

In the 1960s when Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council, he invited the bishops of the world to participate. Our bishop, Charles Helmsing, sat next to the bishop of Masaka, Uganda. They became friends. Fifteen years later, Bishop Helmsing invited a priest from that diocese, Fr. John Nnanzi, to spend a year at our cathedral in Kansas City. One of our seminarians, Ray Pichardo, met Fr. John and asked him for a pen pal. The priest gave him the name of another seminarian, Aloysius Kasoma. They corresponded for years. Aloysius went to Rome to study. About the same time, the associate pastor at Ray's parish, that would be me, also went to Rome to study. At Ray's urging, Aloysius and I met each other there. After we parted, we corresponded for about 20 years.

This summer Fr. Aloysius made his first visit to the US and asked me if he could come to Cameron. He also needed to raise money for a truck. I asked some donors in Kansas City to help. Quite honestly, I was hesitant about asking you. I don't like taking advantage of people. We just took up a collection for missions in India. We support a parish in Tanzania. Before long, I'll be asking you to fund a project to improve our buildings. So, I didn't want to ask your help. Then, one donor said, "If you take up a second collection, I'll match it." He asked, "What do you think you can get?" I said, "\$2500." So we took up the collection last weekend, and you surprised me. Last weekend, you contributed to Fr. Aloysius \$4,691.20. That was more than you gave your own parish last weekend. That's more than you gave at Christmas. Several donors in Kansas City kicked in. This morning I wired over \$20,000 to Uganda so Fr. Aloysius can shop for a new truck. It took over 40 years from Vatican II to last weekend for that to happen. You may think you gave only a little, but look at what you have accomplished.

Elijah appears in today's first reading on the run from Queen Jezebel who wants to kill him for outdoing the pagan priests in her court. He stops to rest under a tree. An angel shows up with a little cake and water. The angel says, "Eat this." He does. It was only a little, but on the strength of that food, Elijah traveled 40 days and nights to safety on the mountain of God.

Sometimes it seems that God gives us only a little: a mediocre job, a small salary, a few resources, a couple of really good friends, a partial answer to a big prayer. It sometimes seems like God gives only a little, but a little can do a lot.