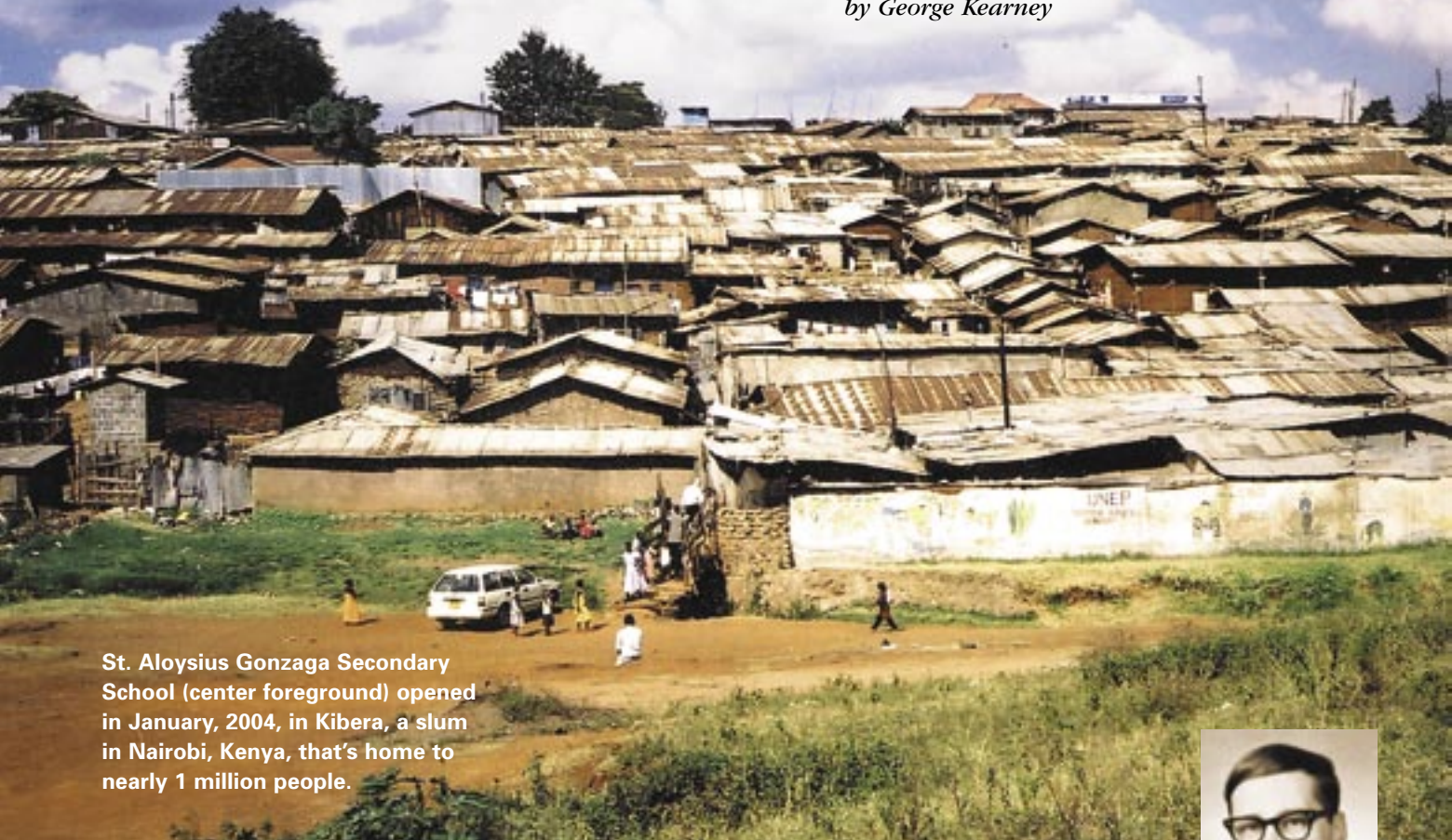


# IN AFRICA

by George Kearney



St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School (center foreground) opened in January, 2004, in Kibera, a slum in Nairobi, Kenya, that's home to nearly 1 million people.



