

Sherry Notes

September 2021

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Dear Family and Friends,

In the book of the Prophet Jeremiah, chapter 29, verse 11, we read: *“For I know the plans I have for you,”* declares the LORD, *“plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”* International travel normally requires planning and reliance on Providence. In the era of the Covid pandemic, it is essential. Changed plans are the norm. Confessing that I am a planner and an organizer will surprise no one. I’m tired of Covid being in charge of all my plans. And yet, as I reflect on all the changes in my summer plans, perhaps it worked out for the best. Maybe the pandemic can teach me to listen more and plan less.

Nonetheless, all those carefully crafted plans I told you about in my April newsletter, didn’t happen the way I anticipated. It began at Entebbe Airport in early June when Fr. Tonino and I arrived at the check-in for our flights to the USA for mission appeals. It was a midnight flight and chaos reigned at the airport because there was NO INTERNET



Entebbe Airport, June

connection for the airlines or the airport authorities. Boarding passes and luggage tags were being hand-written for passengers who came to the airport with a printed ticket. Fr. Tonino was denied entry to the USA because he

carried a passport from Italy. We tried to explain that he had been in Uganda since the beginning of the pandemic, but our pleas were unheeded. So, they changed his ticket and flew him to Bologna; I flew to the USA and did all the mission appeals on my own. Though his arrival in Italy was unexpected, his family welcomed him and were grateful for his help: just days before, his sister Bruna had fallen and fractured two vertebrae. She was confined to her bed and needed help.

Stateside, I enjoyed extra time with my family. I had plenty of time to do the things that needed to be done and enough time to spend with friends and family. It was one of the most



The Meyer siblings, oldest to youngest: me, Nancy, Lynn Baumann, Marty, Mary Beth Servie, Gerry



Comboni Missionaries, North American Province in Cincinnati:
Provincial Fr. Ruffino Ezama and Fr. David Baltz

relaxed home leaves of my missionary life. My married siblings each have new grandbabies and I was delighted to spend time with them.

The uncertainty of other travel plans stayed with me throughout the summer. However, I was able to fly to Italy in August without major hassles or quarantine. I stayed in Cesena with Fr. Tonino and his sister Bruna who eventually had surgery and began her recovery. We traveled within Italy without problems. My niece Alex Servie, who had spent months with us in Arua during her gap year,



Brecklyn Marie Banta, daughter of Alyssa and Brandon....youngest of the new babies

now lives in Berlin. She and her friend Rodolfo met us in Rome for a few days. I had not seen her since the death of my mother. There were few tourists in Rome and Assisi so I had opportunities I had missed in the past because of large crowds. In St. Peter's piazza, I stood about as close as possible for Pope Francis' Angelus on Sunday, September 6; I was moved to be in the same place with him and listen to his simple wisdom. In Assisi I had lunch with a view of San Francesco Basilica and we actually drove through the streets of Assisi on the way home!



In St. Peter's Square, listening to Pope Francis in the Sunday Angelus; Niece Alex Servie and friend Rodolfo in center of the photo

We enjoyed the Dolomites in Trentino; the mountains always delight me with their majesty. Though hesitant and fearful, I did take the three-part ride in a ski lift to the top of one of the peaks, Paganella. The birthplace of St. Daniele Comboni is in a small place called Limone in Trentino. We enjoyed visiting the Comboni Missionaries there and seeing the development of the preservation of his birthplace and the exposition of his life.



St. Peter Basilica in Rome



In Assisi, place where St. Francis died

In the midst of so many joys, I kept in touch with friends and colleagues in Arua. The longing to return to Uganda was always present. Fr. Tonino and I returned to Radio Pacis and St. Martha Parish in Katrini as planned. We left Italy early in the morning on September 15th and arrived that same day in Entebbe at nearly midnight. We spent a day in Kampala to buy groceries to re-stock my house. On September 17th we drove to Arua.

Pandemic-wise, Uganda is under the same restrictions that began in June as we left: churches and schools remain closed, public transportation is restricted, and a curfew is in place. It is hard to know the Covid statistics for Uganda because testing is not widely available. The vaccines

continue to arrive in the country very slowly. The number of vaccinated staff at Radio Pacis is growing. However, only a very few people in our parish have had access to the vaccine. I will resume the same practices of the months before home leave: masking, distancing, working mostly from home, avoiding the market and having groceries delivered. In the parish, we will resume meeting with leaders in very small groups.

Thank you for your continuing prayers and support. We are so grateful. It was a privilege to meet with so many supporters this summer in both Indianapolis and Cesena. May God bless us all.



Happy to see elephants along the road to Pakwach on our way home



One of the ski lifts that we rode to the top of the mountain

Please join us in these prayer points.

Humbly ask:

- For the Comboni Missionary family as they serve others in the spirit of St. Daniele Comboni.
- For God's gift of medical personnel who have courageously served the sick and dying around the world.
- For the growth of faith in St. Martha Parish and the safe re-opening of the parishes of Arua Diocese.

Give praise and thanks for:

- God's providence in all times and all seasons, especially the newest Radio Pacis frequency in Moyo.
- The gift of family and friends who send us off and welcome us back.
- For journalists and media specialists at Radio Pacis who speak truth of the pandemic and vaccines.

Our prayers unite us!

Sherry



First meet and greet with catechists of St. Martha Parish on Saturday September 18th

Most people now receive this newsletter by email and have greatly reduced the costs of printing and postage. THANK YOU. If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email, please send my sister Nancy (NMeyer7739@aol.com) an email message to that effect. Also, if you want to have your name completely removed from my mailing list, please let her know. Thanks.

<p>Contributions for Sherry Meyer's missionary work in Uganda: Make checks payable to COMBONI MISSIONARIES. Send the check to: Comboni Mission Center, 1318 Nagel Road Cincinnati OH 45255-3120 Include a note with the check indicating that it is for Sherry Meyer. <u>Or, if you prefer:</u> Make checks payable to SHERRY MEYER Send the check to: Nancy Meyer, 109 Walleye Court Indianapolis IN 46227-2588</p>	<p>To reach me in Uganda: By phone: 011-256-772-474-669 By email: sherry.m.arua@gmail.com By post: P.O. Box 454, Arua, UGANDA</p>
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