

VISIT TO ST. PETER'S CHURCH KONOKOYI
FEBRUARY 2ND 2014

I visited for the Sunday service starting at about 10am. Again the parish priest who has many different out-station churches to visit was not present and the service was managed by a catechist. It was dry season and the drum was now outside as I arrived catching the sun to make it taut before being taken in to the small choir. There was also a large cow sitting very near the entrance to the church; she was not bothering anybody.

Inside, there were more changes to take in. The tabernacle was now fixed into the wall and some plastering and painting had been done. I was told later that the money for the painting and plastering has come from the sale of the football shirts which I had left with them on my last visit in September and which had been given me by parishioners.

The service was lively and full of vigour as usual and there was an added treat for me of the young children performing a dance routine before the altar. All Ugandans seem to me to be great dancers and these children were no exception.

After the service I was able to pass on your gifts. I have told them about the raffle that was held in Newtown before Christmas and the decision that was made to pass half the proceeds to them with a third of that gift going to their local school. With some family money that I had been given we were able to pass on to the church 1million Ugandan shillings (about £250) and they were, of course, delighted. I have been presented with the church work plan for 2014 and I will put a copy of this with their thank-you letters on the notice board and you will see that their ambitions for their church are unflagging.

You will also see in those letters their thanks for a "communion cup". This was a very badly damaged ciborium that a brother in law in north Yorkshire had passed on to me and which my brother, a jeweller had restored to its former glory. This was something they had started to save for so were delighted to receive. A lively discussion started about where this was to be kept given that the church only had wooden shutters for windows but I left this discussion to them.

After the service and past the cow at the entrance, I proceeded to the local school and there handed over the £100 equivalent as part of the Christmas raffle funds. I asked that this be used as a hardship fund by the school for their poorest children and not part of the general budget. I have asked for an accounting of this money.

As I left the school there was a small group under a shady tree and the reading glasses were being handed out according to the list and requirements noted on the previous visit.

Your gifts are so graciously received and put to almost immediate good use. It is a great privilege and a lot of fun for me to be your messenger on these occasions. If there is anybody in the parish who would like to visit the people of St. Peter's, let me know; you can be certain of a wonderful welcome.

John Harrington.
26/02/14