Fr. Charlton graduated from Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in 1966

The teachers had to send George home from school again. Though his teachers and the folks who were sponsoring his education agreed that George was a student of excellent potential, he was failing. His academic performance was slipping. And his misbehavior had become such a disruption that his teachers had no choice but to send him home.

What they didn't know, according to Fr. Terry Charlton, SJ, a Jesuit priest from Indianapolis, IN (and originally a member of the Chicago Province), was that George, whose mother was

working as a prostitute, was often chased from their one-room house without even having had time to eat. George's father had died from complications stemming from AIDS, and his mother was HIV positive.

George's story, unfortunately, is hardly unique in Africa, where HIV/AIDS is systematically decimating the population. In 2001, UNAIDS estimated there were a total of 28.5 million people living with HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa, and 2.2 million AIDS related deaths. Nine percent of the adult population was estimated to be infected. In Kenya, where Fr. Charlton has been assigned since 1990, the situation is even worse.

There are 2.3 million infected adults, roughly 15% of the population.

It's not uncommon for both parents to die from AIDS related illnesses. As a result, UNAIDS reports, there are currently 11 million "AIDS orphans" in Sub-Saharan Africa. Worldwide, there are 14 million.

Fr. Charlton, a 1966 graduate of Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory, went to Africa from the Chicago Province in 1988 to be a professor of theology but, as the epidemic has worsened, he and the lay collaborators with whom he works have responded to

**FR. TERRY CHARLTON, SJ,  
OPENS A HIGH SCHOOL  
FOR HIV/AIDS ORPHANS  
IN NAIROBI, KENYA**



the need by focusing on HIV/AIDS related ministry. In 1990, after spending two years in a rural spiritual center in Ghana, he was assigned to teach systematic theology to Jesuit scholastics at Hekima College in Nairobi. Prior to the opening of the Jesuit Theologate in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire (see adjoining sidebar), nearly every Jesuit in Africa studied theology at Hekima.

A week after his arrival in Nairobi, Fr. Charlton was invited to become the chaplain for a Christian Life Community (CLC) that had been formed a year earlier. He accepted and soon was appointed CLC's national chaplain. The purpose of CLC

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### CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT CHANGE IN A CONTINENT WITH URGENT NEEDS

In a letter sent to every Jesuit in the world on January 1, 2003, Fr. General Peter Hans Kolvenbach, SJ, reiterated that Africa is one of five "apostolic preferences" of the worldwide Society of Jesus. Africa is a continent with countless urgent needs. It is largely economically depressed. Civil wars threaten stability. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is killing millions of people every year and leaving behind millions of orphans. Almost every African country remains mired in virtually insurmountable debt, which precludes investing in the institutional changes that will spur economic development.

Most of us are familiar with the images of Africa that often filter into the United States. We see children wielding guns, and adults swollen from hunger. These images move us, but often our response is, "What can we do? It's so far away. How would we even begin to help?" For centuries Jesuit missionaries have gone to places where the need is great, going when and where others with good intentions can't. Your generous support has made the work of these Jesuits possible.

The Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus assigned Fr. Terry Charlton, SJ, to Africa in 1988 (see main story) and Fr. Dick Baumann, SJ, will begin a new ministry there in August (see sidebar on pg. -21). In addition, the Chicago Province has, in response to Fr. General's request for support, agreed to partner with the nine other American provinces (and one from Upper Canada) to raise half a million dollars for the continued development of the Jesuit Theologate in Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire. We're hoping to raise \$100,000 from our Province for this important ministry.

"Wait!" you may say, "a theology school? I want to help feed the hungry or provide medicine for the suffering." If that's what you want, then investing in this school is actually one of the best contributions you can make. The theologate, which opened in fall 2003, is only the second one on the entire continent. Fortunately, Jesuit vocations in Africa are increasing at a rapid rate. Currently there are almost 1,500 Jesuits, and nearly half of them are novices and scholastics preparing for ordination. In a few years, once they've been ordained, these Jesuits will open schools like St. Aloysius Gonzaga in Nairobi, Kenya. They'll care for those suffering with HIV/AIDS. Through education and social work, they'll attempt to lay the foundation for economic and social development that can begin to make a real difference in Africa.

