

# MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA

## (WHITE FATHERS)



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Mary  
Queen Of Africa  
Pray for Us.  
Missionaries Of Africa



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***In November we pray for all the dead, no matter how long or short their lives were. We commend them to the Lord of Life and Love.***

# Editor's Word

In this issue of our magazine we have two articles from Nigeria concerning twins. Amongst the Yoruba people twins have always been considered special and a blessing. However amongst their neighbours, the Igbo people, twins were considered unlucky and possibly evil. Twins were welcomed by the Yoruba and killed by the Igbo. The fate of the twins depended on the beliefs of the parents and of Society.



Fr. Michael Heap MAfr

In England and Wales there were 190,00 abortions in 2018 and 13,000 in Scotland. Most, perhaps all, were performed because parents or Society thought it was right for the mother and sometimes for the child.

The reasons were no doubt many and serious - mothers unable to cope mentally/physically/financially, handicapped fetuses, rapes/incest etc. Questions always asked are, Why should a woman be made to suffer in these circumstances? Does she not have a right to autonomy over her own body? The Law and Society in general answers She Shouldn't to the first question and Yes to the second.

However, one might wonder What about the child? The parents and Society decide if this child should be considered a blessing or a curse and deal with it accordingly. The child or potential child has no voice.

In one article we hear from Nelson who devotes his energy to Vlogs and Podcasts encouraging young people to be the best they can be. He wants them to unlock their potential. In UK in 2018 over 200,000 potential lives were stopped.

In another article Moses waxes lyrical about the fact that God loves us no matter who or how we are, and invites us to share this love. This particularly concerns the poor, the weak, and those without a voice.

No-one should deny the rights of women to health. I am not blind to the many serious reasons behind abortions. I only want also to wonder aloud what a child without a voice might say or what potentially gifted lives that never come to fruition might have been.

# Meeting young people where they meet and speaking their language

*by Nelson Ekeh Chinedu, a Nigerian Missionary of Africa deacon due to be ordained priest on 3rd October 2020 before going to Uganda for Youth Ministry. He began making blogs, vlogs and podcasts whilst studying in Jerusalem.*

**“I have become all things to all people so that by all means I might save some”** (1Cor 9:22). These words of St. Paul were key motivations why I decided to meet the young people at their meeting place and be able to speak to them in their own language.



Since the beginning of social media, as a young man I have never shied away from modern technology. Over the years I have increased my knowledge through curiosity and I have grown to appreciate social communication and journalism on the social media.

During my stage (2 years in a parish) in Goma, Congo, the youth were at the centre of my personal growth. They taught me a lot more than what I could teach them. After my stage the burning questions were: how can I, as a missionary and a young man interested in the development of the

youth, reach out to them? How can I have an impact in making the life of someone better? I have been fortunate to have the White Fathers stir up the curiosity within me. As a student, however, I felt I was limited but when I went on a nine days pilgrimage to Czestochowa in Poland I had my Damascus experience.

Before that I had temporarily deleted my Facebook account. However, during the pilgrimage on foot, I saw the number of young people using Facebook in Poland and how some were coming to share their personal experiences (fears and joys) with me. Most of them needed someone

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MUSLIM?



to listen to them. Some needed help, while others needed motivation and encouragement. The more I engaged with people, the more they reminded me of something a few of my friends had been mentioned over the years, “Nelson create a platform, do a talk show, write articles, you have a lot and God will use you to touch many lives. It is in you. You are young, you understand us and can speak our language.” I replied, “I don’t speak Polish”, but they did not mean Pol-

ish, but rather the INTERNET. We made a Vlog in Poland about our pilgrimage experiences. It had almost 300 views within the first day. I was like EUREKA!!! This is their place of meeting. This is their language. You might not find lots of young people in church but you can find them on the social media. So it is for that reason I have to meet them there; “if Mohammed doesn’t go to the mountain, the mountain must come to Mohammed.”

