

MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA

(WHITE FATHERS)



Notre Dame de la Garde

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Foreword from the Editor.

Since our last Magazine issue in May so many things have happened.

On a world level there has been so much violence, often apparently pitting Christians against Muslims. Bombs and shootings in France, Belgium, Germany, the Middle East, many places in Africa....



Fr. Michael Heap, MAfr

There has been an increase of racial tension in America with black men shot by police and then white policemen targeted by a black gunman.

There is uncertainty in the UK with "Brexit". Will it bring more independence or more

isolation and xenophobia, more prosperity and equality, or more poverty?

Are there signs of hope? Yes, there are!

In July there was a huge gathering of young people in Krakow, Poland, who gathered to meet and celebrate with the Pope. Groups and parishes from all over the world came together to say, "Yes, we have faith. Yes, we believe. Yes, we are in God's loving hands and can build a better world". We will print articles of this hope in the next issue.

Naïve optimism? No, because the Son of God who allowed himself to be killed for love of us, is the same Son who was raised from the dead 2 days later. Only God is able to raise up our unjust and often violent world. He does this with the co-operation of each one of us, doing what little we can to bring healing in our daily lives.

At the time of this issue we are celebrating the Feast of the Assumption. Mary said "Yes" to God throughout her life. She didn't do great things but allowed God to do great things for her and through her. She accepted to be accepted by God, she co-operated with God, and was eventually assumed into heaven at her death, a sign of God's vindication of her life. She is the model of the Church always pointing to her son and saying to us, "Do what he tells you."

But Mary/Maryam is also the role model for Muslim believers. They look to her.

(And when) the angels said, "O Mary, Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above all the women of the world. " (Qur'an, 3:24)

Mary suffered humiliation, suffered the death of her son and never lost hope. May she be a sign of hope for Christians and Muslims.

Finally, during 4 weeks in June/July this year the Missionaries of Africa sent 46 elected representatives to Rome to pray, share and seek out what God wants from our Society for the next 6 years.

There was little new brought out in this meeting but the same love of God expressed by the Church for the last 2000 years.

"What draws us to community is the family spirit which enables us to feel we are brothers."

"Our spiritual life is enriched by our faithfulness to the word of God and strengthens our relationship with Christ."

"We are sent to encounter those who thirst for God, to be close to those in need, to the young and in a special way to Muslims." These are some of the decisions/recognitions announced by the Chapter.

This also is a great sign of hope and trust, that with our help and Mary's prayers, God will raise the world to life.



The Chapter

Times change. We move with the times or we get left behind.

Times change. God remains the same, always faithful.

Times change. The message of the Gospel, the Word of God, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow but the way the Word is expressed has to be different at different times and in different places.



I love you. Je t'aime. Ich liebe dich. Nakupenda. Uhibbuka. In u uwini.

All these phrases mean the same thing but are appropriate in different countries and cultures.

Every 6 years the Missionaries of Africa renew their leadership. There are consultations with every confrere, every community, every sector and every Province about what we need to be do-



Chapter Delegates

ing to be authentically living the Missionary Oath as individuals and as a Society today. Living our vocation in the countries where we work, in the changing circumstances that we meet and can foresee. Vast



The new General Council

numbers of answers and proposals are sent to Rome to be boiled down to the common essentials and then these are presented to the Chapter.

The Chapter is an assembly of confreres chosen from all the Provinces. They are confreres chosen by all the other confreres because of their experience, their knowledge or their spirituality. After arriving in Rome for the first few weeks of the Chapter, the delegates spend some time getting to know one another then reflecting on and praying about the present state of the Society and how it might move forward under the Holy Spirit.

Then come the elections for the new General Council. These are chosen in view of what and who will be needed for us to move forward whilst remaining faithful to our past. Often they will, between them, reflect the make-up of the Society as regards work areas, age and ethnic origins.

The first elected is the Superior General. He is ultimately responsible for the wellbeing of the Society. Then 4 Assistants General are elected to help him in his work, by representing him in visits to the different Provinces and by being responsible for different aspects of ministry, formation, welfare of the confreres etc. and advising the Superior General on these specific areas.

The outgoing General Council consisted of the Superior General

from Ghana. The First Assistant was from Belgium, then the other 3 from Congo, Mexico and UK.

The first Assistant takes over if the Superior General cannot fulfil his functions. This year, the Superior General, Fr. Richard Baawobr, was appointed by the Pope as Bishop of Wa (Ghana) so he was unable to complete his mandate and the First Assistant had to replace him for a short while. The First Assistant is chosen once all the members of the Council are known.



