

**SOROTI CATHOLIC DIOCESE.**  
**ST. BENEDICT CATHOLIC PARISH - AMURIA,**  
**P.O. BOX 36, SOROTI-UGANDA.**

**Brief History of St. Benedict's Parish Amuria:**

St. Benedict Amuria Catholic Parish was created out of St. Patrick Parish Madera in 1941 with Rev. Fr. Raymond Griffin, a Mill Hill Missionary, as the first Parish Priest. From that time to date, many priests have served in the position of Parish Priest and who in turn have been assisted by many curates. These have contributed in different ways towards the development of the Parish both spiritually and in terms of infrastructure. The Parish, by the time of creation, covered a very big area but with time, a total of six parishes have been created out of it.

**Population:**

Before the creation of St. John the Evangelist Parish in August 2019, the Catholic population was twenty thousand and ninety one (20,091). Since then no census has been carried out but from the previous figures of the then census, we can estimate the population now to be at around thirteen thousand (13,000).

**Parish Structure:**

The Parish is divided into six zones and twenty-six out stations. Each zone has a zonal coordinator. He coordinates the pastoral programs of the churches making up his zone. Each outstation has an area Catechist who in turn may have an assistant. These take care of the spiritual needs of the Christians. The Parish has two Grade III catechists, four Grade II catechists and 36 Grade I catechists. 23 of the 26 outstations are permanent, and 3 are temporal with grass-thatched roofs.

**Pastoral Achievements:**

- Pastoral Programs are faithfully fulfilled; the Christians are therefore spiritually nourished.
- Many church buildings have with external support from **Little Way Association** been raised to a permanent state.
- Ongoing catechesis of Christians through seminars, Conferences and during adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
- Establishment of Basic Christian Communities.
- Creation of new outstations.

**Pastoral Challenges:**

- Many, as noted above, of the pastoral agents (Catechists), are untrained.

- Lack of proper facilitation of the pastoral agents; most of them (97%) are humble peasants.
- Some Churches lack land for expansion or for projects.
- With the majority of the Christians being low incomes (peasants), it is thus difficult for them to fund or support parish projects.

### **The Parish Health Unit:**

The Health Unit was started in 1983. It was interrupted by insecurity due to cattle rustling (1985-1988) and so was closed. It was re-opened in 1989 but only to close again the following year because of financial problems. It was again re-opened in 2003 and Government under the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) helped with funds that built a house currently used as an Out Patient Department, a ward as well as a maternity. It is managed by a qualified staff comprising of: a clinical officer, a comprehensive nurse, an enrolled nurse, an enrolled midwife, two laboratory technicians, and an accountant.

**Health Unit Mission Statement:** “To promote life to the full and to heal.”

**Health Unit Vision:** “To offer a healthy and productive life for all individuals, their families and the communities in our catchment population.”

**Health Unit Core Values:** “Team work, Confidentiality of patients’ information, Privacy and Non-discrimination.”

**Health Unit Aim:** “To provide health promoting, and disease preventive and curative services to the community in our catchment area.”

#### **The Health Unit Staff:**

<b>Name of Staff</b>	<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
1. Ms. Betty Angeno	Clinical Officer	The incharge
2. Mr. Samson Okiria	Comprehensive Nurse	Nursing services
3. Ms. Catherine Alejo	Enrolled Nurse	Nursing Services
4. Mr. Isaac Ojok	Laboratory Technician	Laboratory services
5. Mr. Julius Ojagal	Laboratory Technician	Laboratory services
6. Ms. Grace Achom	Nursing Assistant	Nursing services
7. Ms. Esther Abulo	Accountant	Books of Accounts
8. Ms. Damali Titin	Enrolled Midwife	Ante and Post Natal Services
9. Mr. David Ejolu	“Askari”	Security
10. Mr. John Robert Ejagu	“Askari”	Security

#### **Successes of the Unit:**

- It has helped in providing treatment to many people suffering from common sicknesses like Malaria, Pneumonia, and typhoid e. t. c.
- It has provided both ante and post natal services to mothers.

- It has helped in providing first aid services.
- It has provided employment.
- It provides outreach services to far places.
- It provides immunization services to children.
- It offers services to HIV positive people and other related services.
- It offers referral services to patients for further treatment.

