

From the Desk of Msgr. Matthew Odong, Rector

Dear friends and benefactors of HOPE FOR UGANDA,

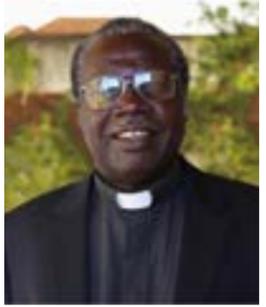
Greetings to you from your brothers and sisters in Northern Uganda. I trust the Lord continues to keep you safe amid the threat of COVID-19. Needless to say, the pandemic has affected the whole world in all aspects of life. May we never lose hope in God's love and mercy for a healthy and peaceful world. In the midst of much pain and loss, your generous support of our schools, the Farm and for our priests has been a clear sign of God's love and mercy. We feel your presence and pray for you every day. We could not do this without you.

The education situation in all of Uganda is tragic. When the government closed all schools because of the pandemic, they recommended online learning as the solution. Only 12% of all students could access the internet for lack of electricity or computers. Even when computers were available, 5-10 students

would struggle to share one computer to follow lectures online. While this is unimaginable in developed countries, online learning in Northern Uganda is a struggle, at best.

When schools were allowed to reopen, many private schools could not resume due to lack of funds to pay teachers and support staff, feed the students in school, and for general operations. Most families lost their jobs because businesses failed during total lockdown. Abject poverty is preventing many parents from paying tuition fees and other requirements for their children in school. Thankfully, both Sacred Heart Seminary (SHS) and Archbishop Flynn Secondary

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Hope Amidst the Pandemic

by Berna Atim Prisca,
Headteacher at AFSS

Greetings in Jesus' name from the students and staff of Archbishop Flynn Secondary School (AFSS). We join you in giving glory to God for those of us who have survived the deadly pandemic. Together we ask for healing of those who are still struggling, and mercy for the souls of those who perished.

The world has been paralyzed in many ways, but in spite of the pandemic, we continue to fulfill our mission to educate our youth and prepare them to become the leaders of tomorrow. Many schools, especially private schools in Uganda, suffered great financial setbacks and were unable to remain in operation. Many teachers had to leave

the profession. Because of your help, AFSS was able to survive and reopen when the government allowed. On behalf of the entire fraternity of AFSS, thank you for keeping the candle of hope burning.

Allow me to share the latest updates on challenges, achievements and developments at AFSS. When schools reopened, we successfully registered 580 students. Of the returning students, 85 sat for the national examinations. They are currently waiting for the results while at home for the school holidays. Sadly, 22 students were unable to return to school because their parents lost employment during the pandemic. Please consider a gift to provide scholarship funds so the neediest of our students can continue their education.

We also find ourselves deficient in technology. It's not only because of our high standards, but also because the Government of Uganda has established a new curriculum aimed at equipping learners with practical skills through the use of computers, projectors, internet, and textbooks. This is very good news for public schools, but many private schools are struggling to acquire the required materials. AFSS has provided students access to adequate technology equipment, but now needs 50 more computers and five projectors just to meet the requirements set by the federal government.

And finally, there is the issue of safety and security for the students on campus. The invasion of animals such as goats, cows and pigs owned by neighbors enter the school grounds, eating and destroying valuable property. The students and staff would very much appreciate your support for the construction of a fence, to keep the children in and the animals out!

Thank you for your generosity in support of Hope for Uganda. We are grateful for your prayers and for helping to educate our young men and women. May the Lord bless you in return for your generous hearts.



AFSS students working in the lab.



Sr. Catherine is a spiritual mother to the girls at AFSS.

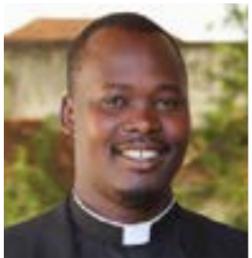
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New motorcycles, Mass kits, and chasubles sponsored by an HFU benefactor presented by Archbishop Odama and Msgr. Matthew Odong to recently ordained priests.