Bp. Richard Baawobr



The new Superior General is Fr. Stanley Lubungo. Born in 1967 in Ndola, Zambia, he took his Missionary Oath in Toulouse, France in 1997 and was ordained priest in Zambia the same year. He studied in Toulouse, Dublin and Rome. He has worked as a missionary in Central Africa (pastoral), in West Africa (Formation) and as Provincial in Southern Africa. His areas of expertise are Formation and Spirituality/ Theology

The First Assistant is Fr. Francis Barnes from UK (Manchester). Born in 1950, he took his Missionary Oath in London in 1981 and was ordained in Stockport in the same year. He has worked as a missionary in both parish work and Formation in West Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, Poland and Rome. He studied in London. His areas of expertise are Formation and Spirituality.



Fr. Didier Sawadogo is from Burkina Faso in West Africa. Born in Ouagadougou in 1967, he took his Missionary Oath in London in 1999, and was ordained priest in Burkina Faso in 2000. He has worked as a missionary in Mali and Burkina Faso. He studied in UK and Rome. His areas of expertise are pastoral work amongst Muslims, Formation and Philosophy.



Fr. Martin Grenier from Canada. Born in 1963 in Beauceville, Quebec, he took his Missionary Oath in 1993 in London and was ordained priest in Quebec in 1995. He has worked as a missionary in Zambia in parish work, then in India and Uganda in Formation. Back in Canada he worked at the AFRIKA Centre in Montreal. He studied in London and Mali (Islam). His expertise is in Counselling, Formation and Dialogue.

Fr. Ignatius Anipu from Ghana. Born in Wiaga, Ghana in 1959, he took his Missionary Oath in Toulouse in 1990 then was ordained priest in Kongo, Ghana in 1991. He worked in Niger in parishes and Abidjan, Ivory Coast and London in Formation. He studied in France and at PISAI (specialist centre for Arabic and Islamic Studies in Rome). He was Provincial of French-speaking West Africa. His areas of expertise are Islam and Formation.



Our new General Council is one of wide experience and great intellectual gifts. They are from different origins able to empathise with confreres from all over the Society. May the Holy Spirit guide them and bless them in their ministry.



Our Lady, Mary, Queen of Africa and the White Fathers

It is well known why the Missionaries of Africa received the nickname “White Fathers”. Cardinal Lavigerie wanted his missionaries to identify as closely as possible with the people to whom they were to carry the “Good News” and so he insisted that they eat the same food, live in the same sort of houses and dress in white like the people. All this was a sign of respect for the local people. In fact the dress code became fixed as the clothing worn by the people of North Africa where the Missionaries of Africa were founded. As the Missionaries moved further into Africa, this idea of conforming in dress was not always practical or appropriate. So for many decades the “White Fathers” continued to wear the long white robes of the people of North Africa. The “gandourah”, a single garment from neck to foot. A “bournous”, a hooded cloak.



Fr Aylward Shorter M.Afr

The Gandourah

Fine in North Africa where the nights could be cold, but not always useful elsewhere in Africa. The “chechia”, a red felt hat rather like a fez. Again this was not very appropriate in some parts of Africa. However, I have seen it used as a filter for petrol when dirty petrol was bought in a village in an emergency! And (less effectively) as a water filter.



Fr Valery Sindayigaya

But finally, there is the black and white “rosary” worn around the neck – all 15 decades (before the “Mysteries of Light” were added by St. John Paul II). This was to indicate that the White Fathers were not simply trying to fit in with the people to whom they were sent, not simply there as aid workers, but that they were meant to be primarily men of prayer. And not just any prayer, they

were to be men whose work of evangelisation was to be under the protection and patronage of Our Lady, Mary, Queen of Africa.

They were all expected to recite the Rosary and Brothers, who didn't pray the breviary in former years, were expected to pray a certain number of rosaries daily, in their workshops, on their building sites or wherever they were working.

Cardinal Lavigerie is quoted as saying, "During my life, I have had a great deal of wretchedness to reproach myself with, but I can bear witness to the fact that I have always been faithful to my commitment as priest and bishop. I attribute this precious grace to my devotion to Mary". It was because of this conviction that he wanted his societies of Missionaries (priests, brothers and sisters) to be devoted to Mary, placed under the protection of the Mother of God. Even today when a Missionary of Africa takes his Missionary Oath, after years of preparation, he says solemnly, with his hand on the Gospels and in front of representatives of the Superior General,



Cardinal Lavigerie

"In the presence of my brethren here assembled,
I take my oath on the Gospels
To consecrate myself henceforth until death
To the Church's mission in Africa,
According to the Constitutions of the Society,
Placed under the protection of Mary Immaculate,
Queen of Africa."

In the days when much of the formation of Missionaries of Africa took place in North Africa, the last sight many students and missionaries had of Europe was a statue of Our Lady. Notre Dame de la Garde was and is a statue high up, overlooking the port of Marseille, looking out across the Mediterranean Sea towards the distant African shore. Then as the ship approached North Africa,

there was and is the Statue of Our Lady of Africa on top in front of the basilica to welcome them. This statue still stands overlooking the Bay of Algiers. Both the statues were blessed by Cardinal Lavigerie personally. Mary was symbolically present with these Missionaries as they set out on the mission of her son.