My aims were exchange and encounter, sharing information and resources. I wanted to learn from those who engage with me and share with them the little that I know. However I am very aware of the risk of sensationalism; the media can make one become whatever they want. I know how hostile the social media world can be. The media is knowledge and knowledge is power. Sitting behind our keyboards we are all-powerful. Some use it for the wrong purposes such as cyber-crime, cyber bullying, and cyber sexual abuse. Others use it for good, such as to educate, to empower, and to reach out to people in need. With up to 5000 friends on Facebook I needed to devise a means to share with them, learn from them, interact with them and promote education. Upon arriving back in Jerusalem I creat-



## WHO ARE THE MESSIANIC JEWS?



ed a Facebook page and a YouTube channel. I began by making 24-second videos for my 24hrs story centred on topics such as self-love and small acts of love. The purpose was to help people have a positive mind-set as they began their day.

Then I named my page on Facebook NELSON'S MIND STAYING HAPPY AND POSITIVE, on YouTube as NELSON EKEH and on Instagram as MANDELSON\_TV. I launched the first segment entitled "**Gratitude: staying positive**". I really appreciated the love and encouragement I received from

people over those 24-second videos. I reminded them how fortunate I am to have them in my life and the need for us all to be positive. After that my phone was vibrating with texts and calls. The love and encouragement from people and confreres and more importantly young people, was motivating. Now I knew that I needed to be consistent. It was not difficult because I enjoyed it. So each week I made two videos. I consulted people asking for guidance on how to improve the show. Accordingly the show has developed in segments with education at its heart. In the words of Nelson Mandela "a child without education is like a bird without wings." Through education, we can learn, listen and discern. So the purpose of my page is: CREATIVE AWARENESS AND EMPOWERING THE YOUTH TO BE CURIOUS. Only when young people are curious and creative are they powerful in achieving their dreams. In one of the first segments I had my guest talk about Youth, Religion and Terrorism. The idea was to understand our differences, to help people rise above the stereotypes that all Muslims are terrorists. I invited my confrere Gaetan Tiendrebiego a professor in Islam to give his reflections on that. In another segment we conscientised people about coronavirus and its effects. This was done in English and French so

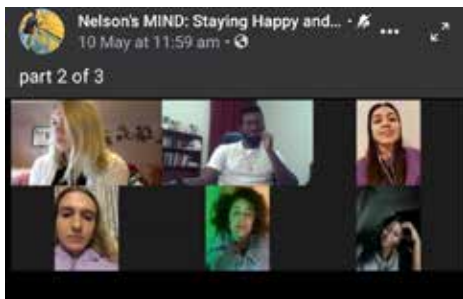


that even the mamas and papas in the vil-  
lages could understand. I talked about the  
importance of self-knowledge.

There have been segments centred on  
morality and spirituality and in these seg-  
ments I invited people to reflect on the  
Scriptures and on topics such as com-  
passion, love, and self-empowerment.

There were segments in which I invited  
people with specialised knowledge to  
debate and discuss on particular themes  
such as Politics and Corruption, Racial  
Inequality, Migration, Tribal Conflicts,  
Ethnocentrism, etc. I also invited Dr.  
Stéphane Joulain MAfr. to educate us

about the sexual abuse of minors and domestic violence. Some segments  
were for missionaries working around the Globe. In this part the guests  
could share their missionary experiences, for people to learn and be in  
touch with their reality. In other segments I invited celebrity guests (ac-  
tors, actresses and artists). Some I had met personally, some I just sent  
emails inviting them and they responded positively. The purpose is to re-  
flect on their achievements, their motivations and how they made it to the  
top. I wanted to remind people that we each have a purpose in life. To re-  
mind them of the need to find their passion and of not being scared to do  
what they love. Young people are dreamers, we have dreams, we want to  
achieve a lot, so listening to people who have accomplished things telling  
us that we need to start low in order to get high can be really empowering.



I have organised Zoom meetings  
for girls to reflect on gender equal-  
ity and the importance of female  
education. Some people would be  
uncomfortable on the live show,  
so I created a podcast like a radio  
show, where we reflect on themes.



