



"Making a difference in the lives of children." It is the focus of all we do at Education Partners Nigeria, a small group of committed individuals connected by the inspiring presence of Rev. James Ojo. We believe that we can make a profound and lasting difference in the lives of children living in poverty a half-world away, by providing essential educational infrastructure – school buildings, furniture, computers, safe drinking water, and more. It is because of you, our donors, that we have built two schools, refurbished a high school library, and provided another school with an underground water well, generator and overhead water tank. These projects serve hundreds of school children who otherwise would have very limited access to a quality education.

We hope you will enjoy reading about all we have done this year. Thank you from all of us at EPN for the contributions you make, large and small.

Thomas Corcoran, Chairman of the Board

St Pius School, Ofakaga

Ofakaga is a small village of 3,000 people where the primary industry is farming. The 186 students were in dire need of a new school to replace the dilapidated single classroom--in the nave of the parish church--they had been using since the inception of the school 12 years ago. EPN, in its first major fundraising venture, raised \$80,000 over a period of 14 months to build a school of six classrooms, including office space and furnishings. Construction began in February 2019 and the building was completed in April 2020...but Covid intervened and schools throughout Nigeria were closed.

In March 2020, as the world began lockdown, Father James was able to meet with the PTA and some members of the St. Pius community. The children, the PTA and the entire village were delighted and thankful for the wonderful gift of a great school.



Students on steps of new School building waiting for school to begin

In February 2021 Fr. James again visited St. Pius. The children and their teachers are happy and doing well in the new school building, which has also resulted in increased enrollment in the school. One of the major challenges expressed by the teachers is the lack of books for the children. Parents are not ready to buy books for financial and other reasons.



Fr. James and a small student.

St. Jude Primary School, Uchuchu

St. Jude is in the rural area of Kogi state, an area without roads, electricity, drinking water, health or educational facilities. The students' average walk to school is 3 miles although children under age 6 cannot manage the distance. Illiteracy rates are very high. The government stopped paying teachers' salaries and the school, prone to seasonal flooding, was abandoned. In 2018 the local Bishop sent a group of nuns to the area to re-establish the school. They operated out of an open mud hut made of bamboo trees.

In late 2020 the diocese asked EPN to provide \$70,000 in funds to cover the cost of a new building comprised of 6 classrooms, two offices, and two restrooms. The site was provided by the community and students of various faiths (Christians, Muslims, and African Traditional Religion practitioners) volunteered to provide manual labor. In late 2020 EPN approved a donation of \$70,000 to fund the cost of a new school building. Fr. James visited the town in February 2021, at which time the site had been chosen and the grassland cleared.

As of July the foundation, structural cement block work, and roof have been completed. It is expected that the building will be completed by September when school re-opens. As building draws to a close we will turn to furnishing St. Jude with desks, books, and other supplies. Drinking water is also a major problem for the school and the community, which has traditionally relied on well water. There is crude oil underground, however, and when they drill for water they can see an oil sheen on the surface. This is a problem across the entire locale. It is estimated that the cost of a new well will be \$10,000 (including a storage tank and submersible pump).

As always, any contributions to meeting these additional expenses will be gratefully accepted!



The original school (left) and nearly complete new building (above).

Scholarship Fund

In January 2021 the Board approved the establishment of a Scholarship Fund for those students who cannot afford the annual tuition of typically less than \$100. This was funded largely by Board Head Tom Corcoran and his wife Maureen. This year's grant of \$2,000 provided scholarships for 135 students from 8 communities and various faith traditions and ethnicities.

Future Projects

St. Kizito Seminary Kitchen

St. Kizito, a boarding seminary for 260 young men, has been in operation since 1982. There are currently 265 students in residence. All meals are prepared for the students in a rudimentary open kitchen with dirt floors. A dilapidated wood stove provides the sole source of energy. The room has no electricity; food is kept cold in the pots shown in the pictures. Plumbing is non-existent. Fr. William Okolo, head of St. Kizito: "The seminary is passionately appealing for financial help to modernize the student kitchen and other necessary accompanying facilities to make it safe, more hygienic, efficient as well as to ensure the health and safety of the cooks." Father Okolo estimates that \$60,000 will be needed to renovate and modernize the kitchen.



The current St. Kizito kitchen



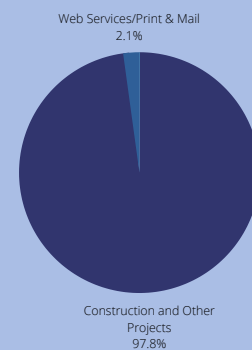
Ss. Peter and Paul Secondary School Girls dormitory. **Egume**

The building of the dormitory began over five years ago through local efforts but was never completed due to a lack of funds. The dormitory, which will house 160 girls in grades 7 through 12, will enhance the safety, and performance of the girls in their educational pursuit. Recently a major EPN donor has committed \$35,000 to the project; an additional \$35,000 is needed to complete construction.

Well for St. Jude and the Community

Potable water is limited in Uchuchu, and creating a source of clean drinking water will be our next goal for the children of this town.

Chart Showing Distribution of Funds



Donations gratefully accepted! Contributions may be made through our website (EPNigeria.org) or by mailing to the address below.

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