Every evening, at the end of community prayers, the White Fathers would sing the “Sancta Maria” in honour of Our Lady, asking for her prayers. Still today, at the end of meetings and also at the funerals of Missionaries of Africa, the Sancta Maria is sung, so that Mary’s prayers accompany the Missionary on his last journey home.

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is still the most important feast of the Society, when in some communities the confreres renew their Missionary Oath.

Above I mentioned that the White Father habit/dress code has gradually changed, according to circumstances. However, students who enter the Novitiate after 4 years of preparation receive the habit in a ceremony marking a very important step forward in their formation as Missionaries. The rosary is very evident in all this and I remember sitting on my bed a couple of days before I took my Missionary Oath, stringing together my own personal White Father rosary. Nowadays most Missionaries of Africa have reverted to the original idea of Cardinal Lavigerie, they wear whatever is appropriate in the country where they are living, be it Roman Collars or colourful African shirts. However the black and white rosary is still used or put behind the windscreens of cars or carried in the pocket by many Missionaries of Africa. It is part of our identity.

After the Crimean War in the 19th Century, the grateful Ottoman Turks gave their French allies a church in Jerusalem purported to be built over the spot where Mary was born. The French Government confided it to Cardinal Lavigerie and his new Missionaries. Lavigerie, who was so focused on Africa, accepted this unusual charge with joy. This Basilica of St. Anne in the Old City of Jerusa-

lem, links the Society of the Missionaries of Africa with Mary in a very special way. The community of confreres at Mary's birthplace continue to this day to live as Missionaries of Africa, welcoming pilgrims and praying for the Good News to be brought to the people of Africa.



Notre Dame de la Garde,Marseilles



Our Lady of Africa, Algiers



Black Lives Matter

All lives matter, but the people who recently protested under the banner of “Black Lives Matter” were doing so in US and UK because there was the perception that young black men in particular were being abused and killed by some policemen in US and no-one was noticing or doing anything about it. If no-one notices it is truly as if those lives do not matter.



In June, Pope Francis went to Armenia and risked upsetting the Turkish Government by referring to the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman forces. From one million to one and a half million men, women and children (predominantly Christian) were killed in 1915. Some were killed with guns or knives. Many more were force marched into the desert, dying of thirst and hunger.

Before attacking Poland, Hitler spoke of his intention to massacre Polish men, women and children because they were inconvenient, he wanted their land and country. He thought he could get away with it. It would be forgotten, as he said, “Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?” Possibly he thought the same thing of the Shoa, the Jewish Genocide.

Commenting on the Pope’s visit, several commentators spoke of “The first genocide of the 20th Century”. But was it?

In 1884 at the Congress of Berlin, several European countries (including Britain, France, Belgium and Germany) agreed to divide up Africa amongst them, taking colonies and protectorates where they could or would. Germany took what is now Tanzania, Togo, part of Ghana and Namibia (bordering South Africa)..

Namibia is a huge mainly dry country inhabited by several tribes, amongst whom are the Herero and the Nama peoples. As German settlers moved into the country they naturally settled near water holes and gradually took them over, but these were equally necessary for the local people. At first there was legal protection for Herero land-ownership but as time went by the settlers became more demanding and aggressive.

By 1903 things were becoming very tense between the settlers (supported by the German army) and the Herero. At one point a Herero chief was shot by the

army, then 3 German soldiers were killed. This led to an uprising of the Herero against the people they saw as taking their land.

General Lothar von Trotha defeated the Herero at the battle of Waterberg and then issued a proclamation, stating,

“The Herero are no longer German subjects. The Herero people will have to leave the country. If the people refuse I will force them with cannons to do so. Within the German boundaries, every Herero, with or without firearms, with or without cattle, will be shot. I won’t accommodate women and children anymore. I shall drive them back to their people or I shall give the order to shoot at them.” Trotha gave orders that captured Herero males were to be executed, while women and children were to be driven into the desert where their death from starvation and thirst was to be certain; Trotha argued that there was no need to make exceptions for Herero women and children, since these would “infect German troops with their diseases”, the insurrection Trotha explained “is and remains the beginning of a racial struggle”.

The Hereros were forced out into the waterless Omaheke desert and left to die. The total number who died is disputed but approximately 80% of the Herero, men, women and children, did not survive.

In October of the same year the Nama people, neighbours of the Herero, also rebelled. They also were defeated and were forced into concentration camps where 10,000 died of disease, abuse and exhaustion.

At the end of World War 1, German South-West Africa was mandated to South Africa, finally achieving independence as Namibia in 1990.

In 1985, the United Nations’ Whitaker Report classified the events of 1904-7 as an attempt to exterminate the Herero and Nama peoples of South-West Africa, and therefore one of the earliest attempts at genocide in the 20th century. In 2004, the German government recognized, and apologized for, the events but ruled out financial compensation for the victims’ descendants.

