

**JOURNAL FOR NOVEMBER 18 TO DECEMBER 1, 2007**  
**Sister Rosita Aranita, CSJ**

November 18, 2007: 6 boys, 10 primary girls, and 10 St. Lucy's girls danced at mass today. The boys are very rhythmic and do a rooster shimmy with their shoulders, an adaptation from traditional Luo dances. Parishioners slowly dribbled in dragging cakes of mud into church. It had rained heavily early in the morning.

After lunch, Sr. Frances and I took Catherine from St. Lucy's to look for Millicent Ojuka's home in hopes of finding out why she has missed 6 weeks of school. When her mother was summoned from church by her eldest son, we discovered that Millicent had deceived her mother when she supposedly returned to school. Her father was dispatched yesterday to find her when an uncle called from Awendo to say she had arrived there. It appears that our innocent looking Millicent may have eloped with some suitor without telling her family. She had someone acting as her mother call saying she was receiving eye treatments at a Kisumu hospital a week after she disappeared. We were unable to piece her disappearing act together. Her mother was distressed when she learned that Millicent never returned to school after spending 3 days at home.

November 19, 2007: Since it rained heavily in the morning, there was no way I could go to the meeting in Miranga about 8 kilometers away. The Palla Road was impassable with thick mud and no vehicle would chance slipping into the drainage trenches along side the road.. We convened for our weekly staff meeting instead.

Mary and I decided that we would do all our thanksgiving shopping in Kisumu and hire a taxi to take us and our load of groceries home tomorrow. It was inadvisable for Angie and Anika to go to Homa Bay to fetch the turkey and shop. A recent uprising among the followers of the popular political candidate ended in a policeman shooting himself with his own gun and a house of the opponent's supporter being burned to the ground. Some of his followers had also been beaten by the enraged supporters of the losing candidate who claimed that the votes were rigged. The Kenyan army was called in to control further violence by curfews and road checks. These outbursts are typical Kenyan election rage.

Our two "fundis", Silvans Molo and Maurice Okombo, stopped by. Silvans informed us that work on the round room would begin this Friday if he could purchase some sand for masonry work. He had just completed the estimates for our gutters for the north and east sides of our house, too. He would have to extend the corrugated roofing on the southwest end of the house so that the rain could drain into the gutters instead of missing it. Maurice came to install some shelves and clothes rods in Anika's and Angie's rooms. They have hung their clothes on a temporary line for the last few months.

I agreed to purchase Silvans a cheap cellular phone to replace his aged mobile and deduct the cost from the labor charges for renovation of the round room. It has been difficult to reach him by phone because his cell was dying.

November 20, 2007: Mary and I rode on pikipikis to Kadel where we eventually boarded a minibus for Kisumu. We waited an hour for a bus with vacant seats and let two overfilled ones go by. Anika and Angie were expecting some leaders from Siburi and Katonde so stayed home. Samuel Lieta was also bringing our thanksgiving turkey from Homa Bay on his pikipiki.

When we arrived in Kisumu, we took a tuktuk to our separate errands, Mary to purchase a new cellular with a modem and an internet cable and I to buy some flash light bulbs and padlock. When I finished, I met Mary at Swan Center where we purchased a cheap Safaricom cellular for Silvans. Mary was happy to finally have her computer programmed for internet services. We then caught another tuktuk for the Kisumu Municipal Market where Mary bargained for fruit and vegetables.

We had a taxi driver who was from Kanam take us from the open market to Mega City Nakumatt center where we first lunched at Mon Ami Restaurant then shopped for the rest of our groceries and household items. We were successful in buying most of the items on our lists. It was good to have some shut eye as we sped home in our taxi.

After we unloaded our goods, Sr. Frances brought our live turkey. It was a large, docile male which was deposited in our round room and left to wander in our courtyard. Mary gave it its last meal of maize. Kenneth Nyatol volunteered to slaughter him the next day.

November 21, 2007: In the morning, Maurice Otieno made some raised beds and planted vegetable and Echinacea seeds that Kate Brady from the Ministries Foundation had given us. The rest of the seeds were given to Kenneth Nyatol who teaches agriculture at St. Lucy's. By evening, we all began our thanksgiving meal preparations. Judith and Maurice assisted Mary and Kenneth plucking feathers and gutting the turkey. Anika and Angie began assembling spices and chopping vegetables for the turkey which was first boiled an hour on each side then left to soak in its broth overnight. They also strung up their hand turkey decorations on the windows.

