

Tangulbei Catholic Mission

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September 2007

Dear friends,

Hujambo? I hope this letter finds you firing on all cylinders. Thanks very much for your interest in Tangulbei Catholic Mission. I look forward to catching up with you. E-mail connection is working properly via my mobile phone.

I'm convinced that people, for the most part, are reservoirs of 'good will', certainly your email, conveying your interest and concern, gives a very good example of that. I remember before I joined the Spiritans, when I was still working for A.M.P., I would read articles in newspapers (perhaps 'World News') and often ask myself 'What can I do about that?', then answer to myself 'nothing!'. It would seem like the problem I was reading about was just too big (or far away) for me to do anything about. Now, however, finding myself in the 'trenches' (so to speak), things are a lot closer to home - more immediate. Possible solutions are, also, somehow more concrete and 'practical'.

If the works we're involved in at the Mission, could become a focal point, where some of that 'good will' could find a concrete expression, then, I would be delighted about that. With what follows, I'll try to give you a sketch of some of the things in which we're involved.



A look at Tangulbei Catholic Mission

Things we're involved in:

New crops

We're experimenting with some new crops. New varieties of maize (*Duma 41* from Zambia), Sunflowers, Mucuna Beans, as well as the Grasspea. Our aim is greater food security (less hunger) for our Pokot people. We're also experimenting with new techniques, such as rainwater harvesting within the shamba (maize field).



The Grasspea plant (*Lathyrus Sativus*) a drought resistant plant. Currently under trials. It can produce food when almost nothing else will. It's been detoxified, and holds real promise for the huge semi-arid areas here in Kenya, of which East Pokot (our area) is one.



A close up of the Grasspea. A legume crop, hardy and nutritious. It can be dried and milled, then mixed with traditional foodstuffs such as maize flour to make the staple (Ugali – maize paste) more nutritious. People will then also need to buy less maize flour when their crops fail (as they do three out of every four year



Fr. Arnold Baijukya standing in front of a Micro rainwater harvesting ditch (a big title for a little hole) in a maize field. Giving 5% of the area of your maize field over to rainwater harvesting can give a 'drink' to 95% of your field when the rain disappears, as it often does



Part of the Mission Shamba (maize) during the harvesting in 2007 (planted in this shamba were 4 varieties of maize, beans (called Roscocco), Sorghum, Cow-peas, and green-grams. As the saying goes 'nothing breeds like success!')



Mucuna bean (Velvet bean), growing at the Mission, it's a green manure (another legume) cover crop (aimed to help the maize produce a higher yield, and also to provide fodder for ruminant animals.



Fr. Arnold with some of the produce from our Mission vegetable garden in 2006 (garden still under construction).

Works of Charity

The object of this section, indeed any of the sections, is not to blow our horn, but simply to say that there is a lot of need, very few support structures (read virtually nil), and a lot of people looking to us for help. Some of the situations include: *a house destroyed by fire*: (usually children playing with fire) - all the household items are destroyed. There's no St. Vinny's or social services here, so we give them something to get started again. *Chronic health problems*, there's a family who have a little daughter (called Cheptite) who has Encephalitis (the condition of swelling of the brain, and hence the head), Cheptite has a shunt in her head. The same family have a son who is crippled, he may have had polio. They both need to be taken to specialist hospitals from time to time, and we try to help them with transport to defray their expenses. The list is long, we try to help, but we don't have much to spare, here are two other examples:



Ms Susan Cheplenying (now deceased) in 2005 receiving a new pair of crutches



Susan's mother (Chepochemorko) and Susan's 4 orphaned boys

St. Luke's Kasitet Pre-School



Headmistress Ms Dorcas Yatich and some students of St. Luke's Kasitet Pre-School. St. Luke's is growing into a Primary School, currently there is class One, and before next year, the Class Two classroom will be ready. We have high hopes for this school, we want to set a standard for all the other Primary Schools to try to achieve.



Can I have a sip of your porridge? 'No, get your own!!' (joke joyce!)



Uji (Porridge) time at St. Luke's. Yum Yum!



The Dining Hall and Kitchen takes shape. We use locally quarried materials to keep transport costs down.



Friends we meet crossing the road on the way to Nakuru.



Some of the 2,500 trees (Eucalypts and Grevillia) planted at St. Luke's in early Sept. (Eucalypts for fuel for the Kitchen, and Grevillia for sale as timber)