But still for many years the word “genocide” was not used officially by the German Government for these events, the reason being that the Genocide Convention was put in place in 1948, and so could not be applied retroactively.

Finally, in July 2015, the German government and parliament officially called the events a “genocide” and “part of a race war”. However it has still refused to consider financial compensation for the victims’ descendants.

My intention is not to rake over past horrors, nor to single out one nation, as though only that nation was guilty of massacres in Africa and elsewhere. The intention is to remember. Herero lives matter. Nama lives matter. All lives matter.

Acknowledgements to: Daniel A. Gross. Smithsonian.com

Peace Pledge Union Information Genocide.

Maryam, Mother of Issa

Role Model of Believers

Many years ago in Mali, our new Parish Priest, who had been in the parish several years before, went looking in the outhouses for a life-sized statue of Our Lady that he remembered from the past. I was curious about why it had been hidden away and was told the following:

This statue used to stand in front of the mission. Every market day the local Fulani (Muslim) women would come and pray in front of the statue asking Our Lady for children or safe deliveries. Then they would put money in the hands of the statue. Often the Fulani men would come and take the money away (perhaps because of scandal, perhaps for their own purposes) and eventually smashed the hands. To avoid trouble the priests put the statue out of sight.

This got me thinking about Mary and the Muslims. I had studied Islam at university and then again in the seminary, but learning about someone from the outside is not always accurate and perhaps not even respectful.

Muslims in general respect Mary because she is mentioned 25 times by name in the Qur'an, more often by name than the prophet of Islam himself, Muhammed. Mary is depicted as the model for all believers, the one who when asked to conceive and give birth to Jesus accepts because it is God asking her, even though she doesn't understand how this can happen.

It is written that the Spirit of God was sent to announce to Mary that she would

Titles of Mary in the Qur'an

- Qānitah:** Mary personifies prayer and contemplation in Islam.
- Siddiqah:** She who believes sincerely completely.
- Sājidah/Rāki'ah:** She who bows down to God in worship. Mary is the example of those who pray by bowing to the ground before God
- Tāhirah:** She who was purified.
- Mustafia:** She who was chosen.
- Sa'imah:** She who fasts.

In tradition Mary is referred to as: **Batul Adhraa** (Ascetic Virgin), and **Marhumah** (Enveloped in God's Mercy).

be the mother of Issa (Jesus) and he would be the Word of God.

It sounds as though the Muslims have much in common with us, however in the Quran it is also written that God does not have a son. The divinity of Jesus is flatly denied. God has no wife and therefore no children. In addition, for Muslims Jesus never died on the cross. This means that there are often misunderstandings between Christians and Muslims. In the very early days of the Church, the bishops and theologians wanted to show that Jesus was truly God as well as truly human. This led



Church of the Dormition

them on to insist that Mary was Mother of God. Not just mother of a human Jesus, a prophet, but mother of Jesus who is both man and God, the one who invites us to become, by baptism in his name, sharers in the divinity of Christ. For Muslims this is a terrible thing to claim. Since for them God is One, any idea that there is the Father and His son, and His Spirit and the Mother of God, means that God has become FOUR and no longer one. Mary has become God. A great blasphemy.

Certainly, no Christian believes that, but that is sometimes how it seems to non-Christians.

But what of the Muslim people? What do they think? They respect Mary. In Jerusalem in the basilica of St Anne's (the reputed birthplace of Mary) people (often Muslim women) come to show respect for Mary. Again in Jerusalem, outside St. Stephen's Gate across the Cedron Valley there is a very old church owned by the Armenians and the Greek Orthodox purporting to be the place where Mary died and was assumed into heaven. In this church there is also a special prayer space (mihrab) where Muslims come to pray, in this place associated with Mary. Back in 1968, a Muslim mechanic was working in a garage across the street from St. Mark's Coptic church in Zeitun, Egypt. He thought he saw a woman in white on the roof of the church attempting to commit suicide. The police came and so did a crowd of people. The woman stayed on the roof for several minutes looking at the crowd, then disappeared. The crowds continued to come daily despite attempts by the police to disperse them, and the lady came to meet them two or three times a week. These apparitions continued until 1971. The lady in white

looked down at all the people, Muslim and Christian, and never said a word. Her presence was the message.

According to Coptic tradition, the site is one of the locations where the Holy Family stayed during their flight into Egypt, escaping Herod and the massacre of the Holy Innocents. Christians and Muslims were



Church of the Dormition

convinced they had seen Mary/Maryam the mother of Jesus/Issa. People who would have argued and even fought over definitions, were able to gaze with reverence on the White Lady who had come to them from God/Allah.

It was and is a great and effective sign of peace. Christian and Muslim people were able to stand together in peace because they were no longer confronting one another, but looking together at the mother of Jesus.

