



Oh, Come Let Us Adore Him!

"Christmas is Peace. Christmas is Joy. Christmas is God among us. On behalf of Hope for Uganda, dear benefactors, and on behalf of the people of Northern Uganda, I wish you a Merry Christmas & prosperous New Year." – Msgr. Matthew Odong

From the Desk of Msgr. Matthew Odong

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Greetings of peace, love and joy in our Lord Jesus Christ from Sacred Heart Seminary in Northern Uganda! I am eternally grateful to you and your families for your generosity. Your gifts help to ensure the education of young boys studying for the priesthood at Sacred Heart Seminary (SHS) and the boys and girls studying at Archbishop Flynn Secondary School (AFSS).

Your donations to HOPE FOR UGANDA are changing lives. Founded by Dan and Bobbi Vaughan in 1990, this non-profit organization is helping to rebuild our war-torn nation through education, faith, health and agricultural sustainability. Your dollars help support the students at both schools with tuition, room and board, along with teachers' salaries and benefits, building maintenance and many other educational necessities.

It costs \$900 dollars to educate a child at either school for one year. As you know, many of our

students are poor and from families still struggling from the war. Your gifts bless needy children and provide them the opportunity to help themselves and their communities. Together, we are transforming a nation under God.

We are celebrating many achievements throughout the organization! You will read separate updates from my colleagues in this letter, but I wish to highlight the progress at SHS we praise God for. Since 1990, enrollment has increased from 38 to 184 seminarians! SHS annually sends as many as 15 young men on to major seminaries – one glorious step closer to the priesthood!

Between 1990 and 2018, sixty SHS graduates

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From the Desk of Fr. Paul



Dear Friends,

Archbishop Flynn Secondary School (AFSS) lives on in memory of its namesake, Archbishop Emeritus Harry Flynn, who passed in September. He was a great supporter of everything under the

umbrella of HOPE FOR UGANDA and will continue to inspire this mission.

What a year this has been for AFSS! There is much to celebrate because of your prayers, advice and financial support. Through your donations and funded grants, we were able to increase scholarships for needy children, acquire additional textbooks for the classrooms and sponsor NET Ministries-Uganda to give spiritual guidance to students and staff.

In addition, your support helped us purchase 2.3 acres of land with huts for teacher/staff housing adjacent to campus. Also, your support helped us cover expenses for the 10-year anniversary celebration held at AFSS in August. All this was in addition to your help with the on-going expenses it takes to run this wonderful school! Praise God for the generosity of his faithful people.

Meanwhile the school continues to excel in national exams, breaking more records with each new year. The campus is alive with young men and women who are determined to learn and thrive in a community that shelters them from harm, fosters and encourages their faith, and gives them a perspective on life that's filled with hope.

We have begun building the Dan and Bobbi Vaughan Guest House, which we predict will be ready for use next summer. Please consider visiting us at AFSS to see first-hand the effects of your love for these children and how their lives will transform a nation.

Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all!

Fr. Paul

Farm Report by Fr. Paul

Sustainability through agriculture has entered its second year at Archbishop Flynn Secondary School (AFSS). We have begun to realize the fruits of our labor because you embraced the project so whole-heartedly. Your support enabled us to initiate the survey of farm land, clear an additional 50 acres, and cultivate 100 acres of land for food. Rains have been friendly, and when all the crops have been harvested, we expect to meet the following needs: 85% of the corn needed, 50% of the beans, 60% of the rice, 86% of processed sunflowers for cooking oil, and 67% of assorted vegetables needed to feed the students and staff. Praise God!



Early stages of the Dan & Bobbi Vaughan Guest House



Because of your donations, The Farm is significantly changing lives in the surrounding communities. Pockets of medium-sized farms are rising up as the community eagerly embraces new methods and moves away from subsistence agriculture. In the first year, it took us 14 days to plant our crops manually. This year it took only five days with the aid of the new planter – even though we were just learning how to use it. Our people have no experience with this equipment because it is the only one in Pader. Our goal is to use the wonderful tractor, plow and disc provided by your donations to not only double our production, but also to assist the local farmers in their efforts to cultivate their raw land. We are blessed to be a blessing!

