

Name: **Fr. Colman Mruma**

From: The Diocese of Same in **Tanzania**

Ordained: 19/06/1980

Ministry: Worked in parishes in the diocese.

Studies: Studied at St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota

Taught in the National Seminary of Tanzania for eight and a half years.

Now on Sabbatical in the Archdiocese of Toronto and have served in a number of parishes.

I'm **now at St. Francis de Sales in Ajax**. Instead of the diocese spending money to send somebody all the way from Tanzania, they gave me that assignment.

The Mission Appeal is for assistance to buy food for the pre-school program centers in parishes and sub-parishes, that cater for children.

Thanks. God Bless

Fr. Colman

Mission at St. Elizabeth of Hungary: 16/17th Sept. for the DIOCESE OF SAME: Mitha ya thaa nne na nuthu na thaa thita

May I begin by thanking the pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Fr. Segjo for allowing me to come here this weekend to make this mission appeal on behalf of the Diocese of Same in Tanzania, and for being such a wonderful host since I arrived here

The church in the missions started to grow and flourish because of sacrifices and efforts made by both the missionaries and the indigenous people. Your contributions have always been invaluable in the building of the church around the world. Thank you so much

As I speak here today, I am sure some of you are well aware of the ferry that sank on the 10th of September, last week between the island of Zanzibar and Pemba, and more than two hundred people lost their lives. When something like that happens, we come to grips with our own sense of mortality and we realize how close that unknown hour can be. I ask you for your prayers for the families ^{that} ~~of those who~~ lost their loved ones, for the injured, survivors and their communities to get the strength to work together and to help each other through this difficult time.

I come to you today on behalf of the Diocese of Same, which is in the North Eastern part of Tanzania in East Africa. Tanzania is a tropical country and there are basically two seasons namely wet and dry. One of the ten poorest countries in the world, it is about 9/10th the size of Ontario with a population of around 44.4 million people

Since the Diocese of Same was created in 1978, the focus of the church has always been on trying to launch programs that could help the most vulnerable groups in the society namely women and children.

The major preoccupation of the people is small-scale farming. A very small percentage of the population depends on fishing.

But the weather has not often been kind to us. In spite of all the hard work and great effort, there is hardly enough rain for the crops. Farming is thus weakened by the arid conditions there. Most of the people are struggling to grow enough corn, cassava, bananas, beans and in some parts rice, to feed their families. Coffee, the main cash crop is on a rapid decline because of coffee, berry disease. The bugs just invade the inside of the trunk and the next thing you know, the tree starts to dry up. That is the end. The available pesticides, have very adverse side effects on

people's health, i.e. heart disease and respiratory problems

The food crop harvest can only stretch for a period of time during the year and the rest of the time is a question of trying to survive.

Most of the population lives on less than \$1 a day, and it's a daunting task for parents to feed their families and send their children to school—especially since many depend on subsistence farming.

Of particular concern for the diocese are the children especially the pre-school children who more often than not, have to wait sometimes for the whole day for their parents or their elder siblings to bring something back home. It tears your heart apart to see children crying not because they are just cranky, but because they are hungry and there is no food in sight.

That's the reason several years ago the diocese launched a campaign to erect pre-school centers, in the likes of day-care centers in the parishes and sub-parishes so that children could be provided with at least a meal a day. Parents enrol their children knowing that apart from the enticement of the daily meals they receive, a good foundation is being built for their education.

The building and running of these centers require a variety of resources

especially monetary, for buying food for the children. There are times when they have to close down because there is not enough food. While the communities make contributions, their efforts are significantly curtailed by the meagre resources available in terms of money and food, to the extent that in order to keep running, there is a need for a subsidy to cover the costs. And hence my visit to you today.

The Diocese of Same, just as the disciples of the Lord in the gospel, finds itself trapped in a grip of a fierce storms and it becomes hard to make headway. But then the Lord Jesus always appears walking on the waves in the form of his community like this one of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and says reassuringly, *'Do not be afraid. It is I'*.

That surely brings a brightness onto the faces of those children who will one day wake up in the morning, get ready to go to school happily because *they* know that someone stretched out a hand, and blessed and said, 'take this my child, my sister, my brother in the Lord and eat. Take this and drink _____,"