

I have invited the pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Marambo, Tanzania, to come spend a month with us this fall. A couple years ago our stewardship council recommended that we twin with this church in Africa, and other leaders of the parish agreed. Since that time, we have sent funds we have raised, and they have sent us several gifts, a cloth for our altar, a chasuble for the mass, and a wooden statue of St. Munchin, carved by hand, and now part of our shrine of saints in the church.

Last year a friend of mine from Uganda visited us – Fr. Aloysius Kasoma. He remains very grateful to us for his visit. I hear from him about once a month now, and he still expresses his appreciation for all you did for him. He would come back tomorrow if we sent him a ticket.

I will be taking my vacation this year in September. Next month I celebrate my 25th anniversary as a priest. For some time I've been planning a trip to Italy with the two men who were ordained with me. Since I will be gone 4 weeks, I've considered several options for a substitute while I'm away. I proposed this idea to the councils. Since we had such a positive experience with Fr. Aloysius from Uganda, why not invite the pastor of our sister parish, Our Lady of Fatima? Twinning works at a distance, but it works even better if people from one community visit the other. And if we hired a local priest to take my place for a month, we'd pay almost the same amount it would cost us to fly a priest here from Africa.

Council members were excited about this possibility, so we contacted Sr. Rita Tofflemire, originally from Cameron, now in Tanzania, who first put us in touch with this parish. She immediately talked to the pastor, Fr. Melchior Kambona, and Fr. Melchior couldn't believe what he was hearing – that someone was willing to fly him to the United States to work in a parish for a month. He is very, very excited. He is very, very nervous. He speaks English, but he is more comfortable in Swahili. He is worried about American customs. He has very little clothing. He spoke to his bishop. The bishop gave him permission to come. He has obtained his passport and applied for his visa. He needs only one more thing: a ticket. This is where you come in. It will cost about \$1900 to get Fr. Melchior here this August. If we could raise a few hundred dollars more, he could get shoes, clothes, food and other items for his trip. Next weekend I'll ask the ushers to take up a second collection. Whatever you normally give to the parish on a typical weekend, if you give half that amount again in the second collection, we'll be close. We need what you normally give the parish, so please don't take out half of that and give it to him; I'm asking for a special gift. If you can give more, please do. If you can't do this much, give whatever you can or just pray for this collection and for his visit.

In the Book of Revelation, John has a vision of every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth and in the sea crying out blessing and honor, glory and might to the one who sits on the throne and the Lamb for

ever and ever. In this small way, our parish reaches out to another part of the globe so that together our efforts may please God.