The Feast of the Assumption is a national holiday in Lebanon and every year Christians and Muslims trek to Our Lady's shrine in her honour.

Mary gave Jesus to the world, perhaps in our times of fear and violence Jesus is giving his mother to the world to bring peace and hope.

Our Lady of Africa, mother of the Suffering Servant,
mindful of the peoples of Africa,
in whom Christ is reliving his Passion.
May those who have not yet recognized Jesus
as the Son of the Father
be drawn to Him by the Holy Spirit.
Mary Immaculate, Mother of THE Prophet,
intercede for our Muslim brothers and sisters.
May they who honour you
come to know that He whom they call Allah
is the Father of our Redeemer. Amen



Br. Trevor's workshop in Tamale, Ghana

A reminder of Br. Trevor's work in West Africa from 2009. The work continues day by day, quietly and effectively as God's love.



Br Trevor & friends.

The project began in 1992 when myself and Fr. Dermot

Sheehan M/Afr. realized that there was an urgent need to provide mobility and dignity to the many disabled people in the area who were either on crutches or crawling in the dust.

I had recently opened a new workshop to provide a service to the local church and to train young men in metal work and welding. This new workshop was ideal for making the wheelchair tricycles. Fr. Dermot went to Accra to get plans from a similar project run by an SMA priest, Fr. Jean Thibault. Soon the first tricycle was produced in Tamale from water pipes and bicycle parts. Over the years this work has become the chief occupation of the workshop that now produces the tricycles in batches of twenty five or thirty, with over a thousand now in use.

Most of the users are victims of polio and have lost the use of their lower limbs, though some have had accidents and are amputees. We had a case recently of a builder who was working in a trench when the walls caved in on him. He survived but suffered a broken back and even after treatment could no longer walk. He now gets about in one of our wheelchair tricycles. Nowadays road accidents cause severe injuries often leaving the victims crippled, and even people falling from trees whilst picking fruit.



Imagine if you can, the difference it makes to a person's life when they are suddenly free to move about independently and with dignity after many years of being confined to the house or compound.

There is a woman in a village not far from Tamale who is

paralyzed from the waist down and has a good arm and partial use of the other. She never left the compound for twenty years but when she received her tricycle and learnt how to handle it, there was no stopping her. Not only was she going about her own locality, but she was also loading her tricycle into market lorries and visiting neighboring villages.

Many of the tricycle users are still young and as they now have mobility, they can go to school, no longer dependent on a family member to carry them there. Others have some sort of a trade and now with mobility, can extend their business. There are hairdressers, barbers, cobblers, radio repairers, wood carvers and even a couple of teachers. Once these people are used to the freedom and independence a tricycle gives them, they would be lost without one. So they take care to maintain them.

It costs \$250 to make a wheelchair tricycle, an impossible sum for the disabled person to raise. But still we do not give them away for nothing, each one who applies for a tricycle is expected to participate in the cost and contribute about ten percent and even that is sometimes difficult for them to get together. Keep in mind that the daily minimum wage is between one and two dollars!

So where does the rest of the production cost come from? Generous benefactors who know what we are doing are very keen to participate. Many of them are individuals like retired missionaries, or small groups who raise funds through various activities like coffee mornings and pub quizzes. Without this generous support it would be impossible to continue. Materials and bicycle parts have to be paid for, as do the wages of the workshop staff who, I must say are very dedicated to their work and get a lot of job satisfaction, especially when they see the smile on the face of someone receiving a new tricycle.

There is never a shortage of applications. We are currently making thirty wheelchair tricycles and they are all spoken for. When we began, we were just serving Tamale and the



Tricycle number 1000

surrounding villages, but as we became known, requests came in from far and wide and now there are wheelchair tricycles throughout the country.

With over one thousand tricycles delivered and applications still coming in we hope and pray that with God's help and people's continuing support we can produce many more and so give mobility and dignity to those who are worse off than ourselves.



Repairing Wahab's calipers



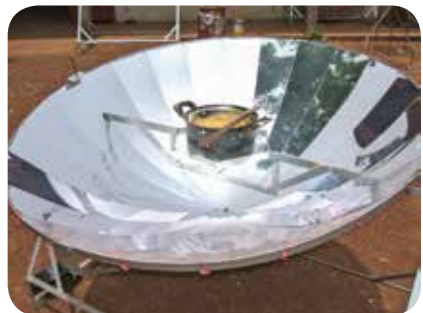
Fitting his leg

In addition to making wheelchair tricycles the Mechanical Training Centre also manufactures furniture for various church projects. These items are made from metal profiles welded together to the required design and paneled with plywood, for example tables, chairs, wardrobes, beds etc. recently completed for the house extension of Haskew House at Bolgatanga.

This work gives an excellent practical training in metalwork and welding that can be put to future use by the workers when one day they have their own workshops. The training in metalwork has also given one of our trainees the skills necessary to repair calipers and crutches and also do minor repairs of artificial limbs.