Farm Report by Fr. Paul Peter Rom



We are in our fourth year of sustainability through agriculture at the Farm. I must testify that, through the intercession of St. Joseph, we have achieved what is close to a miracle. We have transformed untilled land into fields, quadrupled cultivation of 50 acres in one season to 100 acres in two seasons, and provided employment to the surrounding communities. Because of this, participating families can buy books and scholastic materials for their children and enjoy a change in diet once in a while. In addition, and very important for the long term, many pockets of small-scale farmers have arisen around the Farm by learning from us the art of scientific and commercial agriculture.

You make this possible by your unfailing support and promise of hope. An HFU benefactor has donated threshers for beans and corn, and a generator. This equipment will help to reduce our post-harvest losses which are sometimes as high as 40% of the production. Better production is directly linked to our major goal of providing food security and good nutrition for students and staff at Archbishop Flynn Secondary School (AFSS). Students are actively participating in the farming project and it is often through them that we reach outlying communities.

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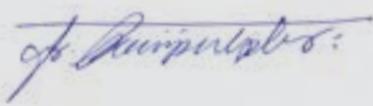
Farm equipment donated by HFU benefactor recently shipped to the Farm in Uganda.

Farm Report continued from page 1

To further our goals of sustainability, we would like to introduce animal husbandry at the farm. Rearing pigs and chickens is a logical beginning because they both reproduce quickly, providing a healthy and speedy response to the lack of animal protein in the diet of the students. At the moment, we can only afford meat for one meal on Sunday – insufficient for children 12-18 years of age. Introducing pigs and chickens to the Farm will quickly solve this problem.

As crop production improves, other challenges grow. We must store safely to conserve our harvest, but we have no storage facilities. A good access road is imperative to bring our product home, especially at the time of harvest when heavy rains make the road impassable. A better vehicle suitable for farming would also improve our capabilities. We therefore appeal for support for these four critical areas of need: Storage facilities, improved access road, funding for a farm vehicle, and the addition of pigs and chickens.

We want to thank you very much for helping to fund our sustainability program. Your promise of hope is a promise that extends to the remotest parts of the Archdiocese of Gulu as AFSS students learn and bring the promise of a bright future home to their parents. May God bless, keep and protect you always.



Msgr. Matthew continued from page 1

School (AFSS) remained in operation during this difficult time. Your generosity gives hope and nourishes the minds and the souls of our families in Northern Uganda.

At the same time, ten of our 194 seminarians did not return to Sacred Heart Seminary when schools reopened, and 40% of the remaining 184 students have not paid their tuition fees. They live in fear of being sent home. Your donation of \$900 will keep a seminarian in school for one full academic year. It's also worth mentioning that our Major Seminarians, many also graduates of Sacred Heart Seminary, face the same difficulty. They need your prayers and support to continue their pursuit of the priesthood.

On a joyous note, I am pleased to inform you that recently three SHS alumni were ordained priests and three ordained transitional Deacons. These are young men you have been supporting and praying for. In addition to helping them complete their education, your donations provided the funds for three motorcycles for their pastoral ministries among the people they were ordained to serve.

Please know how grateful we are for your generosity supporting education in Northern Uganda. May you be blessed in return.



HFU-purchased tractor makes possible the cultivation of 100 acres per season.



Gloria and her friends enjoy camaraderie and having three meals per day.



2021 Parish Visit Update

The status of the annual visit by our clergy friends from Uganda remains uncertain. Hoping for the best, we have tentatively scheduled the following visits with our Parish Partners:

- Sept.11/12 St. Anne's in Hamel
- Sept.18/19 Immaculate Heart of Mary in Minnetonka
- Sept. 25/26 St. Patrick's in Oak Grove
- Oct. 2/3 Holy Family in St. Louis Park
- Oct. 9/10 TBD in Tampa, FL area

