

Uganda Trip – Part 1

August 2017

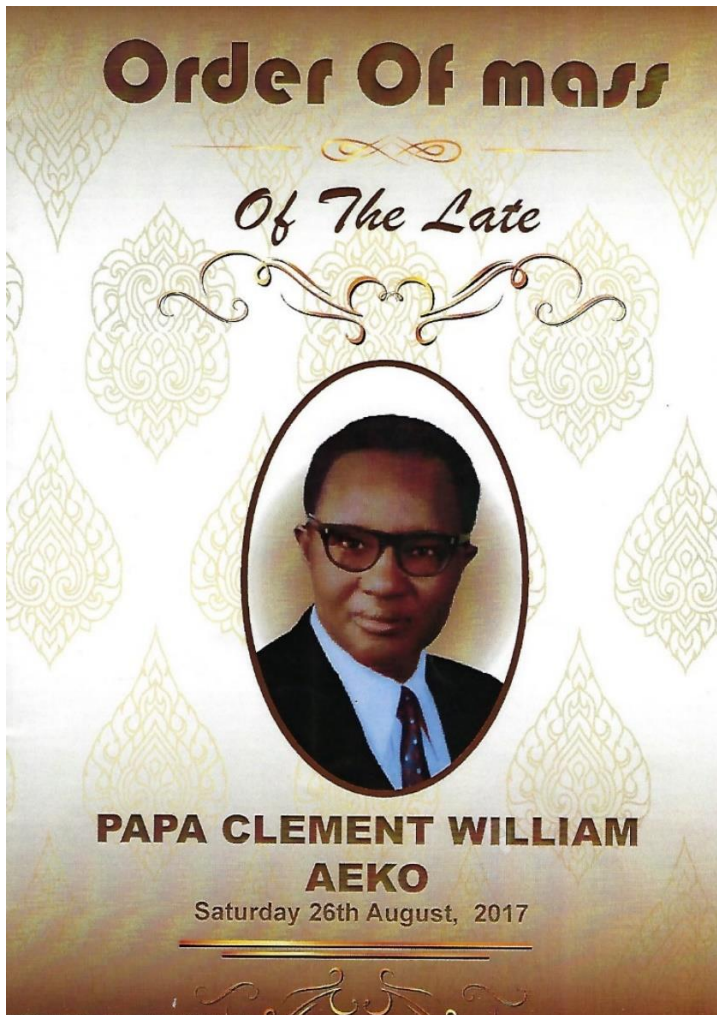
We traveled to Ngora, Uganda to celebrate a traditional African ritual to formally bring to close the mourning period and last funeral rites of Father Simon Peter's Father known as "Papa Clement". Uganda is a stunning country in East Africa and considered one of Africa's best kept secrets. Very lush and evergreen with a diversity of wildlife and with an average elevation of 4,000 ft has a mild temperate climate. Winston Churchill called Uganda the "Pearl of Africa" due to its splendor, natural wonders and best of all the amazing and friendly people!



As we journeyed from the Capital City of Kampala to Ngora, about 7 hours, using paved and unpaved roads, the poverty of rural Uganda soon became apparent. The lack of utilities, in particular, running water and power, seemed to be an everyday struggle for the people. I started to think how blessed we are in the US and how much we take for granted when we flip that switch that the power turns on or the water flows out. But, my perspective completely changed when we arrived in Ngora and met Fr Simon Peter's family. They were the most gracious, welcoming and friendly people. They warmly welcomed us to their home as part of their amazing family. I began to realize that maybe they were the ones who were more blessed than us in the "modern" world. At the end of the day, life is about being grateful every day for what you have. I am extremely humbled by this life changing trip. There were so many great moments to share.



Although I had never met the great man, Papa Clement, the stories and description of him greatly reminded me of my own Dad. He was an entrepreneur who looked toward the future and inspired many to leave this world a better world for everyone. He taught his children the value of hard work and to appreciate what they had. He was a very generous philanthropist and had a large heart. Papa Clement was a man of great faith and instilled family prayer as important to the lives of all his children. The Last Funeral Rites Mass was attended by over 2,000 guests! The incredible Offertory Procession included all of earth's bounty offered by the members of the Teso Village of Ngora.



Father Simon Peter's sister, Florence, handmade the amazing African clothing for us!



The Last Funeral Rites Celebration Mass ended with the Naming and Installation of the Heir. Joseph, the eldest and first son, was named the heir to Papa Clement.