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were ordained priests for service to humanity. The campus renovation is still a work in progress, but recently the Archbishop Guest Room was completed with grant funding from HOPE FOR UGANDA. The seminary maintains its excellent academic reputation as one of the nation's best schools, thanks to your support and the hard work of the young men who are dedicating their lives to the glory of God.

I recently read in our local newspaper that "hundreds of millions of people in our world live below the poverty line." Sadly, Northern Uganda participates in this economic travesty. HOPE FOR UGANDA exists to help raise up people in need through the education of their children. It is not lost on any of us that you have prayerfully chosen to help us with that quest.

With love and gratitude, I wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year 2020!

Farm Report continued from page 1

With grateful and happy hearts, we look forward to the New Year 2020. We hope to receive visitors from the United States who are experts in nutrition, so we can learn the best way to feed our students and families. It is also our dream to introduce poultry to the farm and receive the important benefits of protein in eggs and chicken. Please consider making a gift to make the poultry project a reality.

Thank you for supporting this now-proven effort towards sustainability at AFSS. From tractors and motorcycles, to land surveys and education, you are changing lives and transforming a nation! Our promise in return is to be the best possible stewards of our land. God has blessed all of us in creating something very good.



Above: Farm Challenge Grant plus donation match funds purchase of new tractor, plow and disc.

2019 Appreciation Dinner

The annual HOPE FOR UGANDA Appreciation Event was held on September 18th at Providence Academy. The evening began with Mass in the beautiful chapel, followed by a social hour and dinner. Bill Kottemann, President of the HOPE FOR UGANDA board of directors, served as emcee for the program. Msgr. Matthew Odong brought an inspiring update of activities and accomplishments at Sacred Heart Seminary. Fr. Paul Peter Rom focused his remarks on The Farm, presenting many pictures of healthy crops and progress being made there. Luke Ziesmer and Dan Smerz shared stories from their month long visit to Uganda last March. They ended their presentation with an inspiring five minute video, available for viewing on our website. The evening concluded with three heart-warming testimonials by Mark and Anita Whims and Peter Kurachek recalling their visit to Uganda in July of this year. Common to all who visit Uganda is the overwhelming sense of a life-changing experience.



The Birds and the Biese.

Thanks to all 116 benefactors and friends who attended this year's event. Please consider joining us next year as we celebrate how your commitment to this organization is changing lives, both in Uganda and the United States.

2019 Parish Visits

The annual fall visit from our Ugandan priest-friends is always a special time of year. Msgr. Matthew Odong and Fr. Paul Peter Rom travel thousands of miles to share the boundless gratitude of their people for the support they receive from HOPE FOR UGANDA. Each year, parishioners await the personal update of how their donations are making a difference and changing lives. We consider each benefactor a partner in our efforts to bring about that change, and aspire to be the preferred international mission outreach for each of the hosting parishes, with a commitment to keep everyone informed through parish visits, an annual appreciation event, mail communications, and our better-than-ever website.

Our 2019 hosting Parish Partners were:

- ✦ St. Patrick's in Oak Grove
- ✦ Immaculate Heart of Mary in Minnetonka
- ✦ Ss. Peter and Paul in Loretto
- ✦ Holy Family in St. Louis Park
- ✦ St. Anne in Hamel
- ✦ St. Francis Xavier in Buffalo
- ✦ St. Aloysius in Olivia
- ✦ St. Mary's in Bird Island

The Fall Challenge Grant, one of the tools we use to track the success of these visits, was fully funded again this year. Gifts of \$100 or more were matched dollar for dollar, which doubled the impact of your gift. Thanks to all who participated in this year's parish events. We encourage all of you to consider a reciprocal visit to Uganda, to stay in the soon-to-be finished Dan and Bobbi Vaughan Guest House, and to witness first-hand the difference your support is making and the amazing beauty and hospitality of Uganda.

Msgr. Odong distributes communion at Holy Family



Thanks for the Laptops!

