

## **Uganda Visitors Expected in Mid-September**

The long wait, it appears, is finally over. After a year of planning, offers of hospitality from parishioners, visa problems, a flurry of letters to Capitol Hill and the U.S. Embassy in Uganda — and prayers from both sides — four visitors from St. Paul the Apostle in Mukono (SPM), Uganda, are coming to Cedarburg. They will arrive on or about September 17.

The visitors include: Fr. Ignatius Kibowa, pastor of St. Paul-Mukono; Mrs. Mary Mulumba Plaxeda, bank accountant and treasurer to several SPM groups; Mr. Jimmy Kigozi, an accountant, youth coordinator, and committee chair; and Mr. Bonnie Kakooza Ssewava, a teacher, school inspector, and committee secretary.

Inexplicably, Mrs. Ida Bukenya, an agriculturist, educator, and the leader of the St. Paul-Mukono laity, was denied a visa three times. Her plight reflects the larger struggles of the Uganda visitors to meet the exacting visa requirements of the U.S. Embassy. Last September, all five visa requests were denied. Success for the four came in August, after a second round of letter-writing, this time including a plea from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

The four visitors will spend about two weeks in Cedarburg. They will meet with parish groups and tour Cedarburg and Milwaukee. Numerous parishioners have invited the visitors stay in their homes, or have arranged for farm and factory tours, or visits to schools and youth groups. Our twinning committee will serve as host for the visitors.

Our parish involvement with St. Paul-Mukono began in 2000, when Karen and Tom Guskowski formed a parish twinning group with the guidance of the archdiocesan mission office. In 2001, five SFB twinning committee members traveled to Mukono, Uganda and spent a week there that they said changed their lives. Since then, the group has been attempting to arrange a reciprocal visit from SPM members.

While our parishioners have supported St. Paul-Mukono financially through bimonthly collections, the committee has been asked occasionally about the true purpose of twinning. The contributions are gratefully received by SPM. But the main purpose of the relationship is to foster greater understanding between the two Catholic parishes as well as to foster spiritual and social ties. “The spiritual gifts we received during our visit to Mukono are beyond description,” said Tom Guskowski recently. The committee hopes to build ties that can reach more and more parishioners on both sides.

A parish reception has been planned for the visitors following a Sunday Mass in September. Information about other activities will also be announced.

-Written by John Schauble for the *Messenger* parish newsletter, Fall 2003.