On the day after the Last Funeral Rites Ceremony, Father Simon Peter's family held a Sunday Mass for the people of the Ngora Village and again served lunch to everyone there. In the picture, you can see the children politely waited in line to be served before the adults. Although their family's spirit of generosity and concern for their community reminded me somewhat of our own culture, they seemed to be further strengthened by the entire community following the same moral guiding principles. Our children watch what we do every day and learn from us. Doing good for others is also good for all of us.







Father Simon Peter's Family belongs to the Iteso Tribe, speak the Ateso Language and live in the Teso Region. Teso means "We have seen." They are one of the largest tribes in Uganda. The culture of Uganda is made up of over 40 tribes who all speak different languages. Although English is the official language, only a small portion actually speak English well.



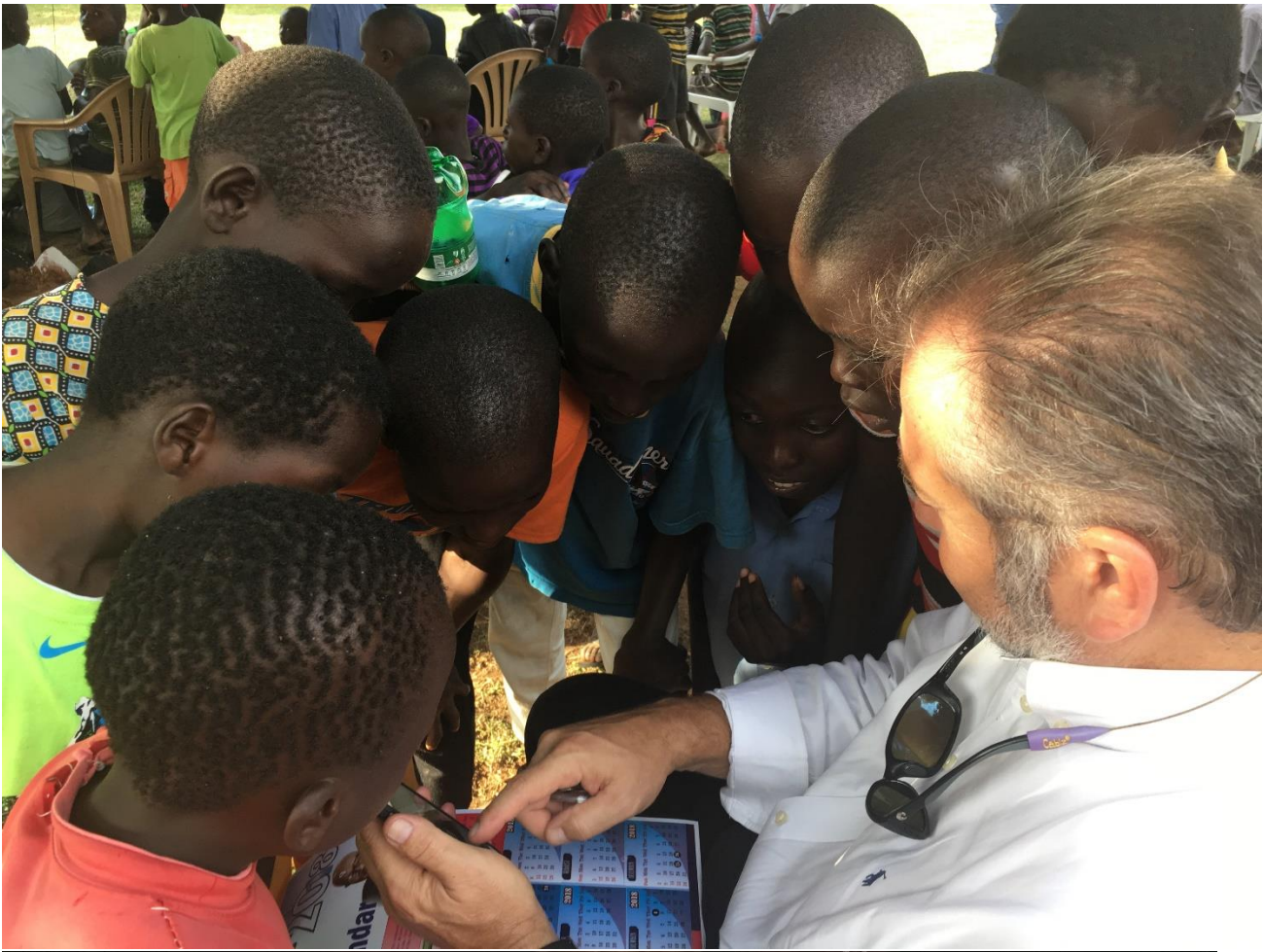
The kids were shy at first, but warmed up very soon after. The guys would put hard candies in their pockets. They loved the "Sweets" Men. They also loved getting their pics taken on our cell phones.



Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me..."









Local groups gathered around pots filled with a centuries old drink called Ajon. It is a locally brewed premier alcoholic drink made in a complex process using millet.



The longest river in the world, the River Nile, begins here at Lake Victoria outside of Jinja. The River Nile then flows north and empties into the Mediterranean Sea in Egypt.



Uganda is about the size of the state of Oregon. The population of Uganda is 36 million. Average number of children per family is 6.7 and 50% of the population is under 18. Granite Outcroppings near Ngora with Cave Paintings dating from the Stone Age more than 50,000 years ago.



Farming is a way of life -- most Ugandans produce their own food. Cooking is mainly done over an open wood fire. Farming is done without modern farm equipment.



Shopping in Uganda – Everything for sale was displayed on the roadsides. From furniture to food to even coffins!







Main Mode of Transportation in Uganda are Motorcycle Taxis called Boda-Bodas. Papa Clement also had a scooter and often rode around the country with his children.



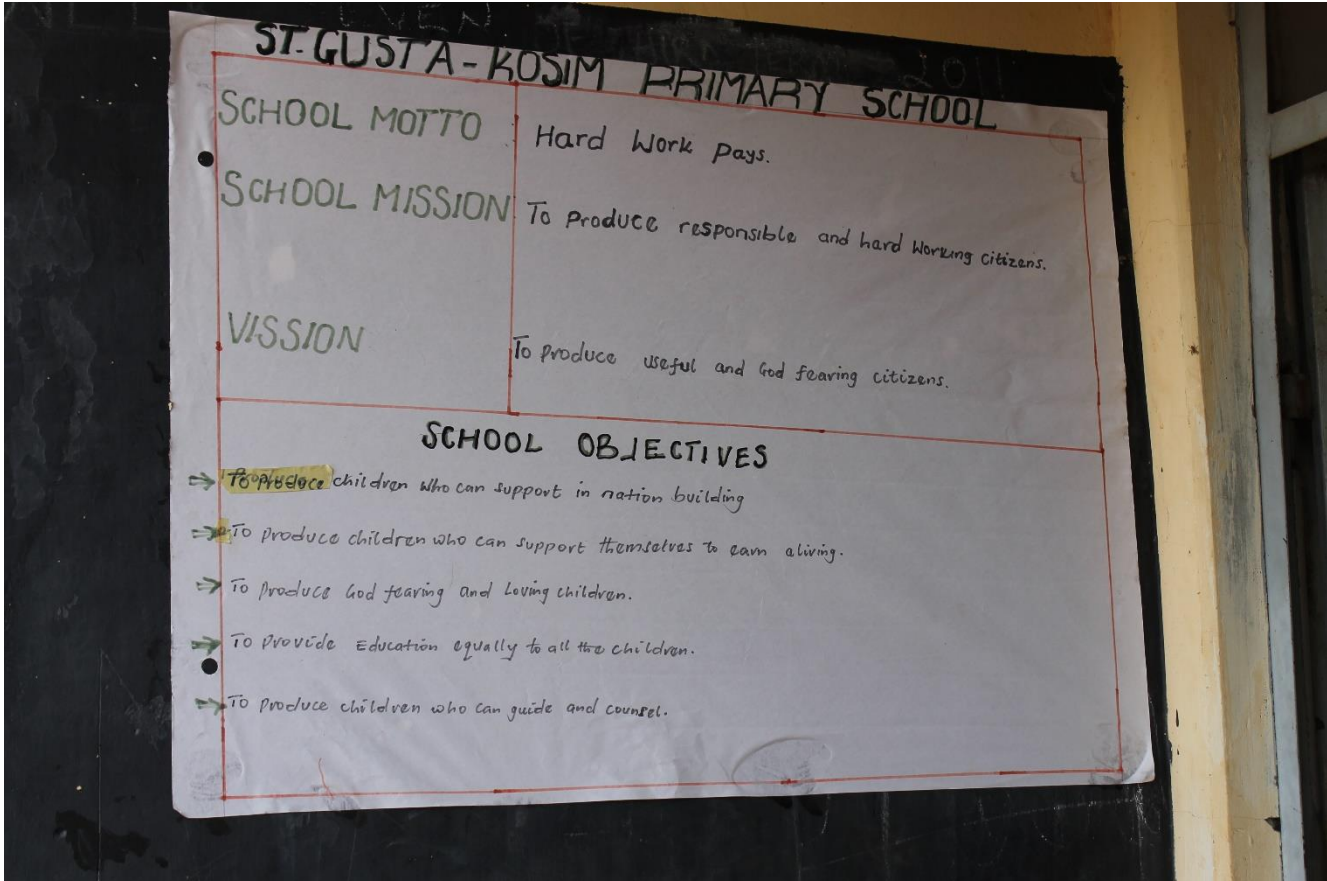
The culture of Uganda is made up of over 40 tribes who all speak different languages. Although English is the official language, only a small portion actually speak English well. Education was Papa Clement's passion and a priority in his life and his children's lives. He built a school nearby which is desperately in need of repairs. Last year they had 474 students in Grades 1st through 7th in his school.

