

June 2017

Rafikis,

Jambo, and blessings of the Risen Lord!

I wish to tell you a small story...my beloved mum –Katarina -, spent most of April in hospital. And as most of you already know (from my homilies)..., she is not only diabetic, but also suffers from hypertension and advanced arthritis that has affected both her legs; she therefore walks with a limp. Recently she was also diagnosed with cataract in both eyes, which hopefully, will be removed soon enough.

Anyway, few days I ago I called her, and after a long ring, one of the orphans she stays with picked her phone. And so I got a little worried, and prayed that nothing had happened to her – at least nothing serious - so soon! She always picked my calls... and promptly so. It was about 9am in Kenya. And so on inquiring about her health and whereabouts, I was a little disappointed to learn that she was on her field harvesting dry beans (we let them dry on the farm). How could she do this when she had just come out of hospital? Why couldn't she ask few people to help her, as I have always advised? How about hiring few people to do it and ask me to help with payments? All these questions rushed into my mind as the girl who answered her phone took it to her.

“Hello” she said...almost breathlessly. *“Hello Fr”*, she repeated. Then I said, *“Mum why are you doing this?”* *“Why go work on the fields, when your doctor advised against it?”* She remained silent for a while, and then slowly, calmly and emphatically said something to the effect that she has to make her contribution towards the building of a new church in our village. Now, my village has never had a permanent church building since the fifties. This is gonna be the first permanent and decent church building in our village. I know something about this project, and I have made several personal contributions towards it.

So my mum's idea was to go sell her beans in the market, then take the funds to the church as part of her contribution, never mind that she had already made her contributions towards the same project in the past. More often than not, villagers would just take farm produce to the church, and the church leadership would then go ahead and “convert all that into money” and use the funds to buy building materials.

And so admittedly, I was touched! The thought that in her health condition, she could risk, go work and make her contribution towards the building of our new village church, just blew me away! She knew very well that she could ask me for funds, and that I could readily give it to her (and I have done so several times) to make her contribution, yet she made it clear to me, that she wanted to **express her love for God and her church**, and that it was something that she needed to do by herself. No one else. Wow! I toned down! I had to.

And so we got to be talking for a while on the phone, and I told her that we here at St. Johns are also in the process of collecting funds to take care of our 100 yr. old facilities. At that point I sensed that she was interested in what I was saying and even asked few questions for more details about our Capital campaign. After listening to me she was silent for some time. She sighed and said: *“Son I always pray for you and for your parishioners. I will also pray for the success of your Capital campaign.”* *“Asante sana Mama, Mungu akubariki (Thanks so much mama, may God bless you)”*, I replied. Then she added *“Tell them to do it for the love of Christ!”* *“Amen!”* I replied!

There you are my dear people! Let’s do it for the love of Jesus! Jesus who is ever present in our community, in our children and in their education at our school. He is present in our ministries, in our families, in our worship and in our work. And wherever we are!

Once again my call to all of us is: Be part of this Campaign. Be an active member of our community. Express your love for God and our community! And be part of this blessed time in the history of our parish. Make your pledge.

It shall be well!

Mungu Awabariki,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Padri Okoth Crispin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first part of the name.

Padri Okoth Crispin