This school is a critical piece of the formation of African Jesuits. And African Jesuits will be a critical piece of the formation of a new Africa.

If you'd like to make a contribution, please contact me at 800-922-5327 or [jeff@jesuits-chi.org](mailto:jeff@jesuits-chi.org). You can also make a contribution on our website at [www.jesuits-chi.org/partnership](http://www.jesuits-chi.org/partnership) or by using the enclosed envelope.

—JEFF SMART



Jeff Smart,  
Director of Major  
Gifts

in Kenya, Fr. Charlton explains “is to help its members, lay people, be better Christians through the ethos of Ignatian Spirituality and the support of a like-minded community, to help them move beyond themselves in personal and communal mission. CLC influences members about how they can witness a reflective and committed way of being Catholic to others, and spurs its members to live their lives in service of others.” When Fr. Charlton began his work with CLC,

the only communities were in Nairobi. Today, there are 350 members in 10 of Kenya’s 29 dioceses.

In the late 1990’s CLC members in Kenya expressed a desire to have a center out of which they could share more broadly and generally with other Christians the experiences of Ignatian Spirituality and Christian mission they’d received through CLC. Because of CLC’s growth, Fr. Charlton, at that time scaled back his teaching load and, in 2000, moved to have his

major work be with CLC. In explaining this change, he says “My sense was that I would be trying in a variety of ways to put into practice the implications of the kind of theology I’d been trying to teach.”

Later that year, CLC Kenya opened the Zaidi Center, a non-residential spiritual center in Nairobi. It serves as CLC’s national headquarters as well as a CLC outreach that Fr. Charlton says “tries to reach people where they are, in parishes, in schools, and

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### BR. TONY KREUTZJANS, SJ, TRAVELS TO AFRICA TO MINISTER TO HIV/AIDS SUFFERERS.

Br. Anthony R. Kreutzjans, SJ, was making a retreat two years ago and thought to himself, ‘What are you going to do when you turn 65? What do you want to do with the rest of your life?’ And then the idea of going to Africa came to him. “I thought ‘O boy are you a dreamer’,” says Br. Kreutzjans. “But when I got home from the retreat, the idea stayed with me.” And it has stayed with him since, prompting his upcoming, six-month journey to Africa to minister to HIV/AIDS patients, to learn more about the disease, and, he hopes, to be inspired by the work taking place there.

Br. Kreutzjans has been in the HIV/AIDS field for over 13 years, working at the Core Center, an HIV primary care

facility in Chicago. He’s helped procure US grants to fund the center, and has worked with several patients throughout his many years. He interviews Core Center’s patients, helps them find social service resources, and assigns them case-managers. In Africa, however, the circumstances will be much different. “Over there, the environment will not be as controlled. I haven’t been there yet, of course, but there is probably a lot of denial, there is persecution of people who are sick, and there is a lot of fear,” says Br. Kreutzjans. “Because I’ve been in the field for so many years, I don’t have that kind of fear in me. And that’s part of what’s calling me there.” And it has been calling him for quite some time.

For two years, Br. Kreutzjans has been preparing for this trip. His persistence has paid off, and despite numerous obstacles, he’ll depart for Africa later this fall. During his six-month journey he will visit three cities, each for a two-month period. The first will be Usaka, Zambia, where he will work with 41 parishes and many volunteers who are visiting the sick, bringing them food and medications, as well as cleaning their houses.

