicki Fagerlee for this magnificent achievement! It is an honor for **HOPE FOR UGANDA** to continue its support of this most worthwhile effort to serve the people of Northern Uganda.

Grand Opening of the DFMC, David Fagerlee with President Museveni



Life saving treatment for a child with malaria



*Above:* Demand is so great, local Villagers wait their turn for treatment at the DFMC
*Left:* Aerial View of the DFMC Campus
*Page 4:* Neo-Natal and Pediatric care are administered at the DFMC

# EXECUTIVE NOTES
## AN UPDATE FROM TODD ZIESMER

Dear friends
of **HOPE FOR UGANDA**,

Peace be with you as we enter the new church year! Much has happened since my joining this apostolate last November and I'm eager to help keep the momentum going into 2018. A return trip to Uganda is being planned for early next year to continue the collaborative activities we share with our Ugandan partners, bringing hope to their people through spiritual formation, education, and health care relief.

We congratulate David and Vicki Fagerlee for the successful opening of the **DAVID FAGERLEE MEDICAL CENTER** in July. What an amazing gift - this project is truly a God-send to the suffering poor in Adilang and surrounding communities.

September is a special time for us as we traditionally welcome the Ugandan priests to Minnesota and facilitate their visits to parishes, schools, and homes of many benefactors. It is a joyous time for the priests to reunite with old friends, make new ones, and express their sincere gratitude. This year Msgr. Matthew and Fr. Paul Peter Rom gave generously of their time and spirit as they put a face on the mission we hold dear. Our thanks to the host parishes and their pastors – St. John the Baptist in Jordan, St. Patrick in Oak Grove, Immaculate Heart of Mary in Minnetonka, and St. Anne in Hamel – for their warm welcome and generous support. Because so many responded to the challenge grant offered by the board, together we qualified for the entire grant. Thank you all for your generosity!

Added to the Ugandan's visit this year was a road trip to upstate NY to meet with Archbishop Harry Flynn. In one short week, Msgr. Matthew, Fr. Paul and I covered 2,000 miles, visiting friends and benefactors along the way. Ripe with reward, the trip gave our friends more than a bird's eye view of America east of the Mississippi, including an awesome display of fall colors. Disney can't beat that!

With nearly 60% of all students at both Sacred Heart Seminary and Archbishop Flynn Secondary School needing financial aid, **HOPE FOR UGANDA** helps cover fees of over $200,000 per year. Please take a moment to read the testimonies of Jimmy and Ferdinand, two seminary students who would not be at SHS without your support. Their stories, all too common in Northern Uganda, illustrate the need these children face and how access to a quality faith-based education will change their lives forever. Both schools are ranked among the best in the country, yet for only $75 a month you can provide one of these beautiful children with a full year of tuition, room, and board – and a promise for a better tomorrow.

One of our goals this year was to expand our board with committed and talented leaders.
Please join me in welcoming our **NEWLY APPOINTED HOPE FOR UGANDA BOARD MEMBERS**:

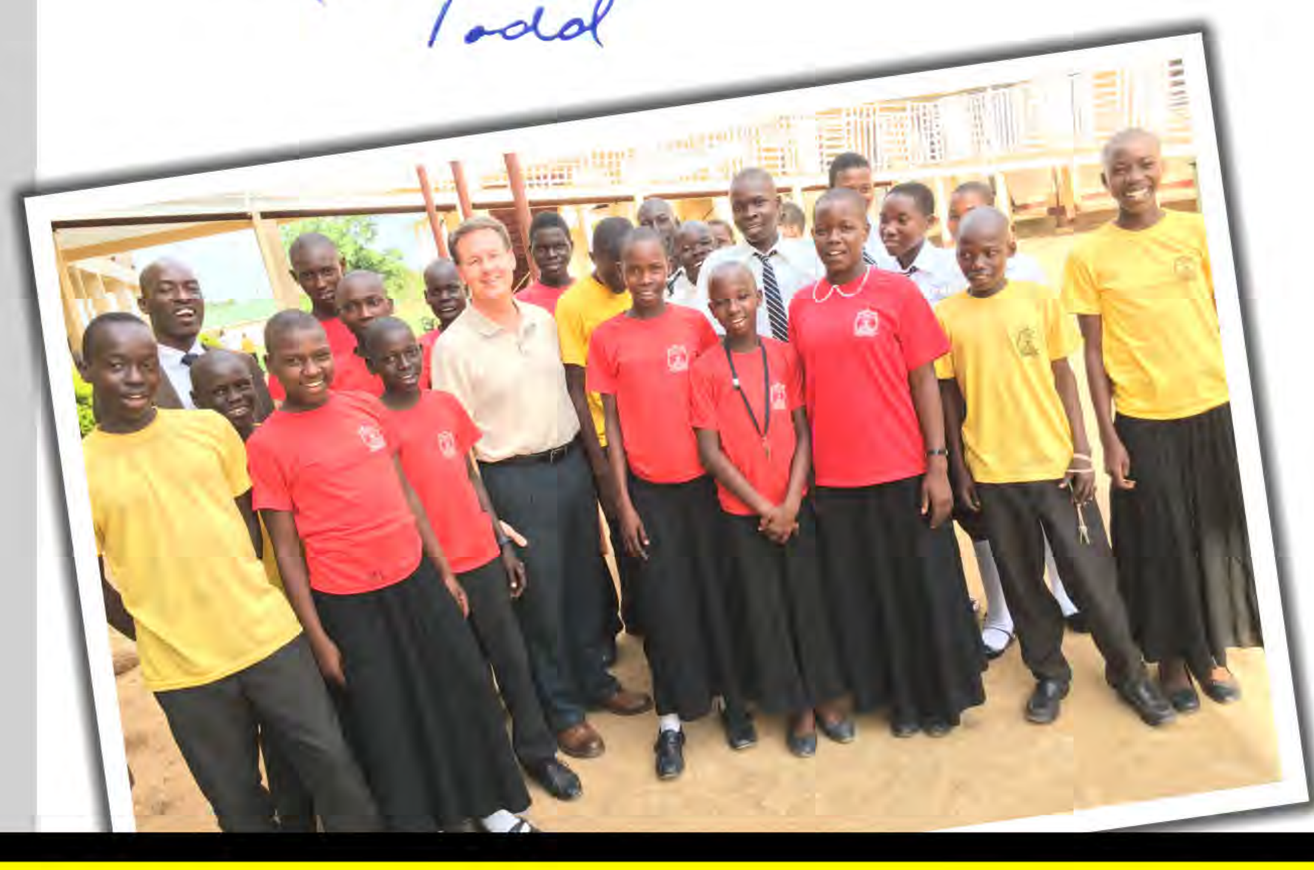
- **MARK WHIMS**
- **STEVE HOLM**
- **PETER WESTERHAUS**
- **BOB KING**

