

November 2008

Dear Benefactors and Friends of St. Aloysius,

Once again this year, I write as we celebrate World AIDS Day (December 1) and approach our celebration of Christmas. Despite so much pain in our world, we can be hopeful because so many are giving of their talent and resources to respond to the AIDS crisis. Even where we fall short, God is with us. We are ensured that there is purpose in all we seek to accomplish, and this assurance spurs us on!

I am heartened by the generosity of so many students at Jesuit schools throughout the USA in joining in the St. Aloysius Gonzaga High School World AIDS campaign, which supports our work and, even more importantly, is a positive indicator that we can be victorious in our struggle against disease and poverty through education and providing hope. This year, 17 Jesuit US high schools and universities are demonstrating solidarity with St. Al's on World AIDS day – thank you!

I last wrote you in June as we were preparing for our annual school celebration of the Feast of St. Aloysius. This year, our feast included the groundbreaking at the site of the new school. We were honored to have the American Ambassador to Kenya, Mr. Michael Ranneberger, with us. The groundbreaking was more a sign of hope than an indication that we were ready to begin building. We were still seeking some permissions from the Kenyan Government. As I write now, the permissions have been received and we will soon seek a contractor to begin the building in early 2009!

The new school building will allow us to serve 420 students, a great increase from current school capacity of 262 students.

Let me mention a few highlights of the last six months. We had a wonderful retreat/in-service for our teachers and professional staff on July 4 and 5. I was really overwhelmed by their enthusiasm for growing appropriation of Ignatian pedagogy. They are so very committed to our mission that produces “men and women for others.”

One concrete fruit of my recent sojourn in the USA was an offer of two scholarships to St. Al's teachers for Masters Degrees at the Boston College Lynch School of Education. It is expected that one will begin studies in August 2009, and the other a year later. We are very grateful for this generous offer in support of our mission.

December will mark another milestone at St. Al's as some of our first students finish their post high school diplomas. We have decided to make the commitment to help our graduates find their first job after finishing their tertiary education. We believe it is important to stretch our limited resources in this further way to help our graduates realize their potential.

St. Aloysius' Class of 2008 is double the size of last year's class with some 60 graduating – a hearty congratulations!

I would like to mention something that is not quite new but worthy of note. We have some 20 of our students and graduates trained as peer counselors. Each participant has had one week of training as initiation and has periodic in-services to keep growing in this ministry. In fact, St. Al's serves as a site where students from other primary and secondary students in Kibera are trained – just one small indication of our outreach into Kibera beyond our own students and their families.

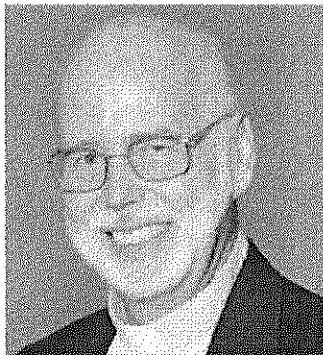
In addition to our enthusiasm about beginning building the permanent school new year, we are also excited about having Fr. Jim Collins, SJ, of the Chicago Province join us for first term of 2009. While I am officially the Chaplain at St. Al's, other responsibilities prevent me from giving much time to this work. As a full-time chaplain, Jim will join several dedicated sisters and lay teachers in serving the pastoral needs of our students.

I recognize that our world financial crisis can cause concern, uncertainty and serious hardship for many of you. I pray that all may move through this difficult period swiftly. Even in the present situation, I trust in the generosity of those who can to continue contributing financially to our work at St. Al's. And to any who cannot at this time, I trust even more in your prayers.

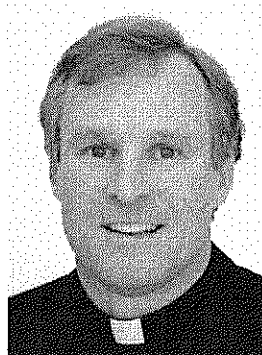
To stay in better contact, we are initiating a St. Al's Newsletter, which we intend to begin publishing quarterly in March 2009. We will send the newsletter out by e-mail. Please give us your e-mail addresses by sending to saintals@jesuits-chi.org. Just title the message "subscribe," and you'll receive the newsletter in March. You can also let your friends know about this newsletter.

We are remembering you very specially at St. Al's in our prayers as our celebration of Christmas approaches. Many blessings!

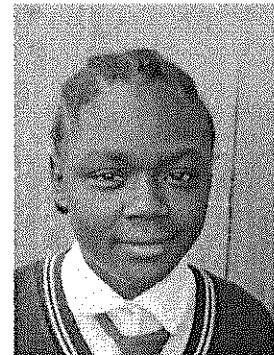
Yours sincerely,



Terry Charlton, SJ
Co-founder and Chaplain



Jim Collins, SJ
Chaplain



Diana Awino
St. Al's student

St. Aloysius Gonzaga High School
Nairobi, Kenya

P.S. Attached is a letter from St. Al's student Diana Awino. Your support helps Diana and her classmates have hope for a better future and the opportunity to learn, to love and to serve – thank you!

ST. ALOYSIUS SECONDARY SCHOOL.

P.O BOX 57421 - 00203

NAIROBI, KENYA

4TH FEB 2008.

Dear Donor.

I would like to take this golden opportunity to show my kindness for the support you've shown us as ST. Aloysius school.

I thank you for what you've been doing to me since I came to this school. Through you I have ~~received~~ ^{had} many changes in my life. I didn't have hope of learning but through you I am now in a secondary school. As per where we are, we are well being taught by the teachers, but the environment where our school is located is the big problem.

The environment is very noisy. The noise comes from the neighbors who have surrounded our school.

I don't know how to show my kindness to you for the money that you've contributed so that our school can be constructed somewhere else where there is a big space and free from the noise.

I would really appreciate if the school is constructed before the end of this year 2008.

I am really working hard to achieve my dreams in future. As per me I would like to be a teacher or a doctor in future so that I may help those who are helpless. Therefore I finish by saying that you continue being with that heart of helping those who are helpless and may God bless you and continue showering his blessings upon you.

Yours Faithfully
Diana Awino