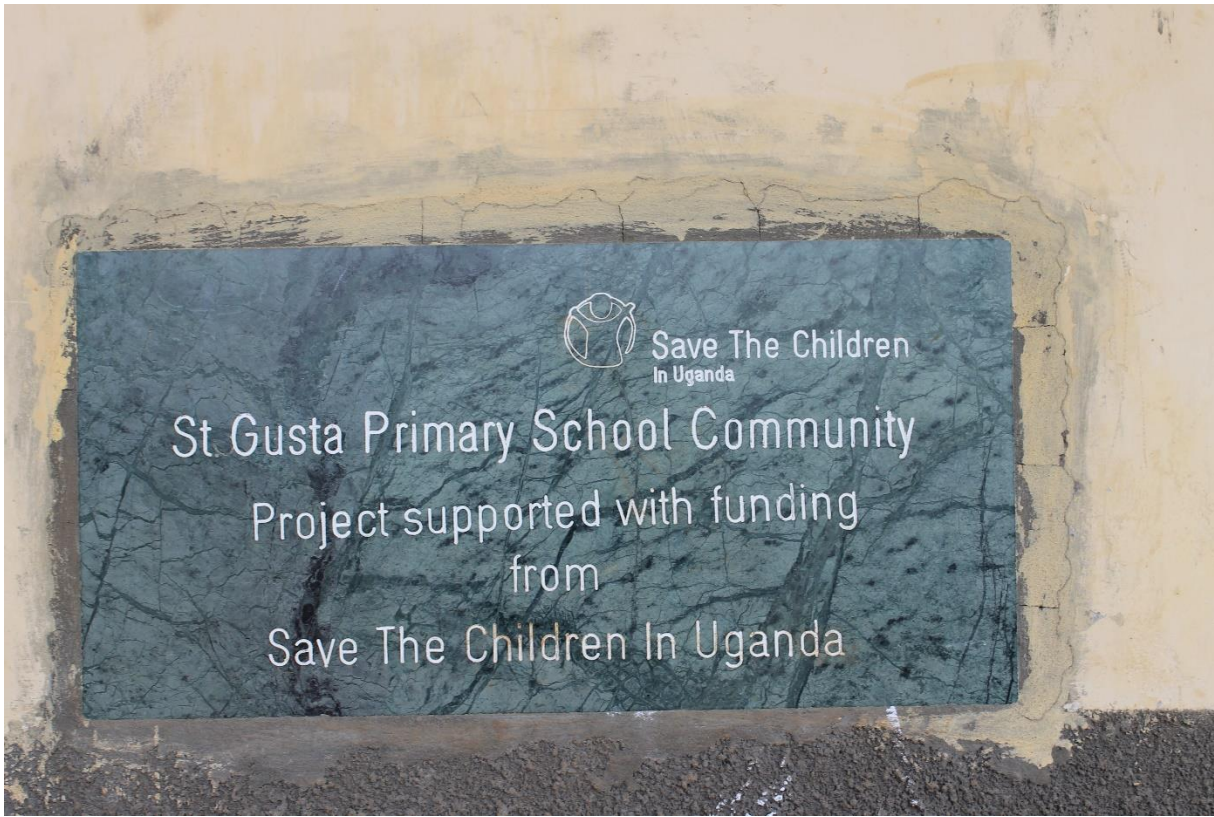
CLASS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
P.1	37	43	80
P.2	42	35	77
P.3	32	43	75
P.4	47	32	79
P.5	29	35	64
P.6	30	32	62
P.7	24	13	37
TOTAL	241	233	474

