

Sherry Notes

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Dear Family and Friends

Some say: Expect the unexpected. I should heed the advice. The truth is, I don't embrace the unexpected easily. I fully intended to write this letter in January. Unexpectedly, an emergency at Radio Pacis in January caused our director, Msgr. Charles Idraku, to ask me to return to working full-time as the acting human resource manager. Since then, I have been back to work in the office and mentoring possible replacements. Now I know how much I enjoyed my work in administration but I mostly know how much I loved semi-retirement! 😊

The first weekend in February we welcomed friends from St. Barnabas Parish: Tony and Sara Milano. They were on their first trip to the African continent and arranged a weekend in Arua before their safaris. They have been active members of the parish outreach committee for many years and the committee has supported our ministry for more years than I can count. We enjoyed being with them as they explored our radio and parish ministry. As most of our visitors say: "You just really can't understand until you actually come to Arua!" They were only here for one weekend but they left renewed by the vibrant Church in Uganda.



Sara and Tony Milano at Karaa Chapel of St. Martha Parish—Katrini with the catechist and Confirmation candidates.

The Milanos left Arua on a Monday morning and a few days later Fr. Jim Farrell arrived for three weeks with us. He has visited us many times over the years. Last year he came and offered days of recollection to our radio staff in Arua. The staff were so enthusiastic about his faith sharing and prayer with them, that they asked him to return this year. Always generous, Fr. Jim did days of recollection this year for all of our radio stations: Arua, Moyo and Gulu. That meant he did a lot



Tony and Sara inside Alinia Chapel of St. Martha Parish—Katrini with the children and adults who came to greet them.



Sherry, Fr. Jim Farrell, Fr. Tonino in the doorway of the Radio Pacis studios.

of travelling in northern Uganda. While Fr. Jim is a gifted retreat leader and a 75-year old priest soon to celebrate his 50th jubilee, seven days of recollection can be hard work. We are grateful for his sacrifices and his friendship for so many years.

Days of recollection or retreats are not all that common here for the laity, but we believe it is an important part of the faith formation of our staff. We proclaim the gospel and the “peace of Christ for all” on Radio Pacis. People can only do that with a microphone if they know Jesus in their hearts. We want our staff to have a rich prayer life and a good understanding of their faith. Our listeners trust Radio Pacis to speak the truth. We are blessed by a generous sponsor from California has funded the annual days of recollection for our staff since 2013 following a visit to Arua with other members of the Comboni family in 2008. Their gift allows us to offer this retreat experience every year and we are seeing people grow in their faith—both radio broadcasters and listeners!

Being back to the radio full-time reduces the time I have for St. Martha Parish. Now I am squeezing all that work into Saturdays and Sundays again. However, the Bishop surprised us with an early



Fr. Jim charmed by the little girl he baptized at Erakaa Chapel of St. Martha Parish—Katrini.

appointment of an associate pastor for our parish—we had been asking for such a priest but didn’t expect it until after ordinations in July. Fr. Festo Afedra took up residence at the parish on February 17. He is overseeing the finishing of the rectory while taking up ministry in the parish. A humble man, he is staying in a makeshift room in the Parish Learning Center while the rectory nears completion. We are targeting March



Fr. Jim joined us for our Tuesday night program called COME HOME on Radio Pacis 90.9 FM and 104.8 FM which is hosted by Gaetano Apamaku. Fr. Jim’s sister, Maureen, listens often to the program through the internet. Radio Pacis offers live streaming of all of our four frequencies from our website.

Tony and Sara speak to a women's group inside the church at Karaa Chapel of St. Martha Parish—Katrini.



well as audience questions, prayer, and light refreshments. Such an occasion gives us the opportunity to share on a deeper level. The event will take place on Monday evening, June 16th at Sts. Francis and Clare Parish. Save the date. More information will be shared later.