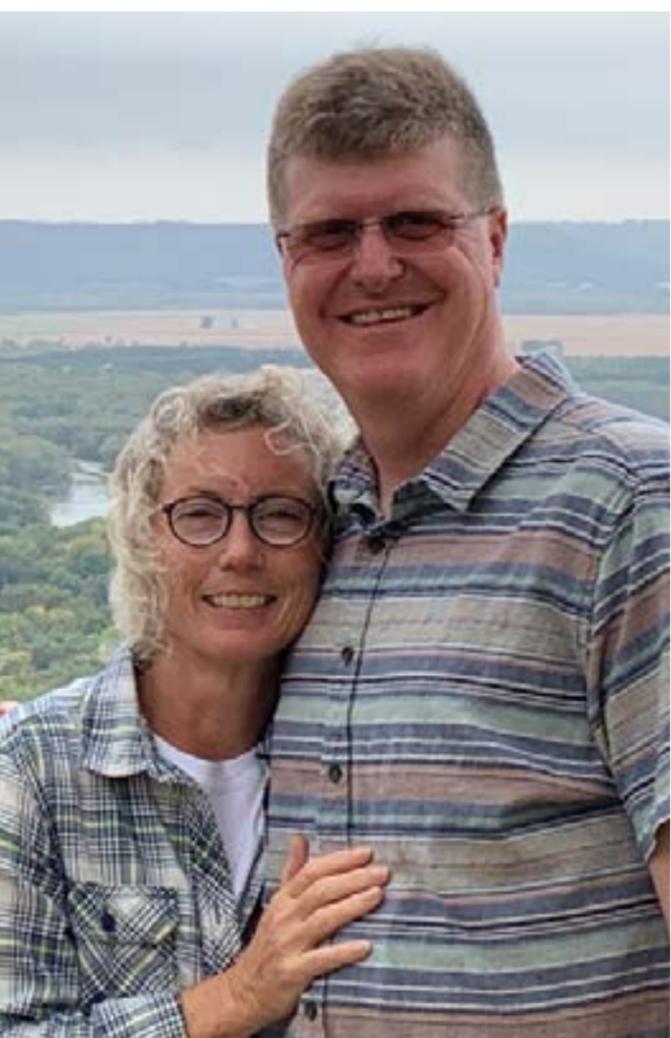
Please pray that Msgr. Matthew Odong and Fr. Paul Peter Rom are granted visas to travel to the United States in 2021. And please send your email address to info@hopeforuganda.org so I can include you in email updates regarding the fall visits. You can also check our web site anytime for the most up-to-date information.

2021 Appreciation Dinner Update

SAVE THE DATE! September 29, 2021 is the date set for our annual appreciation dinner. This dinner will be held that evening whether or not Msgr. Matthew and Fr. Paul are able to visit the US. Once again, we will meet on the beautiful Providence Academy campus in Plymouth, MN. The agenda is the following:

- 5:00-6:00 Mass in the chapel
- 6:00-7:00 Social time and dinner in cafeteria
- 7:15-8:30 Updates from board members and (hopefully) our friends from Uganda

Please plan to be our guests at this year's event. Simply email us at info@hopeforuganda.org and you 'will be added to our invitation list.



New HFU board member, Jerry Powaser, and wife Julie

Welcome Our Newest Board Member

Let me begin my introduction by expressing my appreciation to all who participate in the Hope for Uganda mission. Your generosity has accomplished amazing goals in education, spiritual growth, stewardship, self-sufficiency and empowerment for all associated with our two schools and the Farm.

My name is Jerry Powaser, newest member of the Hope for Uganda board and chair of the Advancement Committee. It is my humble privilege to serve you and our friends in Northern Uganda in this capacity. I'm grateful for this opportunity and am inspired by the dedication and diverse talent of my associate board members.

My wife, Julie, and I have been active contributors to Hope for Uganda for four years, feeling a strong pull to help after hearing Monsignor Matthew and Fr. Paul speak at St. Patrick's in Oak Grove. Julie's call was because of her dedication to tutoring children with dyslexia. She personally understands the strength and empowerment a child gains through education.