Thank you for hearing our appeal for laptop computers! We would like to thank in a special way the Laboure' Society, a Catholic non-profit organization, for donating over 20 good quality used computers. Other individual donations brought the total to more than 26 working computers that have already made a huge difference both at AFSS and SHS. The storekeepers are able to keep up-to-date records for our food inventory. The librarians are now able to keep digital records of books in the libraries, and the infirmary is able to track the health records of our students and present them on demand.

At the same time, there are many more ways we can use computer assistance. We appeal to any of you who may have access to new or used computers that could be donated. However, we no longer have support for Windows 7, so we need those with Windows 8, or any that could be upgraded. Do not hesitate to send computers that are not working perfectly. Remember, Fr. Paul fixed the first 26!

Thank you for positively impacting lives in Northern Uganda through technology. May God bless you!

Executive Notes



Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for making 2019 another year of blessings for our brothers and sisters in Northern Uganda! Your support is changing lives and transforming a nation.

HOPE FOR UGANDA is in the right place at the right time. I recently read an article entitled "Africa: the Continent of Catholic Hope." It presents convincing evidence that the Holy Spirit is moving in powerful ways on that continent. In fact, the abundance of priests and seminarians has allowed African dioceses to send their priests and religious to help re-evangelize Western civilization!

Your support for Sacred Heart Seminary and Archbishop Flynn Secondary School is helping school leadership attract the best and brightest students to a program that forms the whole person through a holistic life experience. One example is our evangelization partner, NET Ministries, who has led several fun and engaging youth retreats on the AFSS campus for students and alumni.

A high priority continues to be the development of The Farm into an "economic engine" that will sustain AFSS into the future. We have seen significant progress in the two years since the property was purchased (see The Farm Report for details). A U.S. delegation of nutrition and agriculture experts is planning a visit to Northern Uganda in early 2020 to share ideas and experience on how to improve student diet and crop production. **Please contact me if you would like to learn how to be a part of this delegation.**

We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of generosity during the recent visits of Msgr. Matthew and Fr. Paul. The number of first-time donors increased by 26% over last year and attendance at the Appreciation Dinner increased by 70%.



NET Ministries of Uganda leads a retreat for 30 AFSS Alumni

Several very generous gifts were given to fund important projects at the schools and The Farm, including:

- ✦ Drilling two wells and installing an irrigation system
- ✦ Purchasing storage containers for harvested crops
- ✦ Acquiring equipment
- ✦ Completing building projects.

Your financial support goes a long way in Northern Uganda. It will make a generational impact – living on after you pass from this earth. For more than 20 years, HFU benefactors have made a long-lasting and positive impact on the families in Northern Uganda. You can be part of this legacy by including HOPE FOR UGANDA in your will or living trust or by naming the organization as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy, retirement or other financial account. Please contact me for details.

Thank you for partnering with us in this mission. May the Lord bless you and your loved ones during this holy season and into the New Year!

God bless,

Remembering Loved Ones

One of the greatest gifts you can give loved ones (living or deceased) is uniting their prayers and intentions to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Many parishes have Masses booked months in advance or don't have dates open meaningful to you. For a modest stipend for the priest (\$7-\$10 per Mass), you can have your special intentions offered by a priest from the Archdiocese of Gulu, Uganda. In fact, because priests in Northern Uganda receive no other compensation, a Mass offering is often the only money they receive to help perform their ministries. To honor your loved ones, as well as to help support our friends in Gulu, please send a list of your intentions,

preferred dates, and a donation to Hope for Uganda and we will coordinate with the Archdiocese of Gulu.

Thank you!



Tribute to Archbishop Harry J Flynn by Msgr. Matthew Odong

Archbishop Emeritus Harry Joseph Flynn of the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis passed on into Eternity with God on September 22, 2019 at the age of 86. Fr. Paul Peter Rom, Todd Ziesmer and I were among representatives from HOPE FOR UGANDA who had the opportunity to celebrate his life when he was laid to rest on September 30. It was thrilling to see many deacons, over 100 priests, 13 bishops, one cardinal, and thousands of lay faithful during the Requiem Mass at the Cathedral of St. Paul. Like Jesus Christ, Archbishop Flynn was a great pastor with a great heart: Human, generous, friendly, approachable, humorous, prayerful, and a deep devotion to the Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

I first met Archbishop Flynn in 1995, through Dan and Bobbi Vaughan. It was the beginning of a long friendship. For years when I visited Minnesota, a group of us (Vaughan's, Truax', Fagerlee's and I) would have lunch with the Archbishop in his residence. I was scheduled to have lunch with him on September 25th, just three days after he passed.