A bonus for us this summer will be the possibility of being in the USA while our station manager is in the USA for the first time in his life! Gaetano Apamaku is in his 16th year of working at Radio Pacis. He started out as a “stringer” which is kind of a free-lance journalist for the radio. He quickly moved up to full time reporter and talk show host. Then he was promoted to producer and later program manager. He’s been station manager since 2016. An organization of people originally from the West Nile region of Uganda who live outside of Uganda now, have an annual

31st for his move-in date, but it may be Easter time before it is fully ready. He has lifted many burdens from our shoulders. More importantly, the Catholics of St. Martha Parish now have access to daily Mass and on Sundays, Fr. Festo does an early Mass in the parish church and another Mass mid-morning at one of the chapels; Fr. Tonino does a morning Mass at another chapel. The people not only have greater access to Mass, they have a resident priest for funerals, anointing of the sick, sacrament of reconciliation. Fr. Festo is enthusiastic about development; he raises pigs and he is assisting the parish poultry project. Did I mention that he is much younger than me and Tonino? Welcome, Fr. Festo!

Recently, we received our mission appeal assignments from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. We will be in the Batesville Deanery. On the weekend of June 21/22, we will be at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Morris, Indiana: 4:00 pm and 8 am; at St. Louis Parish in Batesville, Indiana: 5:30 pm and 6:30 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am. On the weekend of July 12/13, we will be at Holy Family Parish in Oldenburg, Indiana: 5:30 pm and 8:00 am, 10:00 am.

Fr. Tonino and I are making plans to be in the USA from about June 1st to July 15th. During that time we will schedule medical appointments and family fun and time with the Comboni Family in Cincinnati and connect with friends and supporters. Fr. Steve Giannini and the people of Sts. Francis and Clare of Assisi and the people of St. Martin of Tours in Martinsville have very graciously offered to host us for an evening of stories and photos from Arua Diocese as

convention somewhere in Europe or North America. This year it will be held in Washington DC on 4th of July weekend. Radio Pacis was chosen as media partner for the event and Gaetano was chosen as a delegate. He will be working as a reporter keeping the people of West Nile informed about the convention, but he will also inform the convention delegates about the status of West Nile. His interview for a visa is in May and we all pray it is successful. Besides the convention, he will also be visiting our partner radio station, WOOF BOOM, in



Fr. Tonino Pasolini and Fr. Festo Afedra.



The steady progress on the rectory at St. Martha Parish—Katrini. The house will have two bedrooms and a guest room. The view from the veranda is spectacular. The rectory is near both the church and the Parish Learning Centre.

Muncie, Indiana where he will be learning from them in the same exchange program that brought J Chapman and Steve Lindell to Radio Pacis last year. So many of my friends and family who have visited Arua over the years remember Gaetano; we hope to get some Indianapolis time with him.



Gaetano Apamaku: Husband to Regina and father of three beautiful children: a leader in the community as Station Manager of Radio Pacis.

As we journey through Lent and rejoice at Easter, we continue to remember you in our prayers. We are sincerely thankful for your continuing prayers and support. May God bless us all.
Please join us in these prayer points.

Humbly ask:

- *For an end to the destruction and violence of war in our world, especially in Democratic Republic of Congo and in South Sudan and in the Sudan. Our neighbors have become our refugees living in camps in Uganda.*
- *For the recovery of slashed programs such as USAID which provided AIDS drugs and malaria prevention programs and vaccines to the people of Uganda and other nations.*
- *For the renewed participation of the USA in world organizations and forums that directly affect the development and economy in northern Uganda and Radio Pacis as well as the support for the refugees through Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).*

Give praise and thanks for:

- *God's providence in all times and all seasons, especially for the faithful support of both friends and strangers.*
- *For donor agencies within the Church who support ministries such as Radio Pacis and St. Martha Parish, Katrini.*
- *For the gift of the Comboni Missionaries whose ministry laid the foundation for all that we are able to do today.*

Our prayers unite us!

Most people now receive this newsletter by email and have greatly reduced the costs of printing and postage. THANK YOU. If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email, please send my sister Nancy (NMeyer7739@aol.com) an email message to that effect. Also, if you want to have your name completely removed from my mailing list, please let her know. Thanks.

Contributions for Sherry Meyer's missionary work in Uganda:

Make checks payable to COMBONI MISSIONARIES.

Send the check to: **Comboni Mission Center, 1318 Nagel Road Cincinnati OH 45255-3120**

Include a note with the check indicating that it is for Sherry Meyer.

Or, if you prefer:

Make checks payable to SHERRY MEYER

Send the check to: **Nancy Meyer, 109 Walleye Court Indianapolis IN 46227-2588**

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