My heart was touched because my parents had supported Ugandan missions for many years. I didn't really understand the depth of their commitment until I asked for a car. My true understanding began when they agreed to finance the car, and all of my "monthly payments" would go to Fr. John Kauta in Uganda. You can imagine what a lasting impression that made.



Fr. Paul and Msgr. Matthew with friends, John and Al (12/20)

Today I work for Graco in Minneapolis in a worldwide sales and marketing role. I look forward to using my experience to further the mission and stewardship of Hope for Uganda. Do not hesitate to reach out to me to discuss ways you can help bring hope to our friends in Uganda.

Please prayerfully consider making your most generous gift possible this year - together we can work on supporting our friends in need, now more than ever.

Our prayers are with you and yours,
Jerry Powaser

Executive Notes by Todd Ziesmer, Hope For Uganda Executive Director



Peace be with you. I hope this finds you and your loved ones well. Thank you once again for your prayers and financial support during this particularly challenging time in Northern Uganda.

The updates in this issue will show how your support continues to bring hope to the students of Sacred Heart Seminary (SHS) and Archbishop Flynn Secondary School (AFSS). Christianity is spreading throughout Africa and demographers are projecting that by 2050, five of the ten largest Christian populations in the world will be in Africa. Uganda is in the top ten! Hope for Uganda is well-positioned to prepare future generations of leaders to be wise, God-fearing, and hope-filled citizens in this rapidly growing country.

In the spirit of love and hospitality, we are hopeful that our beloved priests will be able to visit the US in 2021. Parishes are preparing to welcome them in September

and the Appreciation Dinner has been scheduled for September 29 (see details on page 2). We will be celebrating the many achievements of the past two years.

To further celebrate the foundation of our organization, we are pleased to announce the completion of the Dan and Bobbi Vaughan Priests' Residence and Guest House. Praise God! A special thanks to the parishes of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Minnetonka, St. Patrick in Oak Grove, and St. Anne in Hamel for helping us reach our goal for the Come and See Hope Alive Campaign. Joyful plans are percolating for a dedication ceremony in Uganda in 2022. Please send me an email if you are interested in joining us for the trip of a lifetime.

The Hope for Uganda board welcomes new member, Jerry Powaser (see "Welcome" on page 2). Jerry brings new skills and passion that align well with our mission of hope through faith, education, health and sustainability. And we extend a heartfelt thank you to outgoing board members Peter Westerhaus and Steve Holm for their dedication and wise counsel over the past 3 years. If the Lord has placed in your heart a desire to volunteer your time and talent to advance our mission, please contact me at tziesmer@HopeForUganda.org to learn more about opportunities to serve.

You undoubtedly receive many requests for financial support to help solve the problems in our troubled world. I suggest the only solutions that will be effective and lasting are those that lead to a deeper conviction to do God's will. If every person loved God and neighbor above all things, the world would be a different place. Make Hope for Uganda your preferred outreach of international compassion. Help us continue to support the spiritual and intellectual formation of future leaders who will be committed to doing God's will through SHS and AFSS. Please make the most heartfelt and generous gift possible.

Thank you dear friends in Christ.

Setting People Free

The truth is that Hope for Uganda changes lives and is setting people free – students, their families, and the community. In a continent that has been called "The Continent of Catholic Hope", Hope for Uganda sets people free through education, faith formation and a vision for sustainability through modern farming. **Hope for Uganda seeks development of the God-given potential of the whole person - body, mind and spirit.**

There are few places where a dollar will make a bigger impact than a gift to Hope for Uganda. For instance, every \$900 provides a student tuition, room and board for one year! Over time, the benefits of that education and faith formation will extend to families and communities for generations to come.

There are many needs in Northern Uganda right now and Hope for Uganda is striving to meet as many of them as possible. Here is what we know:

- **We will need \$300,000 for financial assistance this year to help hundreds of students continue their journey of hope.**
- **Complying with new government educational technology requirements will cost \$60,000 for both schools.**
- **AFSS needs a security fence that will cost \$30,000.**
- **The Farm needs roads and harvest storage facilities costing \$100,000 - and a "one for one" matching challenge means \$50,000 gets it done!**

In all of this we are first and foremost a Catholic mission committed to faithful stewardship in all we do. The HFU Board is forever diligent in working with our Partners in Uganda to plan and use resources wisely to bring hope to a part of the world where poverty continually threatens the future.