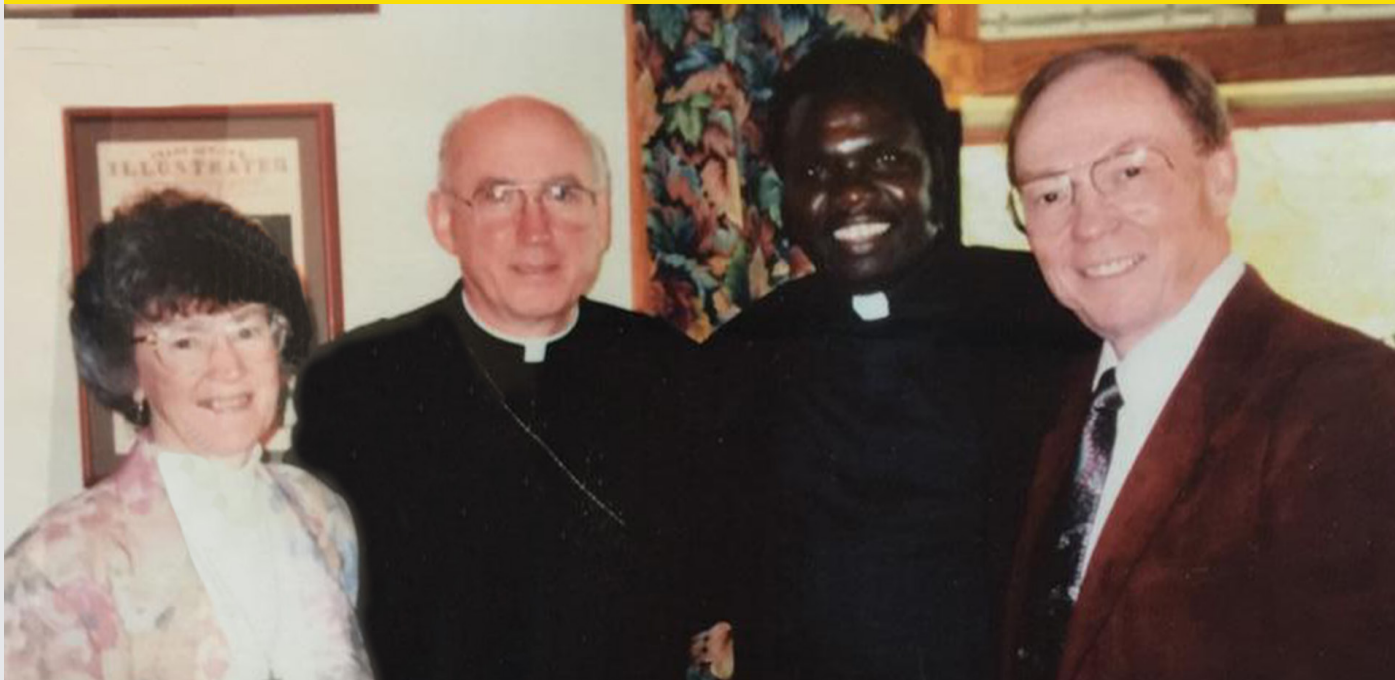
Archbishop Flynn was a friendly shepherd with a compassionate heart for everyone in need. He encouraged his priests and the American people in his archdiocese to financially support HOPE FOR UGANDA, to bring hope to young people at Sacred Heart Seminary and the modern school named in his honor, Archbishop Flynn Secondary School.

He was not only a friend to me but also identified with the people of Northern Uganda. In 2002, he traveled to Rome by invitation of my archbishop, John Baptist Odama, to witness the beatification of two of our catechists (now blessed) who were martyred for their faith near Gulu in 1918. Please know that by supporting HOPE FOR UGANDA, you are promoting the legacy of Archbishop Harry J Flynn. May God reward him with eternal life for the love he had for the people of Northern Uganda.



