

# Petit ECHO

2023 / 03

1139

Prophetic witnesses  
through our lives



MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA





In the second issue of Petit Echo 2023, we talked about how to share our charism with the laity, in other words: the experience of a "shared mission".

In this third issue, dedicated to the evangelical counsels, we go a little deeper in our reflection. Shared mission with the laity speaks of a Christian life that is incarnated and committed to a missionary project born of the experience that each of us has of God's love. The link between the sharing of our charism and the sharing of a faith experience seems obvious to me: there can be no "shared mission" without prophetic witnesses.

Living our faith fully in a globalised world can be challenging, but it is possible when we take the time to have a strong relationship with the One who sends us. Thus, at the same time as we profess the evangelical counsels, we clearly manifest God's love for the world in a much more mature and conscious way. Our mission becomes visible only when Christ becomes visible in us.

Synodality will require us to change certain overly vertical, distorted and partial visions of the Church, the priestly ministry, the role of the laity, ecclesial responsibilities roles of governance and so forth.

*Pope Francis, 9 October 2021.*

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Salvador Muñoz-Ledo



## Prophetic witnesses through our lives, followers or influencers ?

With the media boom concerning social networks, a new terminology has emerged to describe the new realities accompanying information and communication technology development. We can now google, tweet or retweet, gamer, and blog, but also block (someone or some content), e-market, tag and like or not. These new functionalities have given rise to specific and increasingly sought-after jobs in the virtual world: fob manager, hot-liner, pentester, scrum master, and social media manager (you'll have to google to understand). Whether we like it or not, in one way or another, we, too, the Missionaries of Africa, are concerned.

### **Followers and influencers**

In social media, there are many ways in which we can be followers and influencers. Followers follow influencers, and the latter, through their posts, sometimes direct the lifestyle, diet, choice of book to read and the choice of what the users purchase. Now I open a new tab or a new page. In the search box, I write prophetic witnesses through our lives - the main theme of this issue of The Petit Echo, which invites us to reflect on the dynamics of the evangelical counsels in our daily lives. I then google, and it's off to a good start: identity and role of the witness, being God's witnesses, becoming a witness to Christ... and another 416,000 results found in 0.39 seconds. I then write evangelical counsel. After 0.49 seconds, there are more than three million results. There is too much to read, and I risk getting lost. So I disconnect. You have to do that quite often for a well-balanced life.



**Pawel Hulecki**  
General Assistant



Some of the last freshly closed web pages are still ringing in my head. Followers and influencers... but that's who we are! We are followers... of Christ! We have made a radical choice through our missionary oath to dedicate ourselves until our last breath to the Mission of Christ by living according to our Constitutions and Laws, which express our particular lifestyle. We are also influencers because our way of life can inspire those we meet on our missionary journey. And we are aware that our way of life often has a very significant impact on people's lives.

### ***Prophetic witnesses through our lives***

On 13 June 2022, on the occasion of the meeting of the members of the 29th General Chapter with Pope Francis, our Superior General expressed our desire “to form ourselves continuously to live, in radical fidelity, the commitment of our missionary oath to be authentic and credible apostles among ourselves and

among the people to whom we are sent. (...) In a world (...) where the unbridled quest for personal well-being calls into question the evangelical counsels, we continue to rekindle in our hearts the passion for mission and the desire to live this mission in true, sincere and fraternal communities”. The last Chapter adds: “the lack of personal and community prayer, the poor quality of our community life, the lack of authen-



ticity in chastity and in our relationships, inside and outside the community, can inhibit our fidelity to the evangelical counsels”.

What characterises true followers is faithfulness to the recommendations of the influencer. In our case, this means living the three evangelical counsels that the Christian life proposes us to follow: poverty, or a simple lifestyle for ourselves, chastity and obedience.

### ***Lavigerie and the evangelical counsels***

Our founder was also an influencer. We find reflections and practical recommendations on evangelical counsels in his letters and speeches. Some of them are very radical and strong.