By simply having a conversation we understand each other better. We share ideas and learn a lot. In my podcast I have reflected on topics surrounding superficial friendship and the true meaning of friendship. I invited a guest to talk about that. We have discussed relationships and what makes a healthy relationship. Anyone can be a guest. I have had Jews, Muslims, Christians and atheists. Irrespective of our differences we all need a platform to talk. We all need a seat at the table

to take part in the conversation. People have taken the initiative to call or write to me saying that they would love to be on the show. They have something to say and this proves to me that people need a platform for them to share their experience and what I have done is to provide that platform. It is always humbling when someone tells me “I would love to share my challenging experience.” We learn from each other’s experiences. I don’t want people to feel depressed, lonely or left out, I have had people share their deepest fears and how they have learnt to overcome or cope with them thanks to my channel. I have received calls and texts from America and Australia, from people I don’t even know thanking me for the impact of my videos in their lives. It is motivating for some and for others it teaches them to look at life from a different perspective. I know I have lots of ideas to develop and I look forward to seeing what becomes of my experience. It is never too late to start doing what we have a passion for. I believe that God always guides our path when we seek His guidance. Meeting the young people where they meet and speaking their language is one of the modern tools for the Mission of Christ. The social media world can itself be a place of mission.

### Love the Power & Beauty Of Your Mind





# Work has to be valued

Personal reflections on attitudes to work.

*by Dr. Fr. James Ngahy MAfr. Director Centre for Social Concern,  
KanengoMalawi*

First of May is a public holiday in many countries across the world and Malawi, the ‘warm heart of Africa where I work, is one of them. However, this year, 2020, due to the Covid-19, there was a very low key celebration with more of an emphasis on preventive measures against this disastrous virus. International Workers’ Day, also known as ‘Workers’ Day’, ‘Labour Day’, or ‘May Day’, is a celebration of workers and the working classes, promoted by the International Labour Movement. Although originally an ancient European Spring festival, First of May was chosen by a pan-national organization of socialist and communist political parties to commemorate the Haymarket Affair, when an unidentified person in Chicago on 4th. May, 1886, threw a bomb at the police, who responded by opening fire on workers, killing four of them. In the late 19th Century, trades union and labour movements grew along with industries, prompting trade unionists to begin to choose various days on which to celebrate the people’s labour. In 1904 The Sixth Conference of the Second International, called on “all Social Democratic Party organisations and trade unions of all countries to demonstrate energetically on 1st. May for the legal establishment of the 8-hour day, for the class demands of the Proletariat, and for Universal Peace”.

After the Second World War, many countries, some of which were very poor because of the war, became very focussed, people starting to work very hard and indeed valuing their work. They were passionate for their labour, as they were passionate for their nations. Countries like Switzerland, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan went from rags to riches. The Germans and the Dutch were (and are) also known as hard-working people. Work for them was, as it were, fundamental to their culture and for them went hand in hand with Time. In fact, some of our elders here in Africa, especially those who worked with certain missionaries, had that spirit of commitment and zeal whilst at the same time prayer was never neglect-



ed ('Orare et Laborare').

Valuing work meant valuing time, and vice versa. Everything was regulated and calculated accordingly and systematically. It is partly for this reason that their countries recorded tremendous development.

They were convinced that

a nation can only become strong economically if the citizens are hard working. Their living standards too have improved. For them, nothing comes down free from heaven like manna in the desert in the time of Moses! How does this fit with the attitude often attributed to certain Africans, particularly many in State jobs? "In Africa (for Africans) time is not a problem; we have all the time ahead of us," it is said. Naturally this attitude affects the value attributed to work, and then the economy of African nations, and then of course living standards. Unfortunately there is some truth in this claim. Some in Africa have a tendency to be satisfied with the idea that, "Things can be done later. I have all the time in hand or ahead of me." The creative power of work and the positive thinking associated with this is minimised or simply lacking. I personally have been shocked to see workers in government offices or parastatal organisations - education, health, managerial or administrative institutions, schools, colleges, clinics, dispensaries, hospitals, or secretariats - doing nothing even early on in the working day. People simply chatting or watching TV. Recently, there has been a new trend for workers to spend more time in prayer, especially if there is a mosque or a chapel on the work premises. Perhaps these workers are trying to live according to the spirit of St. Benedict: "Orare et Laborare." "Pray and Work".

