

My Journey Home 2011



It is good to be back! I wanted to share a little bit of my travels with you. Jesus told us: *"Love one another as I love you"*. Jesus' command is of love and the measure of that love is his own love for us. I hear the voice of Jesus

everywhere I go. This command is at the heart and identity of my priesthood. I hope that I do love the people Jesus has entrusted to me and love them as he loves me.

There is a farm parish in Nyahuru diocese, Pondo parish. The size of the parish is similar to if you put Grayslake, Lake Villa, Gurnee, Mundelein and Wadsworth together and then multiplied that by three. All roads in this area are dirt roads. The major means of transportation is walking. People walk to church. I do not know anyone who owns a private car in the area, but a few have business cars. In this parish there are seven small churches, referred to as local churches.

Electricity has just started finding its way to the area, but nearly everyone uses firewood as the main source of energy. There is no running water, so people have to get water from the well. In this area nearly everyone is a farmer.



This is the area I grew up in and is where my family lives. This is also the area I serve when I visit Kenya : Pondo Parish, seven local churches (Raicheri, Nganoini, Charles Lwanga, Mahianyu wema, Salama and Pondo). Every time I visit I make sure I celebrate mass in all seven local churches and visit kids in different schools to talk to

them about life. I do visit some small Christian communities (each local church has 3 to 6 small Christian communities that meet every Wednesday for prayers). This time I was blessed to



baptize my brother's child and say a special mass for my family.

People have been very generous with monetary gifts that I bring home to help the people in Kenya. The

St. Gilbert School kids also collected money for me to help those in need on my travels. I want to say thanks very much for your support. Your love for people in these villages is felt strongly by them. St. Gilbert donated choir robes and the choir members in Kenya were very happy to receive them.



This year I recognized that people were struggling to finish constructing the local churches of Wema and Pondo. During my last few visits, I realized both local churches were unable to start doing the roofing of their local churches. They have been trying to finish their churches for more than 7 years, but have been unable to because their community is too



poor. After talking to the pastor, I decided to buy 50 iron sheets for the Wema local church from the money you gave me. The small church needs 150 iron sheets for the whole roofing. I did promise them I have more than 100 friends who will help me buy the other 100 sheets. You can imagine the joy and happiness that the community feels, but for me I see the message of Christ at work - love one another as I love you.

Besides working with the community, I made time to visit Maasai Mara National Reserve. Here I saw all kind of animals. It was so nice to see lions and elephants very close up. My family and I went to Lake Nakuru to see Flamingoes. I did play some golf, but not as much as I had planned.



In all, I did enjoy my stay at home and there are more stories I will share in the future.

Love and Peace,

Father Sam