Concerning lifestyle, he asks missionaries to present themselves simply at opening new posts. While inviting them to live detachment and poverty, he mentioned a spirit of renunciation and sacrifice. He asked the candidates for a solid virtue: the strength and courage to bear material hardships. Before committing himself to expenses, he discerned and did not hesitate to consult his missionaries, even if it was he who had to pay. When the Society was in financial difficulties, he asked the missionaries to unburden themselves of essential expenses and to be vigilant: “We are heading for the storm. We must haul the sails”. The impression that the first missionaries would give to the people was very important to Lavigerie.

In one of his letters, he wonders about the causes of the death of the fathers of the first caravan to Timbuktu: “... for me, one of the causes of the death of our dear martyrs is that they carried too much luggage and camels. They were considered rich, which was enough if they had pushed the Tourages...”. He feared that lack of fidelity to the practice of poverty would gradually lead to the ruin of the Society; the admission of missionaries who sought material comfort would be a kind of treason. He regarded poverty as an essential point, saying that the Society would no longer be itself the day poverty ceased to be practised. “Let everything breathe poverty! Let it be one of the distinctive characteristics of our Society and our principal external mortification”.





With regard to chastity, Lavigerie stressed that “nothing is light” in this matter; he urged the missionaries to be modest in their eyes, modest in their clothes, in their manners, in their words and their appearance. The Cardinal exhorted the missionaries not to lose the halo of chastity: “If he (missionary) keeps it, he is an angel, and if he loses it, he becomes a devil”. He spoke of four possible remedies for maintaining this virtue: running away from the problems, frequent confession as a “sure safeguard”, spiritual direction and the Eucharist.

Without obedience, wrote Lavigerie, “there is no real virtue, no grace from God, no apostolate possible. With perfect obedience, on the contrary, all this is assured. In founding the Society, he asked himself if it would be a Society of truly obedient men. He saw obedience as the expression of God’s will; paraphrasing the book of Deuteronomy (11:26), he wrote: “Behold, I set before you this day the blessing and the curse. Blessing if you obey, curse if you do not”. For him, the danger of not obeying was a kind of sacrilege and the ruin of the Mission. Further on, he wrote: “A Society without obedience is a paralytic Society”.

Finally, I remain disconnected and activate the Silence mode to read the articles of our confreres calmly. Among them, there are also influencers and followers of Christ.



## First appointment of young confreres

	NAME	BIRTH	PHILOSOPHY COUNTRY	SPIRITUAL YEAR STAGE THEOLOGY	MISSION
1	<b>KAWENDA Allan</b>	21/04/1994	Balaka Malawi	Bobo Kigali, Rwanda Nairobi	EAP
2	<b>NSHIMIYIMANA Théogène</b>	15/08/1989	Ruzizi Rwanda	Kasama Oshogbo, Nigeria Nairobi	
3	<b>YAMEOGO Paulin</b>	11/01/1994	Ejisu Burkina	Bobo Tapac, Uganda Abidjan	
4	<b>ZIGIHIKA Mathias</b>	26/07/1992	Kinshasa RDC	Kasama Mbarara, Uganda Abidjan	
5	<b>UWAGBOE Daniel</b>	04/04/1993	Ejisu Nigeria	Bobo Kabanga, Tz Nairobi	EPO
6	<b>HAGENIMANA Clément</b>	23/02/1992	Kinshasa Rwanda	Bobo Bolgatanga, Gh Abidjan	GhN
7	<b>AZANGEO Joachim</b>	23/05/1990	Ejisu Ghana	Bobo Aribinda, Bfa Nairobi	Mgh
8	<b>MUGISHO Batumike Alain</b>	16/04/1989	Kinshasa RDC	Kasama IBLA, Tunis Nairobi	
9	<b>KAVISHE Pasian Emmanuel</b>	16/03/1987	Jinja Tanzania	Kasama Katoy, RDC Abidjan	PAC
10	<b>MUGENI Simplicious</b>	30/09/1993	Jinja Kenya	Arusha Kipaka, RDC Abidjan	
11	<b>SARAMBE Célestin</b>	08/11/1986	Ejisu Burkina	Kasama Kigali, Rwanda Nairobi	