I seriously doubt it! St. Benedict and the Benedictines had this spirit of prayer. It mani-



fested itself in the work they did - high standards and high quality. Work time, just like the time of prayer was highly valued and respected. Vigils and fasting are undoubtedly important for our spiritual growth. But what sense does it make if we put vigils and fasting first so that we end up sleeping in our offices during working hours? What quality of production do we expect at the end of the day in such situation?



At this juncture, we ought to note that as work for us becomes more or increasingly ‘spiritual’, in the developed as well as in the fast developing countries, work becomes increasingly scientific. “Therefore

there is a great demand for learned, skilful and efficient workers, who are called upon to work hard and with maximum efficiency.” As we celebrate Workers Day, this should be a reminder for us that, if we do not take serious action to reverse our attitude especially in some parts of Africa, we

should not be surprised that poverty will be our portion and identity! Botswana, Rwanda and Tanzania are currently three of the fastest growing economies in Africa. It is noticeable that corruption, mismanagement of resources and laziness are not tolerated in these countries! I am amazed when I see people who had struggled so hard to find employment, soon after being employed, change their attitude. Instead of appreciating their employment by working hard, they complain or lament. “There is too much work on my desk” becomes their motto. Of course, this is not to down play or support those employers who overwork or exploit their workers. Not at all! This is totally



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unacceptable and to be condemned in every case. Hard work deserves a good and fair wage. Today, most of the solid, strong and durable cars are Japanese made. Japan is one of the fast developing countries. The secret of the progress that Japan has made in a comparatively short time is qualitative work. "Whether on the street, the factory floor or in the executive boardroom, the Japanese is constantly exhibiting his conviction that will-power and effort are superior to matter. The Japanese has a keen sense of shame and obligation, impelling him to extraordinary efforts to keep his commercial promises. Bosses, book-keepers and factory hands can be found doing voluntary night-work to meet a delivery date. The attention is always on the task rather than on the clock." It is an appropriate time for us in developing countries to emulate this spirit of hard work. Here again we are not downplaying those who do work very hard in the farms and factories - our mothers and fathers, our brothers and sisters, day in, day out. However, we cannot raise our standard of living if laziness and wastage of time are at the core of it all. Government parastatals as well as religious institutions can be strengthened if, and only if, individuals working in those sectors play their own role - working hard. Sustainable progress and development do not drop down from the heavens above but rather come from us here on earth below. Indeed for this reason Kosuke Koyama, the Japanese theologian, named his theological approach "Theology from Below." Whether we work in market places, shops, factories, offices, secular or religious institutions, it is only by doing our own particular job to the best of our ability that we can get satisfaction out of it.

'It is important that we take personal responsibility for the way we live and work because one day we will be rewarded or judged for everything



we do. If we own and value work, personal joy, growth and success will indeed be our portion. Since we humans are relational beings, success and satisfaction in work increases when there is a personal relation between me, my work and the rest of humanity."

# Thirty day and thirty nights - an experience with the Lord

*by Moses Atsinafe, a Nigerian White Father student in Ivory Coast.*

*All Missionary of Africa students are required to take part in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius before making any definitive commitment to Mission. These Spiritual Exercises, originally arranged by St. Ignatius of Loyola for the first Jesuits, take the form of 30 days of consciously living in the presence of God in silence. This involves at least 4 hours of meditation per day and close daily accompaniment by an experienced spiritual guide. During the 30 days the retreatant is led to reflect deeply upon the love that God has for each of us. The retreatant is led to look deep within him or herself to see themselves “warts and all” and yet God still loves, chooses us and trusts us to share His love with others. This is the point where he or she can make a wholehearted choice to recognise and respond to God’s call. It can be a very moving and personal experience, shaping our future lives.*