**Challenges:**

- Lack of enough staff houses for all the workers.
- Lack of a proper ante and post natal section or wards.
- Lack of wards for children, men and women.
- Financial constraints that leave workers minus salaries for some time or months.
- Having a general pit latrine instead of separate ones for staff, men and women.
- Lack of enough beds and mattresses for Children and Adults.
- Lack of separate bathrooms for the different sexes and maternity section.
- Low incomes for staff remuneration and the purchase of essential drugs.
- Lack of proper lighting system.
- Lack of an office space and the store for drugs.
- Lack of water in the facility.

**Parish Schools:**

**i. Nursery Schools:**

Twelve nursery schools have been opened in out stations at the request of the parents and in line with Government plan. The parents, besides taking care of their children’s welfare, pay a small amount of school fees. This money takes care of the teacher’s salaries.

<i>No</i>	<i>Name of School</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>			<i># Teachers</i>
		<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>	
1	St. Peters Opakwi	18	26	<b>44</b>	2
2	St. John Baptist Alaso	26	22	<b>48</b>	2
3	St. Philip Akamurei	10	30	<b>40</b>	2
4	St. Joseph’s Kobwin Akore	32	36	<b>68</b>	3
5	St. Stephen Akore	43	54	<b>97</b>	3
6	St. Peter’s Apungure	18	30	<b>48</b>	2
7	St. Benedict’s Amucu	42	30	<b>72</b>	3
8	St. Mark’s Odoon	70	60	<b>130</b>	3
9	St. John’s Akoromit	20	25	<b>45</b>	3
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>23</b>

**ii. Primary Schools:**

The Parish has 11 day and mixed primary schools. Four of these were started by the missionaries and seven by the community on Church land. The schools are spread all over the Parish and provide primary education to over 8,000 children. The Government policy of Universal Primary Education (UPE) has enabled nearly all school going children to be at school.

No	Name of School	Enrollment as per 2020		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1	Acia Primary School	170	189	350
2	Ajaki -Asinge Primary School	236	268	506
3	Akamurei Primary School	560	571	1,131
4	Akisim Primary School	228	275	503
5	Akore Primary School	618	673	1291
6	Akoromit Primary School	468	479	947
7	Alaso Primary	188	221	409
8	Amucu Primary School	638	647	1,285
9	Asamuk Primary School	324	326	650
10	Odoon Primary School	611	631	1,242
11	Takaramiem Primary School	208	244	452
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,249</b>	<b>4,524</b>	<b>8,773</b>

***Successes of Primary Education:***

- It has produces a number of well-educated citizens who are serving at different walks of life in and out of the country.
- It has facilitated effective civilization of the beneficiary community.
- It has rendered at least 60% of the community literate.

***Challenges:***

- Lack of enough classrooms to accommodate the high numbers of pupils.
- The low ratio of teacher-to-pupils, which has affected the quality of learning.
- Lack of adequate accommodation for teachers.
- Absence of midday meals for most learners.
- Absenteeism on the part of learners.
- Lack of enough teaching and learning materials.
- Most schools are day, and so pupils do not have a good learning environment.
- Abject poverty in most families, making it very difficult for parents to support the education of their children.
- High rate of dropping out from school.

**iii. The Secondary School:**

The Parish has one Secondary School, named St. Benedict Secondary School Amucu, started in 2008 by the then Parish Pastoral Council. The school started on the renovated block of the former Mission Farm School that had been closed earlier in the 1980s because of armed insurgency. This block was first used to accommodate the Primary Seven pupils who had been displaced by the 2007 floods and yet were about to sit for their Primary Leaving Examinations.

The School had humble beginnings with a total of sixteen students, some of whom even dropped out. The number has however yearly kept on increasing. Today the school has over 900 students.

***The School Motto:*** “Victoria per Deum” that is to say, “Victory through God.”

***The School Mission:*** “To provide all round education so as to produce brilliant and vibrant students who can comply with the dynamic society for self-reliance.

***The School Vision:*** Spiritually, socially and intellectually developed students for better socio-economic status quo.”