We have also assembled solar cookers sent out in kit form from Austria and we are currently making 12 cookers with only the reflectors imported. These have been distributed mainly in the Tamale and Wa areas and are being put to good use.

The workshop evolved from a garage, which was opened in 1988 when I came from Wa. The demand for car repairs became very small compared to that for the services which we now provide.



Solar cooker
cooking marmalade

Br. Trevor Robinson. M/Afr. Tamale, Ghana, West Africa.

THE WHITE FATHERS IN MARSEILLES

A mission meant to meet people and witness God's love



Jean Baptiste Sams, a Congolese student in Marseilles

There is a community of five Missionaries of Africa – White Fathers – present in the Northern district of Marseilles. Our main concern is to be at the service of the people of the area and elsewhere. We serve pastorally the parishioners of two churches, St Antoine and Notre Dame Limite, we care for the passing migrants and keep friendly contacts with the Muslim population. We try to express our faith and charism by way of different services, such as providing chaplaincy for the young people, welcoming the homeless and giving literacy classes to the needy, in all of which I play a role.



Chaplaincy for the young

Every two weeks, a group of young people gathers in the parish hall of Notre Dame Limite. They love being together to exchange ideas and plan all sorts of activities. Pride of place is given this year to the preparation for the World Youth Day. It is for those over eighteen and is an activity which has unfailingly motivated our group.

Then other pilgrimages open to all ages, for example to the l'Arche community, are also on the agenda for other meetings. L'Arche is an organisation forming communities for mentally and/or physically challenged young people. Finally, occasional activities spread throughout the year such as putting up and taking down the crib (an important event here

in Provence), the Christmas meal offered by our community, the animation of the Sunday Mass and various diocesan outings.

Our young people feel really committed and concerned by the activities of their chaplaincy. They debate about all sorts of subjects which enrich both their lives and ours. Coming from poor districts, the young people are naturally interested in ways of making money, such as publishing a magazine, selling home-baked cakes, a lottery...etc. Their parents, themselves coming from humble backgrounds, are all ready to give a hand whenever they can. These are all simply concrete expressions of a Church taking responsibility for itself. Thanks to all of them. God bless them!



Béthanie. Day time Welcome

Every Monday morning, I go to Béthanie, a 'Secours Catholique'-run Centre which depends on Caritas France (the national Catholic aid service in France). Services offered there include: a daily welcome for homeless people and migrants as well as a unit providing literacy classes. The thinking behind the welcome unit in Béthanie is the attitude expressed in St Luke's gospel 10, 38-42 in which Jesus reproaches Martha for getting worked up about serving while he praises Mary for being attentive and spending time with him. Yet someone has to serve!

In short, our service consists of offering breakfast, delivering people's mail, distributing clothes, registering people in other Centres (e.g. with the Salvation Army), providing toiletries and medical care, looking for temporary accommodation, etc. Besides this, volunteers and those they are caring for get the opportunity to share a meal together at particular times of the year and also take part in sporting activities and other events.

Can we always show a radiant face when welcoming homeless and hungry people? Sadly sometimes I'm obliged to tell people for whatever reason, we cannot



feed them or provide for their specific requests. But it is not only about material giving. Those who know that I am a Christian, question me at times about my faith and talk to me about theirs. A fraternal and respectful dialogue can then take place. It is generally very enriching to collaborate with these friendly people who express their faith in a common God (or Allah) and whose questions

force me to deepen my understanding of the Good News.

Training people in French at Bourrely

In the social centre of Bourrely, Raphaël, Michel, Sylvia and myself provide literacy classes in French every Monday and Thursday afternoon. I like this apostolate very much. Knowledge of French is a real asset for someone who is living in Cardinal Lavigerie's homeland!

Other assets are courage and patience, my friend... for the students not only have different aptitudes but also have a wide age range. Still we try, in a relaxed manner, to make the exercises understandable and possible for each one of them. Our "pupils" are so grateful that for every single piece of encouragement we give them, we receive a thank you and a smile in return. It is an experience of joy similar to that of the seventy-two disciples to whom Jesus says: "Do not rejoice that the spirits are subjects unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10, 20). What a reward! Our place close to God is more precious than our missionary success.

I am happy to contribute to this Missionaries of Africa project in Marseilles. I truly believe that what we offer freely, without strings attached, to those on the margins of French society, makes a difference. May Christ continue to enlighten our way!



"Praise the Lord of the harvest....."

"I want you to visit every Parish in the Diocese and interview the boys the Fathers have selected for entering the Seminary!" Fr. Fritz Muller told me. For 3 years I had been teaching in St. Mary's Seminary, Mwanza, a town on the southern shores of Lake Victoria in Tanzania. I set off on my motorcycle. At this time, there were 18 Parishes scattered over an area roughly twice the size of the Isle of Wight. Outside the town of Mwanza there were no tarmac roads!