I had the great opportunity and the privilege of participating in the thirty days Ignatian Exercises here in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Initially, the retreat was supposed to take place at the Christian Village, Kumasi, Ghana or the Jesuit Retreat Centre in Burkina Faso depending on whether



Whole group beginning the 30-day retreat in Ivory Coast



**Simple meals together in silence and gentle taped music**

we followed the Exercises in English or French. However, because of the lockdown and border closures as a result of Coronavirus, we were all obliged to do it in French at the Capuchin Retreat Centre, Abidjan. The

retreat was moderated by Fr Edouard, a Jesuit from France, together with two Xaverian Sisters and a consecrated virgin as our spiritual guides /companions. As participants, we were 14 students of the Missionaries of Africa, plus 2 Sisters of the Poor and a Claretian Sister. I feel this wonderful experience of searching for the face of God and his will in my life is worth sharing with others. The Ignatian Exercises are not new to me since I already had an experience of them in the Novitiate. However, this 30 complete days and nights in silence with the Lord was quite a unique experience. This special time was a pilgrimage in the search for



**After the meal, the washing up, still in silence**



**Daily Eucharist and prayer together**

God's presence; a time of discernment, a time of prayer and intimacy with the Lord, a time with myself and with Nature. Despite knowing it was coming, when the date and the duration of the retreat was finally

announced it shocked me and I thought, "30 days of prayer and silence! God help us!" When they heard about it, my family members and friends were equally surprised that I would be following such a retreat. This was a good opportunity to shed a little light for them about the Ignatian Exercises that many people, including some religious people, are not aware of. Explaining it to others helped me get used to the idea also. At last, the long awaited month arrived and once it started, the month which looked so long and daunting, turned out to be the shortest spiritual time ever for me. So many things changed for the better because of the spiritual and human nourishment of this pilgrimage with the Lord. First of all, the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises have helped me to get deep down within myself, to come into contact with the Lord and to listen to the different voices inside me (conscience, habit, self-interest, laziness, God etc) with discernment to recognise them for what they are and choose to follow the right one. It helped me to understand myself at last as a beloved sinner, loved and forgiven by God with the invitation to show the same Christ-like attitude of forgiveness to others. An invitation to work and live in the knowledge of His compassion, in His endless desire to bring reconciliation and love among people and with Nature, and above all, to commit myself to caring for the poor, the

marginalised and the abandoned of our society. A society indeed full of violence, hatred, conflict and division. But as the Risen Lord had pity and love for the poor, so am I invited to be a sign of consolation and hope for those afflicted. These cardinal points of my retreat are central to the mission of our Society of White Fathers. The “one to one” encounters with my spiritual companion (a consecrated virgin) was a time of sharing, of openness and of discerning my spiritual journey with God. Through “the principles and foundations”, the graces asked in the



**Growing closer to the Lord in prayer**

midst of my meditations and contemplations, the discernment of the spirit, “the two standards”, “the three degrees of humility”, and all the other “stages” of prayer through which I was led following the Exercises, I was able to enter into the spiritual pattern of Ignatian prayer. It all sounds very technical and complicated, but in reality these were the prayer images that were radical and inspirational, helping me

make a choice between my old ways and new ones, between God’s spirit and the spirit of the world. Above all, the Spiritual Exercises gave me the will power to find God’s presence, solace and joy through silence and profound listening to myself and the will of God. The interior freedom and the thirst for God became a reality by the third week of my retreat. Really, I had the experience of God speaking in silence and in calmness. The confirmation that this was real is that I continue to experience an interior joyful state in my life, my prayer and meditations and my sharing with others. I was able to prioritise what is of God and let go of what is not. This was possible because my experience was built on the solid foundations of the tried and trusted methods of the Spiritual Exercises. I began to see more clearly what is essential in my life and



what is “fake”, what gives real peace and fulfilment and what is merely temporary. What more? This exercise is not only a spiritual pilgrimage but it can bring psychological and emotional healing. The Ignatian Exercises can be considered as a great healing process, comparable in some ways with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. It can help to alleviate emotional and behavioral patterns in our lives that fuel depression and other forms of mental instability or illness. Thus, simply dismissing these exercises as just a spiritual obligation for priests and religious is