Remembering Loved Ones

One of the greatest gifts you can give loved ones (living or deceased) is offering their prayers and intentions with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Unfortunately, because of its popularity, many parishes are booked months in advance or do not have dates available that are meaningful to you.

There is a way to address your wishes AND encourage priests in Uganda. For a modest stipend (\$7-\$10 per Mass), you can have your special intentions offered by a priest from the Archdiocese of Gulu, Uganda. Because priests in Northern Uganda receive no other compensation, a Mass stipend is often the only money they receive to help perform their ministries.



To bless your loved ones, as well as help support the priests in Uganda, please send a list of your intentions, preferred dates, and a donation to Hope for Uganda and we will coordinate with the Archdiocese of Gulu. Thank you!



AFSS graduates after the blessing prayer.

Your gifts will literally make a life-changing difference in hundreds of lives. When considering your gift to Hope for Uganda, here are some things a faithful steward might want to think about:

- What will giving in proportion to my ability look like in my decision to support HFU?
- What does God want to do through me to fulfill the work of HFU in Northern Uganda this year?
- Is there anything important to me that I can do without so that something important to God can happen in Northern Uganda?

Finally, is it possible that you have family and friends who might join you in "bundling" a significant gift to HFU this year? If that is so, be sure to share the HFU story in this newsletter and invite them to join you in doing something that will change lives forever!

It's Official – our legal name is now Hope For Uganda, Inc. You are part of our legacy, so here is a brief history of how our name has evolved.

Hope For Uganda has been supporting the Archdiocese of Gulu, Uganda for nearly 30 years. The mission began by providing financial assistance for Sacred Heart Minor Seminary in Gulu – and the apostolate took the 501(c)(3) legal name Adunu Maleng Pa Yesu Society Inc. – which is the name for Sacred Heart of Jesus in the local Acholi language. Here in the US we became known as "Sacred Heart Seminary" to keep things simple.

When the 22-year war between the Lord's Resistance Army and the Ugandan government ended in 2006, Msgr. Matthew Odong appealed to the benefactors of Sacred Heart Seminary to build a quality co-educational high school for the suffering community in the Archdiocese of Gulu. We opened the Archbishop Flynn Secondary School in 2009. It has grown to provide education, room and board for more than 600 boys and girls and has been ranked in the top 30 of 3,000 high schools in Uganda.

With expansion of the mission, "Hope for Uganda" was adopted in 2015 as a d/b/a ("doing business as"), while maintaining the original legal name. For various reasons, the board has now worked through the process of changing the legal name to Hope for Uganda, Inc. Thanks to all who helped successfully complete this change!

Let God's Peace Prevail

an SHS Alum story

Cordial greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am Rev. Fr. Kilama Stephen Raphael a diocesan Priest of the Archdiocese of Gulu in Northern Uganda. I am a former student of Sacred Heart Minor Seminary Lacor-Archdiocese of Gulu from the year 2001 to 2006. During this time when I was still a minor seminarian, in the year 2003 on the night of 11th May, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels attacked the seminary and abducted forty-one (41) seminarians - among whom I was. After a period of one and a half months in captivity, by the grace of God, I managed to escape and return home to continue with my formation to priesthood. So far a total of thirty (30) out of the abducted forty-one seminarians have returned; eleven (11) are still missing with no clear information about them. Let us continue to keep them in our prayers.



Fr. Raphael with Msgr. Matthew Odong and Archbishop Odama during book launch event.

I thank Msgr. Matthew Odong, the Rector of Sacred Heart Seminary at the time of the abduction, for his fatherly love, support and guidance always. I can never forget how he lifted me up with both hands while thanking God and congratulating me when he came to pick me from the military barracks after my escape from captivity.