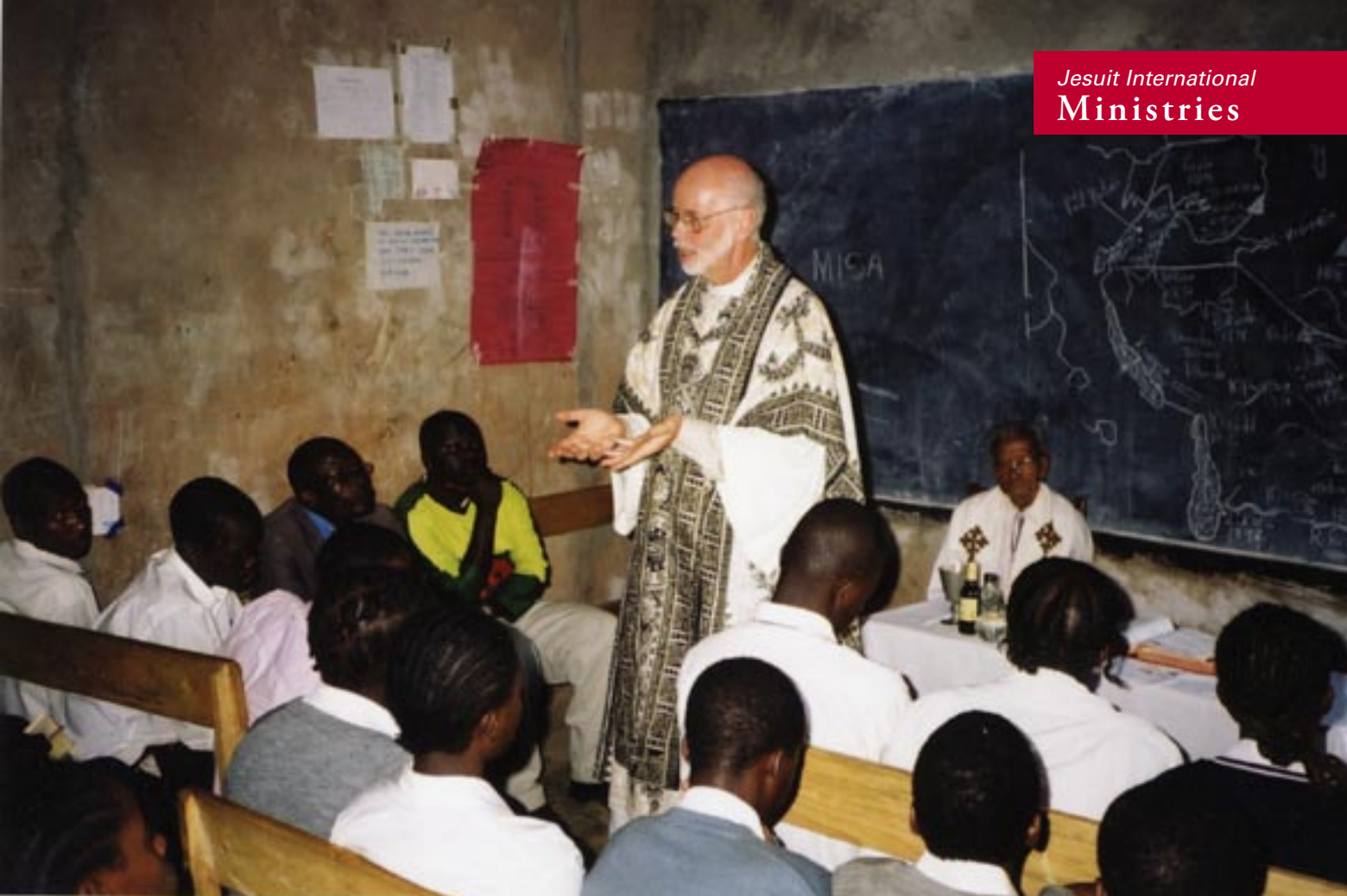
The second will be Kampala, Uganda, where there are mobile home-care teams that go from Catholic hospitals to bring medicine and food to the sick. In Kampala, this has been one of the factors lowering the infection rate of HIV. In 1990, the HIV rate was around 30%, and it has been reduced to 10%.

Lastly, he will visit Benin City, Nigeria, which needs the most help of all. “The virus reached Benin City later than the two other cities,” says Br. Kreutzjans. “So they are not set up the way the other cities are. They would love to see a program started to begin to control and help the infected.”

Br. Kreutzjans is looking forward to beginning his journey in Africa, yet he will miss his support system here. “It’s like I’m walking away from everything I have ever known, so why am I going? I’m just going to go, to learn, and to be inspired,” says Br. Kreutzjans. “The Lord is leading me, I am going, and they are welcoming me! I cannot wait to go!” —AMY HUDEC



Tony Kruetzjans, SJ, with Peter McLoyd, a patient and staff member at CORE, an HIV Primary Care Center in Chicago, will visit Africa to learn about HIV/AIDS in Africa and minister to those suffering from the disease.