**Moses and 2 sisters ready for mission**

a serious misrepresentation of what they really are. The meditations and contemplations, the abstinence and asceticism, spiritual encounters with the companion/guide and a lot more, help to overcome spiritual blockages and a harmful pride which often expresses itself in passion and addiction to evil. Even though people nowadays often shie away from notions of “sin” and “unworthiness”, the Ignatian Exercises are still relevant to us in the 21st century. They are relevant not just to Religious and clergy who are seeking a pathway to holiness

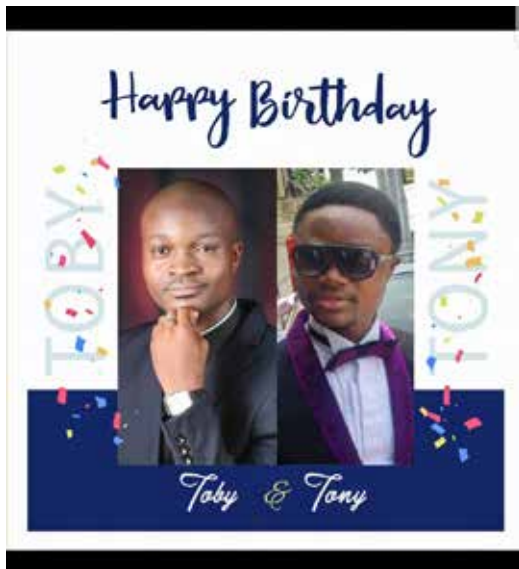
but also as an authentic response for any Christian seeking repentance and reconciliation with God, with others, with oneself and with Nature. They retain their relevance and spiritual popularity because of their spiritual and psychological healing. God willing, these Exercises will prove a solid basis for my life as a missionary of Jesus Christ to the people of Africa.

# I would have died for being a twin!

*by Fr. Toby Ndiuwku MAfr, an Igbo Missionary of Africa at present working in a parish in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso.*

The killing of twins particularly in the southern part of Nigeria is one of the most horrible experiences my mum ever shared with me. It was an ugly experience she had to go through as a newly married woman.

Back in the days, twins were considered a bad omen and a threat to the peace of the community. There was some superstitious belief held by



**Twins Toby and Tony celebrate the gift of life**

so many people about twins decades ago. Most communities in southeastern Nigeria believed that twins had some mysterious magical and diabolical powers; making them demi-gods. They were perceived as evil.

The archaic practice resulted from some old belief system which couldn't demystify or explain why a single pregnancy could yield two children at the same time. This was for the traditionalists a taboo and a curse to the family. In fact, at that time any

tragedy, misfortune and any disaster encountered in the community was quickly attributed to twins. Hence the need to exterminate them. Most women prayed not to have twins, and those who eventually had twins and were able to, separated from them and gave one out to distant relatives in neighbouring villages for fear of losing both in a brutal manner.

Because the local community felt insecure having twins in the community, to cleanse the land and avert any impending doom in the community, any twins were taken and thrown into what was considered at

that time an evil forest, which was just less than a kilometre from my village, to die or be devoured by wild animals.

This was a tragic and terrible experience for the mothers. My mum showed me some of the elder women in her village who remained childless, particularly her close friend back in the days, who lost two sets of twins to these pitiless men who came to take the infants away. Furthermore this was not just limited to twins alone, but also to any child who began to teethe earlier than expected. This act of cleansing and disposal



**Toby next to his Mum and whole family on his ordination day** ing and getting rid of newly born twins in the community. These infants were put into a jar before been thrown into the evil forest and exposed to the cold and and dangers to die. So cruel!