Ted Wildsmith M.Afr.

A NEW EXPERIENCE

On this particular day I had set off from Kibara hoping to reach Kahangala Parish by nightfall. My route took me across a cotton soil plain. Ominous black clouds were building up ahead. Within minutes a storm broke: thunder, lightning, and buckets of rain! I took shelter under a baobab tree. Like a typical tropical storm, it blew itself out fairly quickly and out came the brilliant sunshine again. I kicked my motorcy-



Fr. Ted in his office

cle back into life and set off confident of reaching my destination. But - oh dear! This road over the drying out cotton soil was proving impassable. Every 10 metres or so the wheels clogged up and refused to turn, acting as if the brakes were on! I scraped them as clean as I could and tried and tried, again and again! Now the Sun was going down. Helpful and kindly passers-by said: "Father, you'll have to stay with us tonight!" They pointed to the Chief's House some way off. With difficulty I got my bike there. I was met with real African, Tanzanian, hospitality: "Karibu - Welcome - Padre!" By this time, it had been dark already for a couple of hours. The Family had eaten! I was ushered into a mud-brick, grass-roofed house. It had a central passage with a room off to the left for Mum and Dad and another to the right for the rest of the family. Here there was one iron bedstead but no mattress, just a mat over the springs. As I settled on top, fully dressed, the Family started to troop in laying mats on the floor around me: adult women and children; maybe a dozen of them! Things went quiet and our door was



Bartholomew and family

shut. Then, into the central passage way came the animals: goats, chickens, the lot, making quite a noise!!

THE HARVEST

Before the Vatican Council, Missionary Societies were discouraged by Rome from accepting candidates from among the youth of the countries where they were evangelising. Our mission

was to establish the Local Church. Like some of my confreres, I taught for many years in a Diocesan Seminary. I can't give exact statistics but I know at least 50 of my students became priests and among them several went on to be bishops. In the seminary I met Anthony Mayala, the son of an excellent and holy catechist. We had a great football team, renowned in those days. People loved it when we played in the town stadium. Anthony was a full back along with Aloysius Balina. Both became priests and both became bishops: Anthony, Archbishop of Mwanza and Aloysius, Bishop of Shinyanga. Both have already been called by the Lord to our heavenly home. Their teacher lives on!! We Missionaries thank the Lord for blessing our efforts and giving us a rich harvest.

ANOTHER DAY

God so blessed 'Missionary' efforts to create a viable and sustainable Local Church that, after the end of the Vatican Council, Rome began encouraging Societies, like the Missionaries of Africa, to open wide their doors to candidates from all countries. We lost no time in establishing our own seminaries. Today, our 3 centres for our one year 'Spiritual Formation' and our major seminaries for Theology are situated in one or another of the countries of Africa, excepting a small group who follow their Studies in Jerusalem.

Since leaving my ministry of teaching in Mwanza diocesan seminary, I enjoyed parish ministry, for 6 years in the Diocese of Singida, Tanzania, and then for 10 years in the Diocese of Nairobi, Kenya. I like to think the Lord was preparing me for a new phase of association with young people, this time as candidates for our Society of Missionaries of Africa, (White Fathers). My Superiors asked: "Would you be ready to accompany our Theology Students as a mem-



Jinja House of Formation, Uganda



Archbishop
Anthony Mayala



Fr. Ted and Football Team Nyegezi

ber of Staff in our residence at St. Edward's, Totteridge Lane, London?" Fr. Morman, a holy Dutch White Father, gave us a retreat when I was in 3rd year Theology. A theme of his was: "Be the available man!" Fr. Renault, a former Superior General, told us: "A Missionary must be ready to travel light with a knap sack on his back, always ready to face a new

challenge!" So I was happy and ready to be back, this time with our own students. They had all experienced the 'heat of the day.' Part of today's training for 'Mission Ministry' is to spend 2 years in 'field work' experiencing first-hand what it is like to be a Missionary, White Father. We were 4 on the Staff and we each accompanied a team of 6 or 7 students. Simon from Burkina Faso, West Africa, one of my team, witnessed how during his 2-year experience in a parish in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Mission had been attacked by a 'rebel' army. He happened to be listening to music on his small radio. One of the rebels wanted that radio! Simon is a joyful, happy fellow, often joking. He tried 'charming' the rebel but his charm was falling on deaf ears! Fortunately, his parish priest, a Spanish White Father, with long experience and fluency in the local language, came to Simon's help in the nick of time!!

Studies these days most often entail going to a study-centre: A Consortium or University. Since extending our outreach for Missionary Candidates beyond the countries of Europe and North America we have experienced and are still experiencing a great HARVEST. The "Joy of the Gospel" so fills the peoples of these countries of 'the beyond'. The Lord is blessing these young Churches. Simon, that student in my team in St. Edward's, was ordained and a few years ago he became parish priest where I used to be PP in Our Lady Queen of Peace, Nairobi. Today our Society has many full and active members from this NEW HARVEST and nearly 500 candidates in training.



