

NAMITEMBO TIMES

Winter 2017

Elephant Stampede a Success

The Parish Picnic and Elephant Stampede were held on a blustery yet sunny Sunday in September. For the comfort of those attending (and preventing everything from blowing away) the event was held in the church hall. The sun did shine enough for many to enjoy the picnic on the patio!

The St. Bridget community greeted old and new friends, enjoyed great food and drink, played games, and renewed their commitment to our sister parish in Malawi.



The Elephant Stampede did not have a run, just fun at the picnic. Did you get your orange tee shirt?

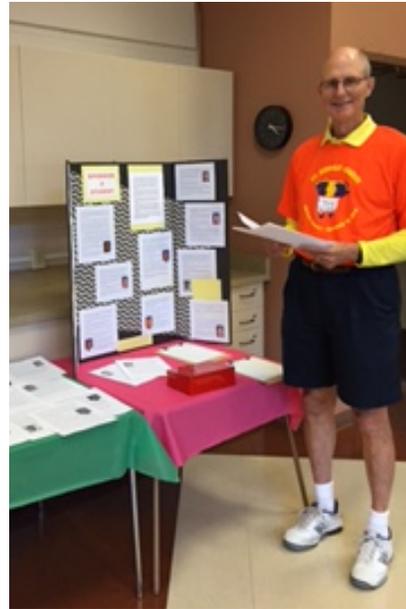
Displays were set up to show our history and continued support for Namitembo. The Women's Embroidery Group from Namitembo had pillows and table runners for sale.



There was opportunity to Sponsor A Student at Namitembo Trade and Agriculture School, and many of you did.

The goal for the Stampede was to raise \$25,000 in support of education in Namitembo.

You did it! Thank You!



In addition, \$3,000 was raised to Sponsor A Student at NAMTAS. Your support will make it possible for students unable to pay tuition to attend, learning skills for future employment.

Money Wired to Namitembo

The new school year began mid January in Namitembo. St. Bridget parish was able to send its first quarter installment for 2017.

St. Bridget's mission in Namitembo is education. It is their decision how to use our gift: teacher housing, school supplies, feeding hungry children, or teacher pay.

Fr. Henry and Mr. Kapinda decided they wanted the Sponsor A Student tuition aide in partial payments too. \$1000 was sent for young adults to learn a trade.

Christmas in Namitembo

Traditions in rural Namitembo, Malawi are quite similar to ours in the US. Celebrating the birth of Baby Jesus at mass and gathering with family are the focus of the season.

During Advent families are saving money to buy new clothes to wear on Christmas day. The choir is practicing extra long to make sure their selection of songs is good. Everyone is able to sing for the newborn baby.

Also during Advent the small girls do not dance at the altar during Mass, but then on Christmas there is much dancing by everyone. It is a big celebration! The whole church is decorated too, a sign of joy to welcome Jesus.

At the offertory people try to be generous. It is a sign of thanks that God has allowed them to reach the final month of the year.

After Mass everyone returns to their decorated homes, turn on their radio to listen to Christmas songs and programs about the birth of Jesus, and enjoy good food with their family.

If you have watched the video on the St. Bridget website, "A Day in the Life," to see and hear the singing and dancing at a regular Sunday mass, you can imagine how exciting Christmas mass must be.

Gifts are not exchanged in Namitembo during Christmas. That is a tradition in the urban areas where family friends, companies or other groups have parties. The Trade School staff was invited to a party at the diocese along with other church groups. There, they were given awards for such things as being punctual, hard working, discipline, and entertaining. The end of year party is given when the school is breaking for the holidays.

Delegation to Namitembo in May

A small but dedicated group is travelling to Malawi in May. Mary Jo Gasparich, Sherry Atterbury, and Ann Nachtigal will represent you, taking your regards, prayers, and concerns.

Their visit is not all play. Plans include visits with Bishop Tambala in Zomba, and the Women's Embroidery Group in Namitembo.

As part of their cultural exchange Mary Jo and Sherry would like to record interviews with people throughout the Namitembo region. They hope to get out to all seven out-churches.

Do you have a question you would like to ask? What do you want to know about Namitembo? Email either Mary Jo or Sherry with your question.

Ann will be taking stitching kits for the ladies in the Embroidery Group. They have many pieces ready to be brought back. Look for new pillows, table runners, and aprons for purchase at the Elephant Stampede in September. Proceeds pay school tuition for girls.

Donations to Namitembo

Each group that goes to Namitembo takes items that are useful and hard to get there, but easy to pack into an extra suitcase.

Donations you can give include: pencils, toothbrushes, reading glasses, memory sticks, and gently used running shoes.

Do you have a 3-5 year old PC computer to donate? The Trade School could use an update with their computers. The computer will be wiped clean and new software installed.

Contact for Questions and Donations

Mary Jo: maryjogasparich@gmail.com

Sherry: satterbury1230@gmail.com