Fr. Raphael is grateful for the motorcycle received from HFU benefactor in 2017.

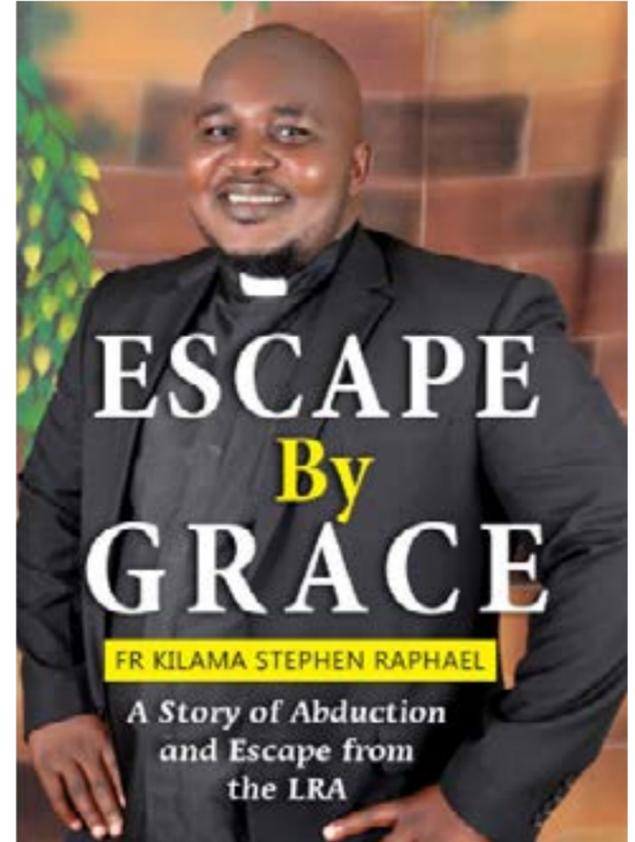
I thank infinitely all those who prayed for me and, more particularly, I thank in a special way HOPE FOR UGANDA - for your continued prayers and support till this day and days to come. I thank very much Archbishop Harry J Flynn (R.I.P) whose friendship with Msgr. Matthew Odong made it possible for HOPE FOR UGANDA to operate in his Archdiocese of St. Paul- Minneapolis in support of the people of Northern Uganda. I can never forget to thank DAN (R.I.P) and BOBBI VAUGHAN - founders of HOPE FOR UGANDA and great benefactors of Sacred Heart Seminary and the Archdiocese of Gulu.

My book entitled "Escape by Grace" which was recently launched by His Grace John Baptist Odama Archbishop of Gulu on the 18th anniversary (11th May) of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) attack on Sacred Heart Seminary, captures some of the highlights of my time as an abductee with the LRA. In it I share with the reader my experience; the things I witnessed personally. My time in captivity with the LRA was characterized with subjection to fundamental human rights abuses - witnessing the murders of innocent people, young girls being forcefully given as wives and concubines to some of the LRA commanders, and abductees walking with heavy loads of looted food stuff and other items on their heads for countless miles in the bushes and jungle of Northern Uganda. These are only a tip of the ice berg regarding the many abuses abductees suffered in the hands of the LRA. **To read the full story of my experience and how I was able to escape, you can access a soft copy of my book on the Hope For Uganda website – www.hopeforuganda.org.**