Tangaza University College, Nairobi, Kenya.

'The Prostitutes....are going into the Kingdom of God ahead of you'

Mt. 21:32

It all began with a workshop on Modern Slavery in our midst, attended by a group of 20, mainly nuns, brothers and priests. One of the areas of concern was prostitution. Cristabell, a young Anglican involved in an apostolate for rescuing prostitutes from the streets, gave a presentation which showed evidence of the extent of the problem in the main town of the Eastern Province of Zambia, Chipata, where all of us are involved in various apostolates.



Fr. Dave Cullen

The Anglican Church was doing a great deal to rescue often quite young girls from the streets and offer them advice and assistance to be able to earn a living in constructive ways, such as sewing skills.

Inspired by the Anglicans' example, a Kenyan nun, Sr. Anastazia, working in one of the nearby parishes, began regular meetings with prostitutes, offering counselling and help. Working with and through our local St. Vincent de Paul Conference, I also took up this challenge. We have so far rescued twelve prostitutes from the streets, five of them young enough to go back to school. Asking all twelve what drove them to prostitution the answer was always one and the same 'poverty'.

Mary and Jane, for example, were orphans living with their grandparents who were not strong enough to find work to support them. The mother of another, called Jennifer, is HIV positive, and she too was unable to find the necessary means of providing for their basic requirements. All but two of the twelve are HIV positive, as are many of their children. We have provided help for both of those who have returned to school, and those who are beyond school age, to start mini-businesses, baking fritters, selling fruit and vegetables from the roadside, or setting up a market stall for the same purposes.

Another one we came into contact with was Brenda, a schoolgirl made pregnant at the age of 17 by a man who was HIV positive and who passed the disease on to her. She had turned to prostitution because she could no longer find money for her schooling. When she realised her condition, her first thought was to commit suicide, but fortunately we were able to persuade her to accept help to be able to go back to school. She too is an orphan in the care of her very frail grandmother. As with the others, we have tried to help them with their basic needs by giving them enough money to start a mini-business and we keep a careful eye on them to ensure that they do not run out of essentials.

The key member for the SVP for this apostolate, Patricia, is always ready to welcome the women to her home, and quite often cares for the children of those attending school, all of whom have a child by an unknown father. She also ensures that none of them are so financially squeezed for food, school fees, or other basic needs such that they could be tempted to return to the streets.

All twelve women are able to worship at their various churches on Sundays; those belonging to our own church have followed a course enabling them to return to the sacraments.

Our hope and prayer is that, as a Church, we will continue to do our best to further this apostolate.

(The names of the girls have been changed.)

Fr. Dave Cullen, MAfr.





Parents & Friends Association

THE PARENTS & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

invite you to join them for their annual reunion on
SUNDAY 28th August 2016

Mass at 12.00 noon at 9 Milrig Road, Rutherglen
followed by a meal at 2pm at the King's Park Hotel, Rutherglen
Cost: £14.00

Those wishing to attend please contact:

The White Fathers,
9 Milrig Road, Rutherglen, G73 2NG

Telephone: 0141 647 3800

before the 17th August 2016.

ALL WELCOME



Your charitable prayers are requested

for those who have recently died
and our deceased parents,
relatives, friends and benefactors.



We remember especially

Mrs Mary Reville	Peebles, Scotland
Mr John Denza	London
Mrs Joan Flanagan	Billingham
Ref Jeffery Phillips	Lymington
Mr Anthony Colley	Hereford
Mrs M J King	Leominster
Mrs T Sweeney	Bishopsbriggs, Glasgow
Mrs Elizabeth Kane	West Lothian
Mrs M Potts	Jordanhill, Glasgow
Mr C R Lund	Wigan
Mr O'Shaughnessy	Sheffield
Mrs J M Woolfarth	Litherland, Liverpool
Mrs Doreen Dumoulin	Gibraltar
Cecilia Igoe (sister of WF Fr John Morrissey) York	
Mrs Cathy Graham (Fr Peter Smith's cousin)	
Mr. Roger Brown Fr. David Cullen's brother-in-law	
Fr Geoff Riddle who died 28/7/2016 in Dar. Tanzania	



Fr. Stephen Collins was born in Edinburgh 26th December 1921 and died in Glasgow on 21st June 2016. "Stevie" made his novitiate 1944-45, took his Missionary Oath in 1946 and was ordained priest in 1947.

For the next 69 years of his missionary life he served God and the Mission in UK, Uganda and South Africa.

He was a teacher, a pastor, an AIDS worker and a kind and gentle confrere.

May they rest in peace



St. Anthony's Burse



By contributing to St. Anthony's Burse for the education of White Fathers, you will be helping to spread the Good News of the Gospel in Africa.

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