

UGANDA MARTYRS' ALOKOLUM NATIONAL MAJOR SEMINARY
P.O BOX 717, GULU (U)

April 24, 2023

FR. GUY BOGNON
PONTIFICIUM OPUS A S. PETRO APOSTOLO
Secretariatus Internationalis
Via di Propaganda, 1/C
00120 – VATICAN CITY

Dear Very Rev. Fr,

RE: LETTER OF APPRICIATION FOR THE GIFT OF THE 80KVA GENERATOR BOUGHT FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

With utmost joy and gratitude, we, the seminarians of Uganda Martyrs' Alokolum National Major Seminary, would love to express our warm greetings of the risen Lord to the fraternity of the Pontifical Society of St. Peter the Apostle.

Dear leadership of POSPA Rome, on behalf of the St. Peter the Apostle Movement Members of Alokolum Seminary, we are deeply overwhelmed with joy for the love you have always shown for vocations – worldwide. From the time Fr. Guy visited us in the beginning of February 2023, so that he was able to witness our community life of the seminarians together with our teaching and formation staff, in that way, the team of Fr. Guy was moved to sympathize with us by promising a big generator as the alternative power source to the existing very unstable power supply to our seminary from the national grid-Uganda.

Uganda Martyrs' National Major Seminary, Alokolum, is located about 8km west of Gulu town, off Gulu-Juba road, on Gulu - Alero road on about 60.30 acres of land (www.ugmartyrsem.ac.ug).

Her existing premises were first built by the Sacred Heart Brothers from the USA way back in 1953 as their Formation House for their African candidates. Eventually they handed over these premises by 1973 to the Uganda Episcopal Conference who straight away utilized it till now for the formation of their Ugandan African Clergy. Constructed way back in 1953 therefore, most of the current buildings are now either old or too small to accommodate the rising number of the seminarians that we enrol today.

Uganda Martyrs' National Major Seminary, Alokolum, suffered twice displacement by the destructive civil war of the Lord's Resistance Army of Joseph Kony which lasted over two decades [1986-2007]. The seminary had to be closed down temporarily and displaced twice between [1987-1992 and 2003-2005]. In all these two scenarios, Alokolum National Major Seminary was transferred to Katigondo National Major Seminary, in Masaka Diocese because of the heightened insecurity in Gulu Archdiocese during those decades of insurgency.

While Alokolum Seminarians and Formation Staff were away in "exile in Masaka Diocese", Alokolum seminary was in the meantime occupied by the Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs, i.e., refugees) by the war in North Uganda which had its epicenter in Gulu. To another extent, this caused a lot of destruction to the seminary buildings; for example, the Seminary Library was burnt down (the IDPs accidentally caused the fire at night); in all the other buildings the doors, the window glasses, door and window handles, walls, ceiling, etc. were damaged by the IDPs. The plumbing and electrical installations and furniture were also stolen or damaged. The seminary Truck was robbed by the fleeing soldiers. The entire period of the war actually brought a general state of deterioration to all the seminary structures and property. The seminary is now on its phase of continued re-construction and re-building.

Providentially, by 2007, the security situation improved, so that, Gulu and Northern Uganda generally become as peaceful as any other part of Uganda. But the population still grapples with the trauma and other effects of the destructive civil war. Fr. Guy can continue with his own experience of life while in Gulu last February 2023. That you came to us was indeed providential, and thanks for coming.

We have always experienced rampant power shortages, sometimes coming to a week. This brought about a drastic decline in the smooth follow up of the Academic and Formation Programs in the seminary, sometimes we ran out of piped water because of lack of the alternative power to pump for us water, we could not access our digital equipment like Computers, TV sets, printers, PowerPoint presentations/lectures etc. Just imagine therefore, how life becomes unbearable in the absence of this power supply for a full week! For us this meant the absence of water in the campus and this often forced us to go in search for water in the neighborhood.

In the absence of electricity and water, some non-resilient seminarians quitted formation since they could not handle the stress and struggles that come with the absence of electricity. We have occasionally lost vocations especially from the year one brothers who come and upon landing on this experience decide to curse life and pack their luggage back home. We have a full conviction that with the availability of this alternative power supply, Alokolum seminary from now shall become a conducive academic and formation institution. Our 80kVA generator is now fully installed and is able to run all the gadgets used in the seminary for pumping water, lighting the residences, powering computers and TVs, powering garage and workshop. Our assignments and course works besides, can now be handled efficiently.

For this and many other changes this generator has brought to our community life, we wish to thank Fr. Guy for shortlisting us for this need. We wish to thank the very generous souls, unknown to us though, who made it possible for the POSPA Office Rome to facilitate us. We shall continue in our daily morning and evening prayers, Eucharistic Celebrations and Devotions to pray for all those supporting POSPA and also continue to educate our Christians on the benefit of supporting POSPA. Still in a post-civil war recovery years, we wish to continue to be in partnership with you as we join hands to make this house of formation a beautiful place for the rising vocations in Uganda. Yours in Christ,



Juventine Odeke
Philosophy II
President St. Peter the Apostle
Alokolum Seminary.

cc. Very Rev. Fr. Charles Olweny, Rector, Uganda Martyrs' Alokolum National Major Seminary, P.O Box 717, Gulu City – Northern Uganda.