My mother, who was newly married at the time was scared as she was yet to conceive and ignorant of what fate had in store for her. However she resigned herself to the will of God.

Mary Slessor, a Scottish woman who worked for the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria for some years, championed the fight and crusade against killing of twins. However even after her death, the practice continued for awhile. Years later with the coming of more missionaries, the movement and the crusade to abolish the practice became stronger. These missionaries played a significant role against the practice of infanticide. Many pregnant women and nursing mothers of twins fled

from their homes at night to the Church or mission hospitals to seek refuge.

The perpetrators of this killing of innocents were unable to find twins to annihilate and this practice gradually diminished and today is a thing of the past.

Shortly before this practice was stopped, my mum began having her children. Today she has nine children and amongst them are three sets of twins all alive. How lucky she was! Luck smiled on her or else she would have had to mourn the death of six of her children (twins). I, and some of my siblings who are twins would have been victims of this gruesome tradition if it hadn't been for the intervention of the early missionaries.

**Mary Mitchell Slessor** was born on 2nd December 1848 in Aberdeen, Scotland. The family went to find work in Dundee and Mary started working at the age of 11. Her father (an alcoholic) and 2 brothers died of pneumonia leaving Mary, her mother and 2 sisters. Both she and her mother were devout Presbyterians and when she heard of the work and travels of David Livingstone in East and Central Africa she was inspired to offer herself to the Foreign Missionary Board. Arriving in Calabar (now Nigeria) in September 1876, she began to work and set about learning the local language (Efik). After 3 years she returned to Scotland suffering from Malaria, but returned 16 months later to the mission in Calabar. Most of the money she earned was sent back to Scotland to support her mother and sisters, so she economised by living as simply as possible in lodging and food. This brought her nearer to the local people and meant that she learned the local language well. After the death of her mother and sisters back in Scotland she devoted herself ever more zealously to the Efik people. She particularly encouraged the care of women and rescued hundreds of twins destined for abandonment and death. These twins were raised and then later were living proof of the falseness of the beliefs which would have condemned them to death. In spite of recurrent fevers Mary worked on until her death 1915. Her memory is greatly revered in South Eastern Nigeria.

# Twins amongst the Yorubas

*by Michael Okunola, a Yoruba student of the Missionaries of Africa. Michael has just finished 2 years working in a parish in Malawi and is now preparing to start his first year of Theology in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo.*



**My sister and I have our place in the world**

social, human, divine, spiritual and physical. Before delving proper into how the Yorubas see twin children, it is important to say something brief about the perception of the Yorubas about Children in general, as understanding this will help us to understand the beliefs of the Yorubas about Twins.

Children among the Yorubas are considered to be blessings from God, in fact, they are considered as true wealth. So much so that no matter how rich, famous or influential a person might be, inasmuch as such a person is childless, he or



**We love our parents and depend on their care**



**We can be troublesome or a joy**

she is considered to be poor. This is because children are seen as true legacies, and are also the ones to whom the riches and the talents of the family can be entrusted. So, if one is very rich and is without children, such a person is considered as having nothing, because all his or her wealth will go to another person after his or her death. Thus, children are seen as the only true legacies/inheritance/inheritors to leave behind, for they are the ones to carry on the traditions, beliefs and the good name of the family and the larger community.

Now, let me delve properly into the worldview of the Yoruba people about twin

children. First of all, in the Yoruba culture, there are some sets of children that have predestined names. By predestined names, I mean these are names which are automatically given to children who fall into certain categories. Twins are among those who fall into these categories of children that have predestined names -the first twin to be born, whether a boy or girl is called Tayewo meaning literally 'The one to taste how the world is'. The second twin is referred to as Kehinde which literally means 'The latecomer'. Kehinde, though being the last one of the twins to be born, is considered the elder of the two. This is because, it is believed by the Yorubas that Kehinde is the one who sent Tayewo to come first into the world, and see how the world is. When Tayewo arrives and sees that the world is good and fit for living, he or she signals by crying, then Kehinde after getting the signal and understanding the meaning, follows suit.