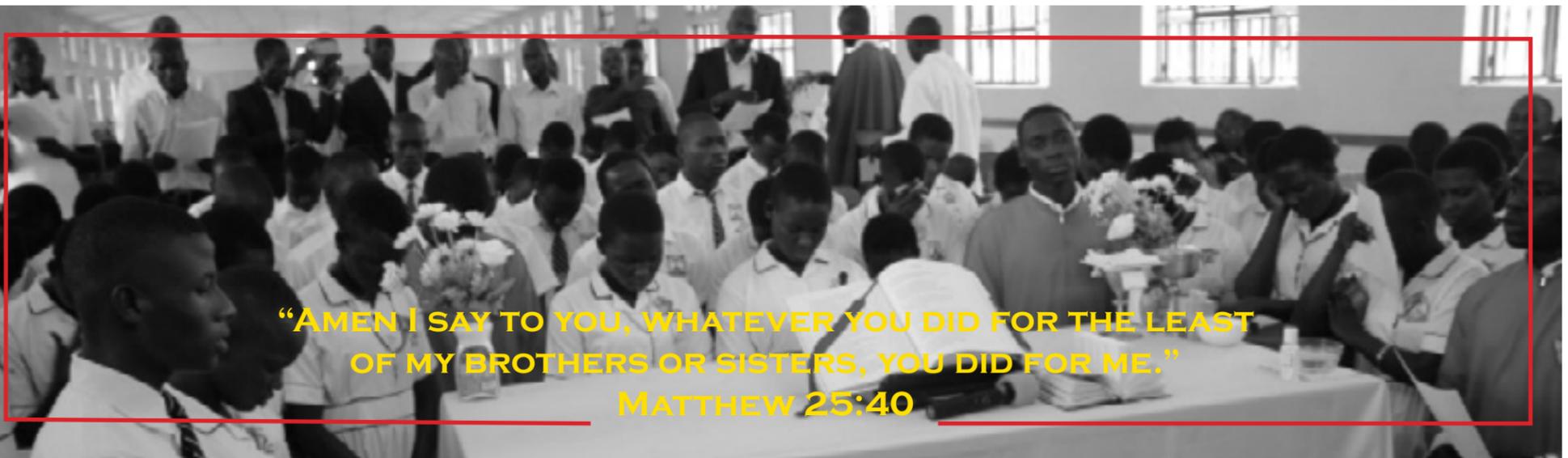
As a former abductee and an eye witness of some of the untold brutalities and barbaric acts of the LRA with no regard for human life as a precious gift from God, I say this in the strongest term possible: PEACE is the responsibility of every human being. We all have to work for peace if we are to achieve our full potential as people of God. Silence and indifference to any call for peace is loudly announcing oneself as a perpetrator for conditions that make possible and encourages human rights abuse.

On July 1, 2017 I was ordained a priest by His Grace John Baptist Odama at St. Joseph's Cathedral Gulu after completing my formation to priesthood from St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Mary's National Major Seminaries in the years 2010 and 2015, respectively.

Once again I thank HFU for praying for me and gifting me with a brand new motorcycle to support me in my pastoral work. Thank you HOPE FOR UGANDA, long live and God bless you abundantly.



Visit www.HopeForUganda.org to read the soft copy of his book.



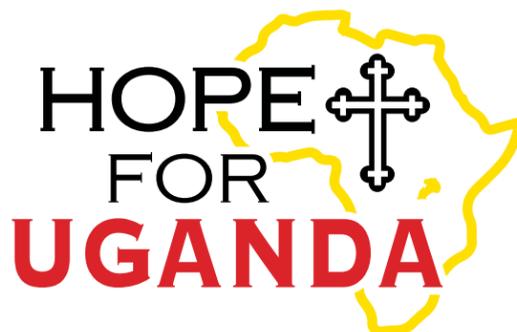
"AMEN I SAY TO YOU, WHATEVER YOU DID FOR THE LEAST OF MY BROTHERS OR SISTERS, YOU DID FOR ME."
MATTHEW 25:40

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 Visit us on the web at
www.HopeForUganda.org



Hope For Uganda is a Minnesota 501(c)(3) Non-profit corporation legally established in 1998 to support educational, faith formation, and relief activities in the Archdiocese of Gulu in Northern Uganda.

Make a Difference

Pray
Please keep the people of Northern Uganda and our mission in your prayers.

Volunteer
If you would like to offer your skills or time to the organization, please contact us.

Donate
Financially support the organization, which in turn provides hope to the people of Uganda.

YES! I want to give hope to the people of Uganda through my generous donation.

See enclosed donation form.