

ST NICHOLAS AFRICA FUND

SAVE AND SUPPORT REAL LIVES, LITERALLY WITHIN MINUTES!

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January 22, 2026

Reverend Clergy and Parish Council
St Nicholas Orthodox Church
San Anselmo, California

Re: **Africa Fund Annual Report for 2025**

Dear Fr Stephan, Brothers and Sisters
and all Africa Fund Contributors !

When I started this program 22 years ago, I was just responding to a couple of kids and their needs for school fees. Within a year or so, the population had grown to about 65 kids of all ages from preschool through university.

Despite various ups and downs, that number has more or less remained stable over the years, although on occasion, it can expand to about 100, as for instance, this last Christmas. Well, when you're feeding people, and the relatives show up, it's hard to say no!

But in general, we serve about 20 people in Congo, about 30 in Luweero (40 miles north of here), and 10 or 15 others scattered hither and yon, including a baby who has just completed her first week.

Responding to the needs of poor *people* is different than responding to the needs of "the poor". Poor *people*, one at a time, all of them personally known to me, with their sorrows and their joys, their fears and their beauty— I wish everybody could be as closely related. There would be no more poverty on earth.

Of course, this isn't the way to run an NGO. With an NGO you have to have application forms, criteria, exclusions. NGOs do a lot of good, and for sure I'd like to tap in to some of those grants! But my work here has never been on that level. And your support, for it has never been "institutional". But I depend on your support, because institutions don't recognize such *personal* or rather *person-to-person* efforts.

Andrew used to hang out in my office when I was here in 2005. He's a good guy, smart enough, and even an Orthodox believer. But there are no jobs, so he just subsists in a shack near the church. He looked really, really sick when I ran into him a couple months ago— and when, despite the hard climb up Luby Hill, he came to visit the other day— I saw that he was waaaay too thin and weak for his own good. Really, he's just hungry more often than not! So somehow I've managed to send him about \$1.50 a day since then, and he can at least eat. He didn't ask for that, but he looks better now, and he thanked me.

Another young man was living on the street— now there's a hard life and a bitter one, if you're young and without skills— you have no prospects, you're vulnerable, and you can't trust anyone. But with your help I've got him studying

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to be a chef and restaurant manager now. "I like school, Mr John. Thank you." He and another friend said that they'd made something for me, and they want to give it to me next Thursday. Whatever it is, i'll accept their gratitude in your name, because the help they're getting doesn't come from me!

All in all, it's been an eventful year for my clients— some have joined schools they never thought possible, gotten skills, succeeded at small businesses— and there have been deaths, life-threatening illnesses, unjust police arrests, accidents, and amputations!

But whatever happens, and from one day to the next it can be ordinary or serious, it's about *people*.

2025 Financial Report

Basically, the 2025 financial record consists of the information from PayPal and two bank accounts, the "official" account owned by Saint Nicholas Church, and a working account that I use for no purpose other than the Fund. All the money that comes into the Fund comes through Paypal, with the remainder always deposited directly to the official account by the Parish Treasurer.

I had to create the "working account" because the bank card for the official account expired and after months of trying to get WellsFargo to send a new one, I had to give up and start using a personal account. I must transfer from the official to the working account by phone, but PayPal can pay into either account directly. From the working account I then distribute to recipients either by mobile money from my Uganda phone, or by a money transfer service such as Taptap Send or Moneygram.

This year I have not tried to detail every dollar spent per individual recipient, because it is simply not possible to keep track of \$121,000 spent one or two or even ten dollars at a time— often under somewhat stressful conditions. The purposes are invariably education, food, medicine, or some other life support. But all funds without exception now pass through the working account, and from there they go directly via mobile money or money transfer service to the recipients. Overhead generally consists of the occasional ream of paper, or utility expenses (water, gas, phone, electricity, and internet).

The amount of money that I received this year was actually some \$7,000 less than last year, but since we started with about \$15,000 from a bequest at the end of 2024, the total distributed in 2025 was higher— \$121.6k as compared to \$114.0k. For information and comparison, I've placed the yearly figures for these past two decades below; and the 2025 financial record is attached.

As you can see, in the 21 years that this project has been operating, we've contributed over \$900,000 directly to people who just wouldn't have had much chance without us. God willing, I guess next year we'll break a million. That's actually huge, even if at \$1.50 at a time, you might hardly notice.

Missionary Relief Fund

As you know, I had a stroke at the end of August, and the parish very generously came to my aid with a "missionary relief fund". I really appreciated this because it was designated not for the Saint Nicholas Africa Fund but for the

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missionary personally (that'd be me). This money is sent to my personal account, so it doesn't appear in this report—except that I too contribute to the Africa Fund, and any missionary relief that I don't spend on myself appears as part of my own personal contribution to the Fund.

About the stroke, by the way, I'm happy to say that by your holy prayers, my walking is almost back to normal, but I do need to do a lot more work with my right hand and arm.

Here are the figures for the past twenty-one years:

2004	\$ 3,600.00	2012	21,577.00	2020	54,894.00
2005	12,000.00	2013	21,786.00	2021	79,518.00
2006	12,000.00	2014	25,218.00	2022	82,125.00
2007	12,000.00	2015	22,122.00	2023	91,808.00
2008	11,112.00	2016	29,472.00	2024	114,002.00
2009	24,048.00	2017	41,289.00	2025	121,603.00
2010	21,416.00	2018	35,360.00		-----
2011	28,014.00	2019	39,815.00		\$ 904,779.00

I sometimes close my newsletters by saying, ***Jesus Christ himself thanks you.***

I really believe that, and I believe you do too.

And for *sure*, a *lot* of Africans thank you and pray for you, as well.

So may God bless us all and help us to love people even more.

And please pray for us.

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John Burnett,
Director

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Financial Report for 2025

Paypal Activity

93,814.26 Total Money In, after fees
-93,795.15 Total Money Out, after fees
19.11 12/31/2025 Ending Balance

St Nicholas Africa Fund Account (6705)

15,533.80 1/1/25 Beginning balance
75,856.67 Total 2025 Credits, excluding beginning balance
-91,384.32 Total 2025 Expenditures
6.15 12/31/25 Ending Balance

Africa Fund Working Account (6501)

243.90 1/1/25 Beginning balance
121,959.40 Total 2025 Credits, excluding beginning balance
-121,603.26 Total 2025 Expenditures
600.04 12/31/25 Ending Balance