Secondly, as earlier stated, a child is or children are very important among the Yorubas. But when a woman gives birth to Twins, they are considered as a very great blessing to the family. This is because for the Yorubas, the normal occurrence of child bearing is giving birth to one child at a time, but the birth of twins is considered to be an extraordi-

nary occurrence, and because of this it is believed that they bring good luck and prosperity to any family, village or community that they are born into. Although, the birth of any child is well celebrated among the Yorubas, the birth of twins is celebrated in a more special and unique way. Also, twins are considered as magical and powerful beings – since their birth is considered extraordinary, they are also seen as children who have been endowed with supernatural gifts and powers and most importantly they are always under the protection of the gods. Thus, no one tries to harm any of the twins or any one that is related to them. If any attempt is made to do so, it is believed that unspeakable evil will befall such a person, or even the entire community. More still, the upbringing of twins is more relaxed than that of normal children because twins are treated with love, care and reverence, since as well as blessings they can also bring about disaster and bad luck to the family. Thus, to avoid



**We've got a great future ahead of us, bro.**

the twins getting angry and bringing about misfortune, the family tries to keep them happy at all times.

Today, the Christians and Muslims among the Yorubas no longer adhere to many of these beliefs about twins, except the belief that they are a blessing from God and that they bring good fortune to any family and community that they are born into. But the Yorubas who still practice the traditional religion still hold to all of these beliefs about twins.

## Fr. Nelson Ekeh Chinedu MAfr.

Nelson, who wrote the 1st article in this issue of the magazine was ordained priest together with other deacons in his own diocese of Awka, South-East Nigeria on Saturday 3rd. October 2020.



Nelson was accompanied by his friends, family and Parish Priest.

The choir played to celebrate the continued growth of the Church and the sisters prayed for the new priests to be humble servants of the People of God and to be faithful to the



Lord who called them.

Then the Bishop of Awka laid hands on the deacons and prayed that the Holy Spirit come down on them and work through them to proclaim the love of God for His Creation.







The parents of the newly ordained priests brought up the offerings of bread and wine.

This reminded all present that just as the priests were offering their lives, so the parents were offering their sons and all was taken up in the self offering of Jesus Christ.

The traditional horn was blown to alert everyone in earshot that something very important was happening and summoning everyone to take heed.



At the end of the ceremony the new priests greeted the people and gave their first blessing.

After the Mass the bishop spoke with the new priests who as priests are ordained as his helpers, and congratulated them on the great and generous step they have taken.

Fr. Nelson is the one with the contagious laugh.



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**Parents & Friends Association**

## **EVENTS**

***As I am sure is the case with many of you, there is not much to report with all the isolations, quarantines, lockdowns and social distancing.***

***All of us here in Rutherglen are well, thank God, and continuing to pray every day at Mass for all of you our benefactors, friends and family.***

***We ask you to continue to pray for us also and pray that soon things may be back to normal, whatever the new normal might be.***

***We ask you also to remember in your prayers all those who are alone or prevented from visiting the sick, the confused and the elderly.***

***May Our Lady of Africa pray for us all.***

# Your charitable prayers are requested

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



**Mrs. Joan Farukh**

**London**

**Paul Saunt**

**Broadstairs, Kent**

***During this month of November,  
we pray for all  
our readers, benefactors, friends  
and family who have died.***

***It is normal that we pray for one another,  
so you are invited to send in  
the names of any people  
whom you know  
and for whom  
you request prayers***

**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.

The Bursary Fund is open to donations of all kinds, large or small.

***Donations should be addressed to:***

### **THE WHITE FATHERS**

15 Corfton Road,  
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### **THE WHITE FATHERS**

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GLASGOW G73 2NG

Every letter or donation receives a personal acknowledgement.

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*Thank you for your generosity.*

*Whether you help us by regular Standing Orders, by Gift Aid, by giving what you can when you can afford it, or by supporting us with your prayers, we thank you all most sincerely.*

White Fathers in England & Wales:

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**Find out more about us at:**

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