Msgr. Odong, & Fr. Johnson at AB Flynn Funeral

Below: Bobbi Vaughan, Archbishop Flynn, Msgr. Odong, & Dan Vaughan



AFSS Celebrates 10 Years

by Berna Atim – Head Teacher at AFSS

Dear Friends and Benefactors of HFU,

On behalf of the staff, students, parents and entire community at Archbishop Flynn Secondary School (AFSS), I send you our warmest regards. I'm privileged to share with you the highlights of our 10th Anniversary Celebration.

The Anniversary Celebration was on August 3rd, 2019. The event was planned to give praise, honor and glory to God for the gift of this modern school. Those present will tell you that the celebration was exciting, lovely, inspirational and encouraging. Many thanks to the dedicated committees who worked so hard to bring about this success. I wish to give a special thank you to His Grace Archbishop John Baptist Odama and our dear Director and Chairman of our Board of Directors, Msgr. Matthew Odong, for their guidance during the preparations.

Guests began arriving early in time for Mass at 10:00 a.m. Many came by motorcycle - the preferred mode of transportation as our roads are not good. Others came by foot if the distance was not too great. The mood was one of high anticipation, especially for the alumni, who screamed and jumped with excitement each time they saw colleagues and staff they had not seen for a very long time. It was a BIG family reunion for all of us!

The Thanksgiving Holy Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Odama, along with 15 priests and many other religious men and women. In his homily, the Archbishop thanked HOPE FOR UGANDA for changing the lives of young girls and boys through provision of quality education. His Grace said he wants AFSS to be a role model for all schools in the Archdiocese of Gulu and in Uganda at large. The liturgy was well organized and the school choir sang beautifully, spreading the joy that filled the day.

Following the Mass, a wonderful luncheon of favorite foods was prepared and served for the nearly 2500 guests. Given the large number of people who were coming to campus for the day, the school had hired two catering services. Actual preparation began at 4:00 a.m. at several tented cooking stations, and the food was ready to serve by noon. Everyone gathered and "broke bread" with local traditional food such as posha, rice, sweet and Irish potatoes, cassava and millet bread. These were served with beef, goat and chicken stews, fish, beans and greens. We praised God for such a feast!

Later there were speeches, fundraising, and entertainment for all of our many guests. Mostly, though, it was a glorious time for the alumni to see old friends, reminisce about their days at AFSS, see the changes on campus, and talk of ways to give back to their beloved school. Some have already come back to teach as volunteers. Most are still in starter jobs but will give back financially, just as soon as they are able.

One could not put a value on the goodwill that happened that day. We do know that the celebration could not have happened without the help of HOPE FOR UGANDA. Everyone present is keenly aware that without our friends and benefactors we would not have cause for celebration. Without your generous love for our people, our school AFSS and all the good that comes from it for our children and our nation, would simply not exist. Thank you and may God bless you.



Berna addressing attendees at the celebration



AFSS Alum Wins Miss Acholi

Berna with Gladace Acayo - AFSS alum named "Miss Acholi" - and Fr. Felix. Gladace attributes her success to skills developed from the NET Ministries training; her intellectual, human and spiritual formation from AFSS; her knowledge of Acholi cultural practices and patterns of behavior from Sr. Catherine of AFSS; the thorough understanding of her clan and cultural traditions from her family; and the motherly support and assurance from Head Teacher, Berna.



"AMEN I SAY TO YOU, WHATEVER YOU DID FOR THE LEAST OF MY BROTHERS OR SISTERS, YOU DID FOR ME."

MATTHEW 25:40

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🌐 Visit us on the web at
www.HopeForUganda.org



Hope For Uganda is a Minnesota 501(c)(3) Non-profit corporation legally established in 1998 to support educational, faith formation, and relief activities in the Archdiocese of Gulu in Northern Uganda.

Make a Difference

Pray

Please keep the people of Northern Uganda and our mission in your prayers.

Volunteer

If you would like to offer your skills or time to the organization, please contact us.

Donate

Financially support the organization, which in turn provides hope to the people of Uganda.

YES! I want to give hope to the people of Uganda through my generous donation.

See enclosed donation form.