**STUDENTS ENROLLMENT 2020:**

<i>Class</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
Form One	135	146	281
Form Two	113	97	210
Form Three	109	129	238
Form Four	102	92	194
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>923</b>

***The School Successes:***

- It has provided secondary school education to Primary leaving pupils, both near and far.
- It is relatively affordable to the poor peasant parents.
- It has continued to record annual growth in students enrollment.
- It has grown in terms of infrastructure.
- There is a great improvement in performance and discipline.

***Challenges:***

- Most students do not pay the fees in time.
- Some students cannot afford fees.
- Absence of science laboratories for science subjects namely: Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Agriculture.
- Lack of piped water or bore hole water within the school compound.
- Not enough accommodation for learners (students) within the school compound.
- There is no good lighting system.
- There is a need for a well-stocked library.

- There is still need for more classrooms to accommodate the growing numbers of learners and for the planned A' Level section.

### **The Parish Personnel:**

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. Stephen Michael Iriso – Iwolingat.

The Assistant Priest and Director of St. Benedict Secondary School: Rev. Fr. Deogratias Opure.

### **The Convent:**

The Parish has a Convent attached to it, with two Nuns of the Congregation of “The Little Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi” of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Order. Both Nuns are teachers in the Mission Primary School. The House Superior, Sr. Maria Goretti Nabwiire, is Head Teacher the Primary School.

### **Vocations:**

The Parish has had a number of young men and women joining the priesthood and religious life. After the creation of other parishes, Amuria Parish now remains with three diocesan priests and seven Religious women born of the Parish. There is a Deacon to be ordained on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2020, and a Seminarian to be raised to the rank of Deacon. There are also postulants belonging to different congregations in formation.

### **The Parish Pastoral Council:**

The Parish Council comprises 12-members, and has four working committees, namely:

- The Parish Council Finance and Planning Committee.
- The Parish Council Social Services committee.
- The Parish Council Lay Apostolate Committee.
- The Parish Council Pastoral Committee.

### **The Lay Apostolate Movements / Associations:**

The Parish has two lay Movements, namely, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the Legion of Mary. They both aim at strengthening faith and promoting practical Christian living within the Christian community. Each movement has its own programs and leadership structures from outstation to Parish levels. The Young Christian Students (YCS) and the Legion of Mary are established and active at St. Benedict Secondary School. They play an important role in inculcated Christian values and charisms among students.

### **Parish Projects:**

Amuria Parish is blessed with a huge size of land, which is already surveyed and titled. The land is fertile fit for Agriculture. There is a need for the Parish to acquire a tractor in order to make

maximal use of this land. However, the low Parish incomes cannot enable the Parish to procure a tractor.

Nonetheless, the Parish is currently running the following projects:

- Rearing cows.
- Development of the Health Unit infrastructure.
- Building of outstation churches.
- Development of Schools, especially the Secondary school.

**Challenges:**

- The main challenge to all these efforts is the low income due to the poverty of the majority of our local donors – the Christian community.

**Parish Work Plan:**

The Parish Pastoral Council has, in plan, to:

- Find ways of raising money to meet the various needs of the Parish.
- Survey other church lands and process their land titles.
- Strengthen the Basic Christian Communities.
- Establish a vocational institute to empower young people with skills for improved income generation, and to economically strengthen the laity in general.
- Continue with construction of outstation churches.
- Open up more new outstations to take pastoral services closer especially to the old and disabled.
- Construct a Parish hall and youth center.
- Purchase a parish computer so as to improve on records management.
- Plant more trees in the parish land and outstations.
- Put more attention on children and youth apostolate.
- Lobby for a tractor so as to exploit the land and raise income for the parish for development purposes.
- Construct a grotto to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- Train the Parish pastoral workers.
- Lobby for development of the Health Unit.
- Improve on the education institutions' infrastructure, academic performance and spirituality.

COMPILED BY:  
REV. FR. STEPHEN IRISO  
PARISH PRIEST  
+265 772 331671.

MR. DAVID ERAPU  
CHAIRPERSON PASTORAL COUNCIL  
+256 784 660301.



The Parish Main Church



Amuria Parish House



Ordination liturgical dance, 2019



Amuchu Health Centre



St. Benedict Secondary School



Students of St. Benedict S.S. in Class



Pupils of Amuchu Mission School in Class



Parish cattle rearing Project