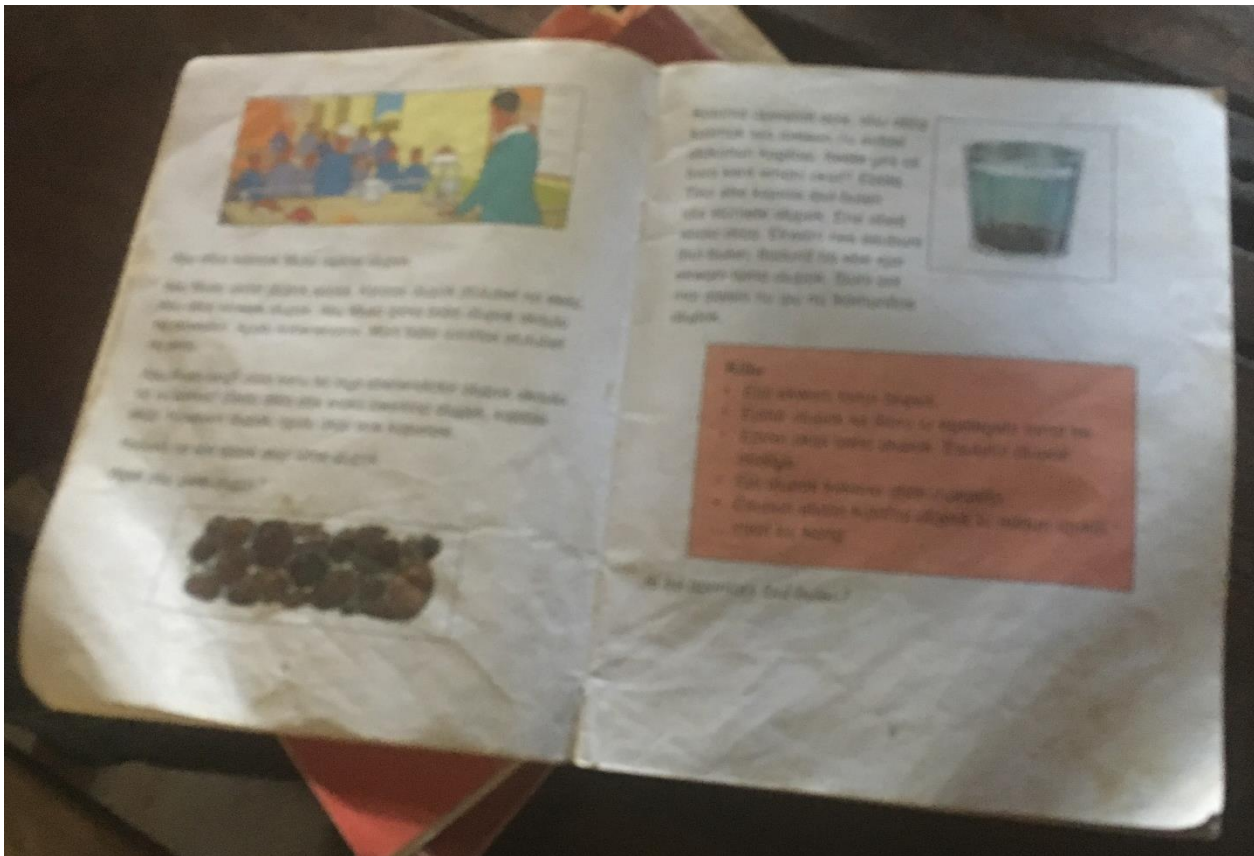
HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS	DEPARTMENT
OKWI PAUL -	ENGLISH
OMODING E.J. -	MATHEMATICS
OKELLO R -	SOCIAL STUDIES
ADICHA P -	INTEGRATED SCI.
	THEMATIC CURR.













Lonny had the privilege to give our baskets of donated supplies to School Teacher. We each checked 2 bags on the flight to Uganda. Only one bag was for ourselves. We each checked a second bag filled with school supplies, pens, notebooks, paper, books and toys for the kids that was left there for them.



Papa Clement was a man of great faith and instilled family prayer as important to the lives of all his children. He built a church near the school which is in desperate need of repairs. At first, they had 12 portable bench kneelers. If they removed them for gatherings in the church, only 10 would come back and most of those were damaged. Therefore, they built in cement seating for the church.





Papa had friends from every walk of life. He dedicated his career to helping build a School for the Deaf nearby to improve their lives. The school has about 200 students. They performed in sign language at the Celebration of Life.

