

# Living Waters International, Inc.

## - Aid for African Catholic Missions -

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*Living Waters' mission is the support of Roman Catholic missionary and international development projects in Africa.*

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## Food Crisis in Malawi

by Executive Director, Stephen Zimmerman

We traveled to Malawi in October last year to visit some of the missions in the southern part of the country.

The benefactor I accompanied was especially interested in traveling to Malawi as according to economic data from Global Finance, Malawi is rated the 7<sup>th</sup> poorest country in the world. In 2023, according to the World Bank, over 70% of the population was estimated to be living below the international poverty line.

The afternoon we arrived in Malawi, it was raining lightly and the Franciscan Sisters who met us at the airport outside Lilongwe, the capital, were overjoyed that we had brought them rain as it had not rained there for months. Unfortunately, that was the only rain we saw our entire time in-country, and the landscape of the fields indicated that a food crisis was looming if things did not change soon.

Unfortunately, the drought has continued in Malawi, especially severe in the southern part of the country. Food insecurity is now extremely high, where many people live as subsistence level farmers dependent upon rain-fed crops.

Through the donation of one donor, we have sent over USD 20,000 to the Capuchin friars who have been able to provide a 10 kg bag (22 lb.) of maize to 2000 families at communities in southern Malawi.

Bro Hendreson, a Capuchin friar has told us: "Please, if possible could you send more funds again in the month of December or January, for indications are that the food crisis will be even worse in those months."

Brothers and Sisters, every dollar you donate to the Malawi Food Fund will go directly to the poor in Malawi for food relief.



*Grateful Recipients*



*Total devastation of crops.*

In the Spring 2024 newsletter, we featured Irene Mehlos, sponsor of newly ordained Father Paul Sunday of Uganda. After a year of intense priestly ministry, his bishop allowed him to take a one-month sabbatical to the USA. Father Paul's experience ensues:

Greetings,

My first year of priesthood was a blessing. It helped me to get the real picture of priesthood. It was characterized by many things. In the seminary, we study to get the theory, but in ministry we experience real life situations of people. I encountered various challenges. Characteristically, priesthood has a strong zeal and enthusiasm to serve the community by celebrating the Mass, administering the sacraments, visiting the sick, counseling, instructing school students, and other various complex situations.

It was so exciting when I landed here and met Mum Irene and Dad Mark. Their reception according to me was beyond imagination! I felt at home in a strange country. The timing of the visit was good because it enabled me to participate in numerous activities. I participated in the Retrouvaille marriage weekend in Central Wisconsin. This is a great program in strengthening marriages. I want to share this with my Bishop back home in Uganda. I met with young adults in fellowship programs. I learned about the culture of the people here compared to the culture in Uganda. There are similarities, but a lot of differences. The differences can be seen in the way of worship, social life, economically, politically, etc. There is individualism as compared to the communal way of life in Uganda. In Uganda, people refer to the USA as "heaven on earth." Though I did find that some struggle here, but not as much as Ugandans.

It is natural when meeting important people for the first time to be nervous or anxious. I was so excited imagining what I could say to the people of LWI who made me what I am. I thought I would meet people who are proud and unapproachable, but their nice reception made me feel comfortable. It gave me happiness to see joyful, humble people who are dedicating their lives to serving the needy people of Africa.

In closing, I would like to say that we have lost many seminarians who would be beneficial to the Church. Therefore, a person who helps a seminarian makes a greater contribution to the Church because when a seminarian becomes a priest, he touches many lives. I humbly implore you to consider sponsoring a seminarian.

Sincerely,

*Father Paul*

Father Paul



*Tina Heuss, Eileen Hartt, Irene Mehlos, Fr. Paul,  
Karen & Brian Prunty, & Steve*





# Spotlight

By Eileen Hartl

This Advent we are shining the spotlight on two new additions to the Living Waters Board of Directors: Sarah Duff and Patti Meyer, both of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Antigo, WI.

"In these days, there is a genuine concern by most people as we look upon the devastation of war in our world, dictators collaborating to conquer Ukraine, and the senseless killing of countless innocent people in the Middle East. There's an air of hopelessness, yet we pray for the courage, hope, and confidence that St. Paul exhorted to St. Timothy : "Timothy, my son, these are the instructions that I am giving you, in accordance with the words once spoken over you by the prophets, so that in their light you may fight like a good soldier with faith and good conscience for your weapons." I would add love and justice to Paul's faith and good conscience when it comes to battling both spiritual and worldly warfare. Because where there is love and justice, there is peace.

Faith, good conscience, love, and justice are good starting points when LWI needs new recruits to carry out our mission. Sarah is a devout practicing Catholic, a graduate of St Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin, where she received her bachelor's degree in biology. She is currently employed by the state of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture. With her mother, Karen, Sarah co-teaches as a catechist for the Antigo Area Catholic Churches faith formation program. Sarah is currently assisting our Grant Specialist, Ellie Payant, with whom she has been a lifetime friend since childhood, as part of the St Norbert Abbey grant program, which we administer for the Norbertine Community in De Pere, WI.

Reflecting about her relationship with Ellie, "We grew up with a strong faith," Sarah shares. Through their formation at All Saints Catholic School, Antigo, and subsequently in their high school religious formation they learned to be charitable and bring about justice in our world by helping people in need, "... and I hope to help people see improvements in other people's lives."

