

On Monday I begin a 4-week trip to Australia. I'll go to the meeting of Societas Liturgica near Sydney and give talks for a few dioceses. Just last month I was invited to speak in the Archdiocese of Perth, way over on the other side of the country. There's something about that diocese you all should know. One of the parishes is Blessed Sacrament. They have 500 students in their school, which is called – believe it or not – St. Munchin Catholic School. I've contacted the principal; they are arranging for me to visit there to meet the faculty and students. Last week we took a picture of our kids at Vacation Bible School and printed this message on the photo: "God's blessings to the children of St. Munchin School in Australia from the children of St. Munchin Church in Cameron MO USA 2009." I'm taking 500 of those, so every kid there can have a picture of our kids standing inside St. Munchin Church.

There are not many churches named for St. Munchin. There's our mother church in Limerick, Ireland, and there's us. There are not many people named Munchin either; I've suggested to many couples awaiting the birth of a child that they name the kid Munchin, but I'm not getting any takers. Last week, as we were taking up a collection for Mary of Fatima Parish in Tanzania to build a church for a group worshipping outdoors in a remote part of that parish, we received this in a letter from Father Melchior: "We thank you and your people for all what we have received up to this moment for this project. We also thank in advance for all what you are going to help us for this project. We have also talked in our Parish council and decided to name the Patron of the Church of Rweje to be that of the Church of our sister Parish i.e. ST. MUNCHIN RWEJE OUTSTATION. . . . To us is a great Prestige to name St. Munchin to Rweje outstation as it will remain in future a living memory that, it was our sister Parish's fund which enabled us to build the church of Rweje." As of today, we have received nearly \$2000 to help him finish the church; he has almost all he needs.

While I'm away, Father Aloysius will be here from Uganda; he is an old friend of mine, and you all have very kindly welcomed him on his past visits. We'll have another missionary here next weekend, and a monk from Conception Abbey at the end of the month. By that time I will be anxious to get back home and go to work for you all again.

Travel can open up opportunities. My trip will connect groups under the patronage of St. Munchin, and it will support the poor in Africa. I'm looking forward to seeing Australia, but something else appeals to me more – meeting the Church in Australia – the people of God, the body of Christ. In today's gospel, when the people catch up with Jesus, they ask him a trivial question, "When did you get here?" Jesus cuts right through this to show them their motives: "You

are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled.” Jesus offers more than bread for the belly; just as any trip offers more than panoramas for the eye. The best opportunity we have in life is to see signs of Jesus Christ. When we open our eyes to him, whether we are far away or right at home, we will feel a deeper satisfaction than any earthly fascination can give.