



Dear friends of St Kizito Hospital Matany,

We find ourselves once again in the time before Christmas. It's not so easy to describe the concept of "time." As children, it wasn't difficult for us to make ourselves small, to let time stand still, seemingly wasting it in order to devote ourselves to one thing with our full attention. Time was filled with discoveries, small wonders, and traces of God.



But before Christmas, the waiting time often felt long to us children. Adults seem to have a mature understanding of time. Therefore, children rely on their role models to practice patience. On the other hand, adults - often in meditation courses - need to relearn how to live completely in the here and now, just like children.

To celebrate Christmas, one must take time for the very small things. Because the miracle is the little child in the manger, God who made Himself very small. Therefore, it makes sense to sharpen our awareness for the trivial things during Advent. It is the time to notice and enjoy the small and inconspicuous daily wonders! We should at least occasionally let time stand still - Advent offers an opportunity for this. Even if there is truly much to do - not just seemingly, but really - if one wants to, it works: light a candle, pay a visit, enter a church for five minutes... and suddenly time becomes something wonderful. And even when we are forced into small waiting times - at the station, at a red light, at the waiting room - it is possible to consciously pause for that moment.

In a brief time-journey through the year, which is coming to an end, I would now like to take you back to Matany and bring some events to life again.

At the beginning of each year, it is necessary to quickly write the annual reports for the past year so that we can have more time and energy for the new. On February 10th, we once again celebrated the Day of the Sick - this year a day earlier than usual. We were reminded that the first treatment we need when sick, is human closeness filled with compassion and kindness. Caring for a sick person therefore means, first and foremost, taking care of the network of their relationships: with God, with others, with creation, and with oneself. As a role model, we looked to the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk 10:25-37), who became the neighbour by slowing down, taking time, and compassionately tending to the wounds of a sufferer.



In March, we received technical assistance from two electricians who were sent to us through SES Bonn. Wolfgang and Filbo, wonderful craftsmen and technicians, helped us systematically map and document the existing electrical circuits in the hospital and across the entire hospital area. This had become urgently needed due to the various expansions in recent years.

For many years, it has been our goal to make the hospital more independent from the power grid by installing larger solar systems to reduce electricity costs. Thanks to co-

financing from the Pro-Cent Initiative, DKA Austria, the State of Upper Austria, and others, a larger solar system with storage batteries, UPS, etc., is being procured to achieve this. A new room was created in the "Power-house" to put up these solar components and switchgear. The procurement is delayed due to high demand. We hope to begin installing the various components of this system by March of next year.



Electricians Julius, Augustine, Wolfgang und Filbo, left to right

In July, we began the construction of an intern doctors' hostel who will be practising with us in Matany. The building will consist of 6 residential units, a communal kitchen, a lounge, etc. The funds for this project come from an initiative of CUAMM (Doctors with Africa).

In August, we broke ground for the expansion and renovation of our operating theatre, which is being financed by a foundation from Italy, facilitated through our supporters in Milan. <https://youtu.be/85zoWiv3val?si=gBJhoH39nK2kXhW>. During these renovations, which will take several months, surgeries will take place in another room. The best-suited room identified and adapted for this purpose was the delivery room in the maternity ward. Normal births are assisted now in other rooms in the maternity ward.

In early August, we gratefully received a new ambulance, which we named "Edi" in memory of Edi Marat,

who passed away a year ago. His sister, Gudrun, made this purchase possible as a legacy of his taxi company.



Our new Ambulance „EDI“ being blessed

At the end of August, a container with various medical equipment and supplies arrived from Germany. This container had been packed with great care by our friends Dr. Friedrich Ullrich from Landsberg and Johann Öfele from Sontheim and sent on its way. We eagerly awaited, for example, the supply units and lighting for the neonatal intensive care unit, the expansion system for oxygen production, and components for the epoxy resin coating of the floors for the operating theatre, which we received at a discounted price from the manufacturer. Many of these supplies were installed in October/November during an onsite mission by Dr. Friedrich, funded by SES Bonn. Our staff were trained to utilise this new equipment and how to instal others after the completion of the theatre renovation.

Since September, we have seen a high occupancy rate in the hospital, well over 100%. Many children are sleeping with their mothers on mats on the floor. Thankfully, our people are experts in improvising and do not complain about the modest conditions. They are just happy to be here in Matany and receive good medical care.

On October 30, our new neonatal intensive care unit was officially opened.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?si=zp0uZA1QPo-ogLte&v=DWK39EFm5Ag&feature=youtu.be>

The Irish Ambassador (main funder) and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health (PS of MoH) were present. They were very impressed with the excellent work being done at the hospital.

For years, we have been considering acquiring an electronic patient management system, but it was always hindered by the cost. The Ministry of Health has now introduced such a system in the regional hospitals and has also made it available to us, through the advocacy of the PS from MoH. This is a significant step towards modernizing healthcare in Karamoja. The Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart is supporting us in acquiring the necessary hardware components.



At the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

For about two years now, the financial security of the hospital has been consistently at risk. Recently, we had a meeting with CRS (Catholic Relief Services). We discussed a concept aimed at securing the sustainability of the hospital. For this, we need substantial help. We hope that our hospital will be classified as deserving of funding, and that investments for the future will be secured, guaranteeing taking care of recurrent costs.

Donations - sometimes larger, often many smaller ones - are no longer enough to sustain us. Currently, we are only able to cover our expenses due to a substantial inheritance from a deceased priest from Italy - this is Providence. But soon, we will again have to worry and continue to trust in God's meditating help.



Thank you for the nursing care

With this, I return to the topic of "time." Good friends who are connected with us in Matany engage in various activities (markets, lectures, handicrafts, organising meals, or even coffee/tea afternoons) to generate support for our hospital. They offer their time and dedicate themselves for us, their fellow human beings.

I am grateful for your connectedness, even though I don't often reach out to you. However, this Christmas letter has informed you a little about some of our activities and events. Along with it, I offer a big thank you and our recognition for all your generous help.

Let us take time for each other, especially at Christmas. Let's stay in touch—with a letter, a phone call, a visit—and show each other our appreciation and unity. This morning, I was deeply touched by wonderful words from an acquaintance: "He who dives into the people... rises again with God." Yes, the commitment to people, being confronted with many needs, with sickness, poverty, and hunger, often wears on my substance. I can only bear it by handing it over to the one who sustains our life. It urges me to help, but often I don't know if the resources will be enough. But I continue trusting in Providence - that it will continue through the helping hands of so many.

Yours *Br. Arthur with Team*