November 22, 2007: Anika prepared the outdoor oven and built the fire to heat up the bricks and stones. When the wood reached the charcoal stage, she put the turkey in the oven. Mary and I borrowed dishes, glasses and pots then set up the tables for 13 of us. Anika and Angie set out for Kandiego to redeem some parcels at the post office. Mary peeled and cut up potatoes to be mashed. She then cut up half of a squash then cooked it the pressure cooker. I made a pie crust and some pumpkin pie filling. It went into the oven for some slow baking on hot rocks. Angie and Anika made two more desserts, one a chocolate/banana crisp and apple crisp. By four in the afternoon, all our dishes were done.

Our eight guests brought their native African dishes. We chatted over some appetizers and spiced wine before settling down to a grand American meal. Anika and Angie recited two short prayers and solicited from us what each of us was thankful for this year. This was the first American Thanksgiving meal for our African guests: Fr. Alloys and Lucy his housekeeper; Sr. Frances Cassidy; Srs. Conrad, Jamescina and Christoph, Kenneth

Nyatol, his wife Janet and son Griffin. Judith, Maurice and Okoth the shepherd chose to eat in the kitchen. The meal was a resounding success leaving our guests contented. I divided up the food for the Asumbi sisters, the Nyatols, and our kitchen & yard help. My contribution was cleaning up and dishes.

November 23, 2007: I received estimates to complete the borehole project for the "Grandchildren of Abraham" Farm Center in Mombasa. Angie will do their proposal.

Sr. Frances brought over letters and report cards for my three girls I sponsor and two of Mary's girls. After Millicent disappeared, I decided to adopt Mary Were whose previous benefactor discontinued her support because she returned to college. Mary's father died and her mother is mentally ill. Her performance was stellar inspite of being out for a month after being dragged by a car. Monica Ogala improved and is a bright girl. Jackline Oburu's performance was poor after struggling for two terms. I set up appointments with each girl to go over their report card, and find out how they are doing. It appears that Jackline needs to take up some technical course elsewhere. She is 21 years old and is not able to do the academics.

November 24, 2007: Mary Were arrived early with her mother. I gave her the letter and report card and congratulated her on her academic performance. After they left, Patrick, the social worker for HOPANET, arrived. He was supposed to interview Mary and her mother to assist them with legal matters concerning Mary's accident. Mary did not tell me that this appointment was set up for the morning. I assumed she came for her report card. I hope another appointment can be set up.

Mary had sustained internal injuries when she was dragged by a car in Kandiege. Sr. Frances wanted to make sure that she had legal assistance to claim reparations from the woman who was driving. Apparently the woman paid for her treatment. Mary is still sore from the experience and appears to have delicate health.

November 26, 2007: Met with Judith and her daughter Jackline. Mary Lieta translated. I encouraged Jackline to find a course she can take without having to complete form 4. She came up with the suggestion of going into Food And Beverage training. We gave her to Wednesday to think about what she would like to do.

Anika, Angie and I set out for Kisumu with Sr. Frances to so aomw ahopping and have lunch at Mon Ami, our favorite restaurant. After some pizzas and milk shakes, we dispersed to do some shopping. Anika and Angie went to buy Christmas gifts at the kiosks in Mega City and I went with the food list to Nakumatt. Sr. Frances headed downtown to shop for hardware supplies to repair the dorms. We got home after dark, but had a satisfying day.

November 27, 2007: Work on the round room finally began after transferring all the building supplies to Mary Lieta's outdoor lock-up. The workmen have to lay three stacks of 6"x9" stones to build the wall up after the roof is disassembled.

Mary and I met with Mrs. Ogala about Monica's report card. Monica began math tutoring class yesterday so was not present. Anika and Sr. Frances are both teaching math for a week during the winter break. Anika has girls promoted to Form 3.

November 28, 2007: Angie and I took a matatu to Homa Bay to meet with the Diocesan institutional representatives on their need for water. We arrived early so interviewed the Development Coordinator, Richard Apamo, about any water projects that may have been done on the complex and in the diocese. Richard said that they have a contract with "Give Us Wings" to monitor the implementation of the water pipe system in Nyaoga.

The St. Cloud Diocese funded a small borehole project in the past. Between 2001 to 2003, CRS gave funding for boreholes in the Suba District. West Karachuonyo has not received much help. IFAD is doing some pond and pan improvements and the Water Ministry of the government is in process of repairing the piping system in the area.