Patti Meyer is the other new addition to our LWI board. Patti has been a generous volunteer in the local Catholic Church and community for many years and

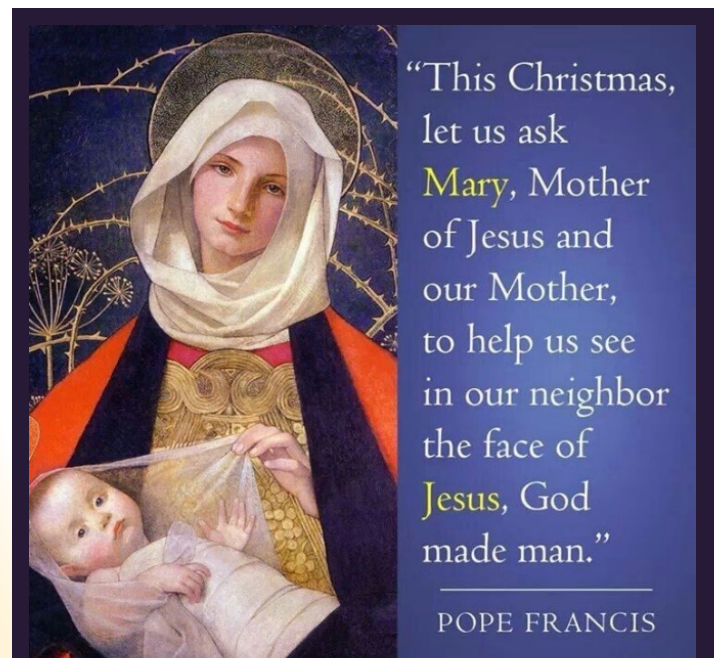


Patti & Sarah

will bring her passion for helping others to LWI as a new board member. Patti and her husband Pat of 20 years have two children, Mitchell, 18, and 14-year-old Olivia. Patti works full-time as an office administrator at Antigo's Middle School. She has sacrificed time and talent to improve the quality of life for others in her local setting, and now is looking forward to extending it to the broader world. In good conscience Patti hopes to, "... serve to the best of my ability and faith."

We welcome Patti and Sarah's ambitions to join LWI, bringing justice where they can through their faith, good conscience, and selflessness.

**"Faith, good conscience, love, and justice are good starting points when LWI needs new recruits to carry out our mission."**



"This Christmas, let us ask **Mary**, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, to help us see in our neighbor the face of **Jesus**, God made man."

POPE FRANCIS

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at Living Waters.**



## Goretti Update | Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the huge success of our Music in the Park fundraiser for Goretti, a little African girl. From the volunteer workers, food donors, Quinlan Equipment, Perpetual Monument Sales, John Filbrandt Plumbing and Heating, Catholic Financial Life, and individual cash donors, it was a tremendous evening, not possible without the generosity of each of you. Lastly, we want to thank all the patrons that evening; we couldn't have done it without you!

Proceeds for the MIP fundraiser enable LWI to support a family from Nairobi, Kenya, who is struggling to care for their 8-year-old daughter, Goretti. Her bladder protruded from a weakened abdominal wall at birth, and she has needed ongoing clinical visits, surgeries, and medical aids, though recent surgery has provided hope. Your help will provide the family with personal care items like diapers and monthly clinical visits.

Goretti has come a long way over the years, and thanks to people like you, she is able to do the

things that most children take for granted. There was a time when she couldn't go to school, or even play outside with her peers. That has all changed now because you made a little girl's dream come true. Thanks again, you serve the Lord so faithfully!



Mother & daughter moment

## Students In Need



**Name:** Iptisam Bakari

**Gender:** Female **Birthday:** February 15, 2017 **Country:** Tanzania

**Favorite Subject:** Kiswahili

**Favorite Pastime:** Playing with friends.

**Other Remarks:** Iptisam's father was killed in a trucking accident, and her mother is a street vendor. Her mother's minimal income is not enough to help pay her school fees.



**Name:** Alphonse Keyala Musanda

**Gender:** Male **Birthday:** December 2, 2015 **Country:** Uganda

**Favorite Subject:** Science, Sports, and English

**Favorite Pastime:** Playing Football.

**Other Remarks:** Alphonse's mother's occupation is farming. Her meager income is only enough to pay the rent and provide food for the two of them. The father is also a farmer but can't afford to construct a house.



**Name:** Caroline Atwami

**Gender:** Female **Birthday:** December 4, 2011 **Country:** Uganda

**Favorite Subject:** Science and Mathematics

**Favorite Pastime:** Playing games with her peers

**Other Remarks:** Caroline's father is a peasant laborer while her mother stays at home. They live in a two-room brick house with no running water or electricity. Mission Coordinator, Sister Walela says that she really needs someone's help. It would make a world of difference for this young girl.

## Student Sponsorship

\$30 a month provides help for:

- Tuition
- Books
- School Supplies
- School Uniforms
- Shelter
- Food
- Health Care

Payments can be made:

- Monthly ..... \$30
- Annually ..... \$360

100% of your tax-deductible donation goes directly to your child's sponsorship.

See more children waiting for sponsorship at: [livingwatersinternational.org](http://livingwatersinternational.org).