Each of our new Board Members bring a unique and fresh perspective, a willingness to serve, and an abundance of professional experience to share. We are also seeking a candidate to serve as Treasurer and chair of the Finance Committee, preferably a CPA. If you or anyone you know may be interested, please contact me using the information on the back page of this newsletter.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support of **HOPE FOR UGANDA**. You have my heartfelt best wishes for a holy and joy-filled Advent and Christmas season.

Blessings!

Todd



## A DONOR PROFILE

# RICHARD HETLAND

*"Our hearts are restless until they rest in you."* These are the profound words of St. Augustine that began Rich Hetland's beautiful conversion story. Rich and his wife Christine are benefactors for Hope For Uganda because of that conversion that began fifteen years ago. Rich was raised Catholic and attended Mass on Sunday, but he knew he was only going through the motions of a Christian life. "*My family life was broken, my spiritual life nonexistent, I was working too much and missing most of what was truly important…*". For Rich, recalling the words of our great saint begged these questions: Are we made for a purpose, and is the Church truly the way to peace and happiness?

A decision to open his heart to the Holy Spirit led Rich to begin attending daily Mass, reading scripture, and developing a daily prayer life. He was ready to let God transform him from not just believing in God, but also trusting in Him. This shift to actually living the Gospel, to becoming a man of virtue, was and continues to be the most difficult part of Rich's spiritual journey. *"It is difficult to let go of self-centeredness, and to trust God in all things… I struggled with the fear of the future and my responsibility to provide for myself and my family."*

But a new sense of trust and understanding gave Rich the strength to create a giving plan, using the tithe identified in the Old Testament as a baseline and the desire to increase that by 1% every year. He then asked the Holy Spirit to guide him in the direction of the alms. *"I was astonished at how the Spirit worked in this area. The direction was clear and specific, always coming to me in unusual and unexpected ways."*

One of those unexpected directions came to Rich on an ordinary evening, as he was looking for something to watch on television. Johnnette Benkovic's show on EWTN caught his eye, and while not a usual program of his, he began watching it that night. The featured guest was a young priest from Northern Uganda who was visiting the United States. He spoke of the wonderful people of Gulu who had been ravaged by twenty years of war and oppression. His words were compelling, his message heartfelt, yet through the pain he radiated a joy that was beautiful and infectious. That young priest was then Fr. Matthew Odong.

Fr. Paul (far left) and Msgr. Matthew (second to right) after mass at the Hetland home

*"The Holy Spirit uses joy as a testament and guide to His way, and I knew the Spirit was directing me to help." Rich began searching the Sacred Heart Seminary website and found that a group of caring and dedicated individuals from the U.S. had already started a foundation (now Hope For Uganda) to support Fr. Matthew in his ministry. "Through the grace of God and His generosity, I have been blessed to be a steward of that which He gives, in order to pass on to those to whom He has called. Msgr. Matthew, Sacred Heart Seminary, Archbishop Flynn School and the people in Northern Uganda are all beloved by God and most worthy of support. May we all be moved to continue what we have begun and to manifest that which the Spirit moves."*

We are grateful for the Hetland's dedication to this ministry, and for the testimony Rich was eager to share. **Yes, all of us are made for a purpose, and a life following Christ is indeed the way to peace and happiness.**

## HOW TO DONATE

1. **MAIL** the tear-off Contribution Form on the back page of this newsletter with a check made payable to **Hope For Uganda**
2. **CALL (952) 222-8330**
3. **CLICK** On-line Credit Card contributions may be made at the following secure website: www.HopeForUganda.org and click the **Donate Now** button

## CONTACT US

**Hope For Uganda**
**PO Box 1863**
**Minnetonka, MN 55345**

**Phone:** (952) 222-8330

**Email:** info@HopeForUganda.org

## THE GREAT STORIES IN THIS NEWSLETTER HAPPENED BECAUSE OF YOUR GENEROSITY.

**Thank you for your support. You do make a difference.**

## OPEN ARMS. OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS.

*please consider a tax-deductible gift today*

## HOPE FOR UGANDA

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Learn more and/or make your donation on-line
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*Please designate my gift as follows:*
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☐ AFSS Support
☐ AFSS/SHS Scholarship Fund
☐ New Medical Center

*Please mail checks made payable to: Hope For Uganda, to **PO Box 1863, Minnetonka, MN 55345**. You may also make a credit card or PayPal donation via the website.*

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