Fr. Charlton celebrates the Feast of the Annunciation during St. Al's monthly Eucharist.

in other institutions."The opening of the Zaidi Center galvanized Nairobi's CLC, and they began considering opportunities for a more corporate form of service.

Early in 2002, Nairobi's CLC formed the Hands of Love Society (HOLS) in response to the escalating HIV/AIDS epidemic. HOLS performed AIDS ministry, mostly in Kibera, a Nairobi slum where somewhere between 800,000 and 1 million people live in destitute poverty. By 2003, HOLS, which is open to non-CLC members, had raised enough money to send twelve students whose lives had been affected by HIV/AIDS to high school. George, the student highlighted at the beginning of this story, was one of those twelve. In mid-December, at the end of the first school year, HOLS members were frustrated by the many limitations they encountered when attempting to support their

students. They'd also learned there would be a four-fold tuition increase at the school where they were sending the students. HOLS had hoped to reach out to more students, but the tuition increase would make it difficult just to continue supporting the original twelve.

In December, 2003, in response to these issues, Joseph Oganda, director of HOLS, said to Fr. Charlton, "The only thing to do is begin our own secondary school."

"I was profoundly struck by his words," Fr. Charlton recalls, "struck as by lightning. I immediately felt, 'Joe is right' but my breath was taken away."

The academic year in Africa begins in January. Mid-December is not the optimal time to begin planning the opening of a school. Despite that, Fr. Charlton and HOLS decided to go for it. "I spent a few moments in prayer and experienced a call to step out in

faith," Fr. Charlton recalls. "It seemed to me that the project was risky and could fail, but there was so much possibility for good."

The next month and a half was a forward-moving whirlwind of discernment with the proper committee in CLC, writing funding proposals, looking for rental space for the school, and other practical measures that usually take months, if not years, to organize. "Most schools open by January 5, so we knew we had to be up and running by mid-January," Fr. Charlton recalls. In hindsight it seems a thoroughly unrealistic goal.

But, thanks to a grant from the Chicago Province and its benefactors, that covered startup funds for the school, they succeeded. St. Aloysius Gonzaga Secondary School opened in space rented from a grade school in Kibera on January 19, 2004. The school took its name from Aloy-

sus Gonzaga, SJ, who in 1591 left the relatively safe Roman College, where he was studying to become a priest, to care for victims of the plague in the streets of Rome. He caught the plague himself and died at age 23. He is the patron saint of AIDS sufferers and those caring for them.

The school was overwhelmed with applications as soon as it announced it would open. Ultimately they accepted 21 sophomore students and 37 freshmen. It was a considerable financial stretch to absorb that many freshmen, but Fr. Charlton said there was a desire to keep as many as possible out of the applicant pool of 200. All students at the school are AIDS affected; they've either been orphaned by AIDS or have parents currently infected with HIV/AIDS.

The school is housed in two simple classrooms, a teacher's workroom, and a combination storeroom and principal's office. The faculty is made up of one principal, five full-time teachers, and three part-time teachers. The teachers, all of whom have bachelor's degrees in education, are volunteers. They receive only a small monthly stipend in exchange for their labors. The school operates under the same principles of



Fr. Charlton meets with members of CLC and HOLS who served on the committee responsible for opening St. Al's. Joseph Oganda, director of HOLS, is at farthest right (in blue shirt).

Ignatian pedagogy that apply to Jesuit high schools in the United States and around the world.

St. Al's first year is only half-over, but already Fr. Charlton is talking about the future. "Now that we're operational, we want to see how we can develop St. Al's into a fine secondary school," he says. "Our vision involves providing an educational

environment and other supports that can do much to compensate for the deficit of living as AIDS affected in a slum environment. We wanted St. Al's to be a place of hope for our students and the surrounding community, and we do see hope on the faces of our students."

