

Dear friends and benefactors of Matany Hospital,

Also this year I am writing to you my Christmas and thank you letter during my annual retreat. These days of silence reminded me again how important our breath is. To become quiet – to let hectic go – to experience breath. Breath; this life giving current – the unconscious life preservation.

Breath and breathing are interlinked with life, are the strength which preserve life and steer it. This breath of life, the Spirit of God, of whom everything has existence, has given me during many days of my life a basis and support. However at times I have questioned this fact and even doubted. I have got feelings, laugh or weep, am happy or sad.

Since the very beginning people thought about this great source of the life giving breath, which is God's gift to us. Every year we celebrate Christmas anew: The remembrance of the birth of Jesus, the small, big miracle of Bethlehem. Also Jesus, the son of God, was in need of this breath, in order to actually live on this earth; for breathing is the unseen, human connection to God. All people are in connection with this spring. No one is forgotten, everyone receives this gift of breath. God is not far from us. He is in the real sense with us until the end of our days and surely beyond.

Now, during the time of Advent and Christmas we search for these moments of silence, moments of reflection, moments of letting go and becoming free, moments of quiet breathing, may be even moments of a new start. I breathe – you breathe and together we breathe in God.

Whenever I pass maternity ward I can hear the cry of newborn babies. It is a liberating and life giving breathing, in and out of this life breath. - The miracle of a new life and the cry for the creator.

At the end of this year we registered for the first time in the existence of the Hospital more than 1,000 deliveries in a year of which ¼ were through Caesarean Sections.



The Hepatitis E epidemic, which was diagnosed in November last year, is slowly fading away. More than 1,480 people were infected. The small orphan Emmanuel in the photo above, whose mother died soon after the delivery due to Hepatitis E, is doing well. One of our Doctors has adopted him.



In the course of the year, there were also some personnel changes. With Dr. John Bosco Nsubuga, we have got a competent obstetrician and gynaecologist who has accepted to become our new Medical Superintendent.

The ambulance and driver given to us by the Minister for Karamoja Affairs and First Lady of Uganda is still with us and is often called for emergencies.

By now the Hospital should have been connected to the national electricity grid. However, there is still the issue of getting an appropriate meter. Already in July our Technical Department had built a transformer house. In September our Austrian partners installed the transformer with stabiliser. We hope that latest by Christmas we shall be connected.

The extension of the administration building is going ahead. By Christmas I can move into the new office. There will be room also for a Deputy Administrator, a Human Resource Officer and our ICT-Team.

With the help of a visiting surgeon, we have now got a modern "Carestream machine". With this technical appliance, we are now able to produce digital x-Rays which can be displayed on the screens of all the wards through an internal network.

During a workshop, organised by UCMB (Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau) for all the Catholic Hospitals, Matany Hospital managed to achieve 97% for the accreditation, for which we are very proud of.

Christmas, the feast with the message of peace is so important in our times. Of our breath I wrote at the beginning, from the life giving breath. We need this comprehensive love of God, which lets us live.

We may hand in our worries and burdens while breathing out, to the one who understands us and accepts us the way we are. The birth of Jesus has changed the world by giving us hope and trust. With your prayers and offerings you have helped us to have a long breath and to remain at the side of the sick and the poor.

With this in mind I wish you all a joyous and blessed Christmas and many good wishes for the New Year.

Yours Br. Günther and Team