

ST FRANCIS FRIARY  
BOX 20111 – KITWE, ZAMBIA  
juniper@zamnet.zm  
19 December 2003

Dear James,

Your \$60 will enable us to feed the old for six days a week instead of the three we were. We got the volunteer cooks from St. Vincent de Paul volunteers. Now they tell me that they don't have enough oil and relish sort of a stew to go with the nshima-cornmeal that we with your help are providing. I am trying to get the local people to come up with more.

You might not get this in time for Christmas but I want you to know that you are remembered in our Christmas prayers.

We have tried to make Christmas a little merrier for the poor. Besides the party for the mentally handicapped and feeding the poor old people now 6 days a week instead of just three days. We are keeping 23 young women and men in high school and college.

That is in addition to the Community School of St. Francis. We are completing 4 more rooms and we plan to start the eighth grade next term. The rain and fierce wind did blow off some of the metal roofing sheets and some of those were stolen but Brother Tony was quick to get replacement.

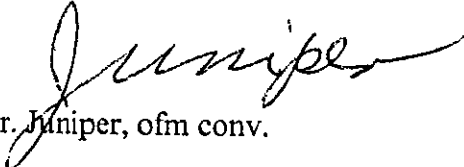
We had retreats directed and preached for Sisters during December (that is one reason that I'm late with this). I'm still teaching at the international diocesan seminary twice a week. The course is on sacraments and I teach once a week at the Franciscan missionaries of service plus having daily masses here and the novitiate of the Baptistine sisters. We, Fr. Umberto and I offer 5 or 6 masses in different parishes around the area. Most diocesan priests have 2 or more big parishes.

This are just some of all the apostolic work that the Friars are doing here. Then there are the bananas. Brother Tony is dedicated to that project. We are still singing 'yes we have no bananas' yet .(I just read that the yes we have no bananas song sold more copies of sheet music than any other song in history). But in a few months we will have, God willing, nutritious bananas in abundance to sell at a cheap price and make money for our many projects including helping to support our seminarians as well as provide wholesome food for many.

We will have a busy joyous Christmas and pray with us that in 2004 employment will increase and economic conditions will improve in Zambia. Statistically over 80% of the people here live under poverty level.

May you have the best year ever in 2004. I never thought that I would be living in this century

Yours gratefully in Jesus with Mary



Fr. Juniper, ofm conv.

P.S. Brothers Tony, John, Charles and Fr. Umberto send Season's greetings along with mine.

**Franciscan Retreats / P.O. Box 20111 / Kitwe, Zambia / juniper@zamnet.zm**  
20 July, 2004

Dear James,

Thanks to you and Cross International. We are still feeding about 25 old people daily at the Church. Now we are trying to find a way to get food to those who are too weak to make it to church.

It is incredibly cold for me and many who think of Africa as balmy. It gets down to the low 40's at night. During the day the sun is beautifully warm, but the shade and breeze are cool. I'd heard that the cool was good for cauliflower but they aren't coming up. Carrots and everything else are doing well.

With all the help we've been able to pay tuition for over 30 young people. For those who attend teacher-training courses we expect them to teach a couple of years in our St. Francis Orphan School that now goes up to grade eight.

We have 3 friars who made their solemn profession in July and during September there will be three ordinations of Franciscans.

I'm not yet visiting the hospital because I've had a bad infectious cold. Unfortunately three other friars in the house got it from me I fear. I don't want to infect the sick.


The European Community has provided a borehole complete with pump, tank and piping for the orphan school. A borehole is a deep well. So our 900 students will have good drinking water plus water for bathing and for the irrigated school garden.

Although there is treatment for HIV positive patients and the price has gotten down to about \$50 a month. Many people cannot afford it because that is as much as some people make a month. Our Home Based Care project is trying to work out a way to get treatment for more people.

Actually despite all the problems things are improving in some ways materially. God willing there is also some spiritual progress. I read in a book that there is a spiritual solution to every problem. When we become more spiritual we have less problem burdens.

May you enjoy your summer months.

Yours in Christ with Mary,



PS I've not been able to get the email functioning. That is partly my ignorance but Tony and others let me know that there is something wrong with the computer and sometimes with our zamnet system.

*Greetings to Michael also to Ted & Ron*