

## Western Missouri Companion Diocese

Once again the Companion Diocese Committee has had a very busy and active year. Shortly after our annual gathering and during the week of Thanksgiving, we were blessed to host Gosego Olivia Nthume, the HIV/AIDS Coordinator, from the Diocese of Botswana. She was well received and hosted by several families throughout the Diocese. During her stay here, Gosego was able to see and experience The Hospice 'Center at St. Luke's Hospital. Needless to say, she collected many experiences to take home and share with the Diocese of Botswana.

The focus of the committee was setting up avenues on how to deliver to the parishes of the diocese the need of a day care center in Paplyupe, Botswana. The committee worked back and forth with the Diocese of Botswana via email and a bit of Skyping every now and then. We were able to secure much needed information in order to make educated decisions during our planning process. One of the most exciting outcomes was to see in print the architectural drawings for the layout of the Day Care Center. We felt we were on the right road and could begin to visualize the actuality of the center.

During the Spring, our chairman, Dennis L. Robinson was invited to Charlotte, NC to meet with the chairpersons from the Companion Diocese of New Castle, England (Fr Geoff Lowson), N. Carolina (Fr Murdock Smith) and Botswana (Cannon Dr. James Amanze) to discuss the best ways we could all assist the Diocese of Botswana in the future and the present time. We discussed the many needs that existed in the Diocese Botswana and the best way of going about addressing these needs from each perspective committee. Each committee plans to visit Botswana with a group of people from their diocese sometime next year. Some of the visitors will be assisting in helping with repairs that are needed to various properties as well as assisting at the other day care center that exist just outside of Gaborone ( St. Peters Day Care Center) . As the Diocese of Botswana has a very small pool of priest, visiting priest to assist some parishes will be made available by the Diocese of Newcastle in the short term.

Fr James Amanze and his wife, Diana were invited to visit the Diocese of West Missouri during their visit to the United States. It was a great joy to have them here to met and visit our community. They too were hosted well by several

generous parish families throughout the diocese. During their stay they were able to visit several parishes in the north, south and metro areas. Our committee also had its “kick off campaign” at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral in downtown Kansas City to introduce to our diocese the need for the day care center in Paplaype, Botswana. Grace and Holy Trinity hosted a reception for the Amanze’s. The Very Rev Terry White presented a check in the amount of \$10,000.00 to the Paplaye Project. Fr James Amanze accepted the generous gift for the Diocese of Botswana. Fr Amanze shared with our committee a wealth of information regarding what is happening in the Diocese of Botswana. His visit allowed our committee to have first hand information that is again needed in allowing us to make the proper decision going forward.

As the Fall is now upon us and the weather is beginning to change a bit here, in Botswana it is coming into Spring where the weather is also changing. We are very fortunate that one of our committee members, Melissa Bolden is now in Botswana for several weeks. She will be traveling a great deal while she is there. She will be spending time at St. Peters Day Care Center, attending meetings with their Link Committee, the HIV/AIDS Committee, NGO’s, working in the Diocese office, spending time at St. Mary Magdalene in Papalpye and the lists goes on. She will be providing us with up to date information about our project and sharing her experiences with us.

We are on the road to making the day care center in Paplaype a reality. We have been receiving favorable responses throughout the diocese with generous contributions from various parishes and parishioners, For these gifts, we are truly thankful and blessed. They bring us closer to our goal of building the center and getting it up and running. Members of our committee will be speaking at vestry meetings throughout the diocese in the coming months ahead to continue to get the word out and share their experiences about the Diocese of Botswana and the Paplaype day care center project. We still have a road to travel but we can honestly say, we are not on this road alone.