Promptly at 10 A.M. we went to another conference room to begin our water meeting. The representatives were from St. Bernard Technical, St. Martha Girls Secondary, the convent, the church, the Diocesan buildings. There were no representatives from St. Paul Primary School and St. Paul Health Clinic/Hospital. As each representative described their present situation, it became apparent that rain catchment systems could not be done on some of the buildings because of the asbestos roofs unless the roofing is changed. Every institution depends on government water which only comes once a week or once in two weeks. The complex has a few rain catchment tanks and gutters. The cathedral has a very large metal roof which can catch a lot of rain that can be used by other institutions.

The diocese has 26 parishes, most of which are poor. Most of the parishioners live on less than \$1 a day. Only 6 parishes have turned in their assessments. The total assessment for all parishes was set at 75,000 ksh. This is what the diocese operates on for its needs so nothing is left for maintenance or improvements of the diocesan complex. Other institutions depend on school or service fees to operate. The complex has many other renovation needs, but, places high priority on enhancing its clean water supply.

It was agreed that their water technician, Michael Abuod, will assist each institution to plan and budget for improvements to the water system. A few alternatives will be explored: increasing the rain catchment capacity on buildings where the roofs are safe, drilling a borehole as a back up system, and negotiating with the water ministry to put in a direct line to the complex from the water purification station in Homa Bay. Richard Apamo would like all the institutions to have an integrated plan so will coordinate the technical assistance.

We set December 10, 2007 for the collection of history of each institution and characteristics/statistics of their clientele. Richard will collect this information and convey the data via e-mail to me. The technical plan and budget is due on January 07, 2008. On January 14, 2008, all institutions will meet to review the first draft of the proposal. Our meeting concluded after an hour so Angie and I walked down to the bank and the Red Rose Restaurant where we lunched.

November 29, 2007: Chief Peter J. Ogwang from Kokoth B Kataa Location dropped by with the minutes of the last meeting. I told him that I had e-mailed Nicholas Koriko and Elijah Omollo the steps for planning and a copy of the census form. A follow up meeting will be held on December 3, 2007 at 11 A.M. at the chief's camp in Miranga. He phoned me later to say that the meeting will be moved to December 4, 2007 at 10 A.M.. We talked a bit more about the water committee. The location is constituting a new CBO and is presently working on some by-laws. They will set up a bank account once the organization is registered. Chief Peter gave me the names of the chief and subchiefs of Kokoth A. They will have to organize themselves separately from Kokoth B because the the two locations are quite large.

I spent the rest of the day on the computer committing the estimates of the Raruowa compound to a readable form.

November 30, 2007: I rode a pikipiki to Kadel where Mary was dropped off by Fr. Alloys who then offered us a ride to Kendu Bay when his passenger arrived. While we were outside of Big Five Restaurant waiting for Seraphine Mambe, Vincent Bolo Ong'ang from Oriens came by to chat. He volunteered to coordinate a meeting for water with the chief and subchiefs of his location. We had been waiting for Rose Anyango to get back to us about such a meeting with no luck.

When Seraphine arrived, we all squeezed into a small taxi to Oyugis. We first met with Pauline who agreed to teach sewing/tailoring/embroidery for the Home Craft Center once it is equipped. We then went off to buy fabrics ordered by Sr. Jeanne Marie Gocha of the Albany Province. I took the opportunity to purchase some fabric for my golden jubilee outfit that Seraphine will sew. We had lunch then ended with shopping for fruit before taking a taxi to Kendu Bay where we boarded a crowded bus that had extra baggage and paraphernalia in the aisle space. It was amazing to see how passengers literally oozed out of the bus working through a maze of body parts and baggage. Our last lap was a luxurious ride on a pikipiki with the wind whipping through our hair.

December 01, 2007: Evarist Diero dropped in to see me after his parish council meeting. I reviewed the proposal on Abundu Hot Springs and asked him a few questions. I asked if he could help organize the other sublocation in Kanam B. He acquiesced graciously and will use the school break to do that. I gave him ten census forms which he will deliver to each clan elder and subchief. He will discuss with the other location what CBO would be used for the water project. If non is recommended, he may have to establish a new CBO.

I went off with Sr. Frances to Kisii where we withdrew money from Barclay's ATM then shopped at Nakumatt. Sr. Frances bought a wardrobe and food for her visitor Sr. Nora who is coming from Gulu District of Uganda. On the way home, we stopped to get some eggs in a small mom & pop grocery store in Oyugis.

I conferred with Silvans Molo, our contractor, about the purchase of needed lumber for the roof of the round room and labor costs for masonry work and roofing. The walls were elevated another foot and a half. On Monday, the carpenters will erect the roof.