Fr. Charlton says it's been a blessing to have the opportunity to share the Ignatian spirituality to which he was first exposed at Brebeuf and which is so much a part of his life with many through his work with CLC members, and now St. Al's students. He speaks readily of "fostering the ethos of Ignatian spirituality." Realizing that many non-Jesuits may not understand this language, however, he adds, "What do I mean? To know and experience that each is loved by God as so special. Can we



Fr. Charlton, says it's been a blessing to share Ignatian Spirituality with the St. Al's community. He's shown here with Humphry Visiga, the school's principal (in dark suit), Sr. Luciana, one of the teachers, some students, and a group of local children.

*Fr. Charlton points out that St. Al's couldn't have been opened without the generosity of the Chicago Province and its benefactors. If you'd like to make a contribution to St. Al's or the Jesuits' Apostolic Fund—which often makes projects like these possible—please contact Mike Murray or Jeff Smart at 800-922-5327 or visit [www.jesuits-chi.org/partnership](http://www.jesuits-chi.org/partnership).*

have teachers committed to interact with these disadvantaged students in ways that speak of the dignity of each and his or her uniqueness? If Ignatian spirituality assures us that each of us is personally called to follow Christ and to make a contribution that no one else can make, can

we form our students to believe that each is invited to a journey which will enable him or her to realize a potential that can be utilized to accomplish great good for others?"

Some 50 years ago, in Indianapolis, The Chicago Province had opened a new high school, Brebeuf Jesuit Pre-

paratory, and a group of Jesuits led by Fr. Bill Schmidt, SJ, were contemplating the same questions. Terry Charlton was a member of Brebeuf's first graduating class. Just as his teachers once hoped, he's accomplishing great good for others, and preparing them to do the same. ■

## IN AFRICA

### FR. DICK BAUMANN, SJ, TO TRAIN YOUNG JESUITS IN AFRICA

*Jesuit International*  
**Ministries**

Former Provincial Richard J. Baumann, SJ, will begin a new chapter in his ministry as a Jesuit when he departs in July for Africa. He'll be assigned to Arrupe College in Harare, Zimbabwe, a four-year, English-speaking First Studies Program for Jesuit brothers and scholastics who have completed their initial two years of novitiate formation. "I feel at ease and at peace with my assignment to our Arrupe College," says Fr. Baumann. "Having explored this possibility on site in Africa and offered it to the provincial's judgment, I receive this mission within the context of faith, as the next episode of my Jesuit vocation."

In January 2003, Fr. General named Africa as one of the five apostolic preferences for the worldwide society. As Fr. Baumann concluded his time as provincial, he asked to explore this new mission not only for this reason but for a variety of other ones as well. He has always had an appreciation for the gifts of the African communities, but more importantly feels there's a major need in some African provinces for Jesuits to assist with the formation of younger men.

At Arrupe College, Fr. Baumann will work as a "spiritual father" and staff point-person for formation. Specifically, his duties will involve spiritual direction, overseeing the students' apostolic ministries, retreats, and offering seminars on Jesuit life. His as-



Dick Baumann, SJ, with parishioners from St. Joseph's, a Jesuit parish in Benin City, Nigeria, in 1991, has long had an appreciation for the gifts of African communities. He'll begin a new ministry in Zimbabwe this August.

signment begins on August 1, and will continue, he hopes, for a good number of years. "I look forward to sharing the Ignatian grace of the Society's life and mission with Jesuits who are in the early stages of their vocational journeys. It'll be a satisfaction and joy to try to pass on to these men something of what others have given me along my Jesuit way."

As much as Fr. Baumann is looking forward to his new assignment, there's also much he will miss here in the U.S., though a general policy allows for him to visit the home province every two to three years. "What I'll miss the most is my immediate involvement with our Chicago Province

and keeping up in a closer way with the province's yearly life and activities," he says.

There will be many challenges for Fr. Baumann. Not only will he be living in a different country, he will have to adjust to new cultural traditions, accept more limited resources, and become engaged with the struggles of the African people. Yet he feels the many challenges he'll face are outweighed by the rewards. "I'll surely be broadened in my outlook and experience with respect to the world, the Church, and the Society of Jesus. It'll be an education and an adventure. In the end, the people that I come to know will be the most blessed gift of all."

—AMY HUDEC