	NAME	BIRTH	PHILOSOPHY COUNTRY	SPIRITUAL YEAR STAGE THEOLOGY	MISSION
12	<b>ABUH</b> Anthony Ejeh	09/07/1989	Ejisu Nigeria	Bobo Jelibugu, Mali Abidjan	PAO
13	<b>ATSINAFE</b> Moses Odogbor	30/11/1990	Ejisu Nigeria	Bobo Korhogo, RCI Abidjan	
14	<b>CHINKONDENJI</b> Titus	13/04/1995	Balaka Malawi	Bobo Bobo, Bfa Abidjan	
15	<b>IWUALA</b> Nicholas	08/02/1993	Jinja/ Uganda	Kasama Agbowo, Nigeria Nairobi	
16	<b>KATULUSHI</b> Leonard	20/07/1993	Balaka Zambia	Bobo Nyamey, Niger Abidjan	
17	<b>NIWAMANYA</b> Crescent	28.07.1989	Jinja Uganda	Bobo Sindou, Bfa Abidjan	
18	<b>ARIHO</b> Henry Moses	09/03/1985	Jinja Uganda	Arusha Marseille, France Abidjan	PEP
19	<b>KIMEMBE</b> Kabobo Emile	10/11/1992	Ruzizi RDC	Kasama Toulouse, France Abidjan	
20	<b>BIBOMWIRAGI</b> Jacques	10/03/1990	Kins RDC	Kasama Chezi, Malawi Nairobi	SAP
21	<b>HAKIZIMANA</b> Christophe	08/09/1991	Ruzizi Burundi	Arusha Sussundenga, Moz Abidjan	
22	<b>OUEDRAOGO</b> Mathieu	14/04/1991	Ejisu Burkina	Kasama Salvador da Bahia, Bzi Nairobi	
23	<b>SALAAM</b> Peter	05/03/1991	Ejisu Ghana	Bobo Falajè, Mali Abidjan	
24	<b>VILLAYER JR.</b> Hilario	01/08/1983	Cebu Philippines	Kasama New Kaloko, Ndola Nairobi	

Robert B. Tebri,  
Secretary for Initial Formation





## Jesus sends us into community

I would like to share what has helped me so far. The word I like to say to Jesus is: "help me to keep your commandments and may I never be separated from you!"

### Prayer life

It is in praying that we learn to pray. Just as the taste of the pudding is in the eating! Prayer is the time and place where we become more aware of our relationship with God. But be careful! I am not saying that it is the time or the place where we are in a relationship with God. It can also be a place where we are not with God. However, in prayer, I am in a position to be aware of my relationship with God because prayer aims to be only a relationship with God. In my prayer, I stop my present activities, and to a certain extent, I suspend time... I isolate myself, at least psychologically or even geographically...



This "break" is quasi-necessary in prayer, at least when I pray for a long time. Jesus himself sometimes spent time alone with his Father, a break or desert time. This break is compulsory in Muslim prayer. There is a kind of delimitation of space... at least virtually. This is materialised by the use of the prayer mat, which is only used for this purpose... One should never disturb someone having his prayer... he can do it in the middle of the street, in a crowd...

Prayer constitutes a kind of pillar of our being with Christ. Remember Mark's reflection in his gospel about the apostles... "Then he went up the mountain and summoned those he wanted. So, they came to him, and he appointed twelve, they were to be his companions... and to be sent out to proclaim the message" (Mk 3:13). Mission springs from the heart of God: "to be with". The mountain is the place where God



speaks; a place of listening, of revelation, but also of interiorisation. Paul speaks of his vocation in this way: "But when he who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by grace deigned to reveal his Son in me so that I might proclaim him among the nations at once..." (Gal 1:15). "

### **Community of life**

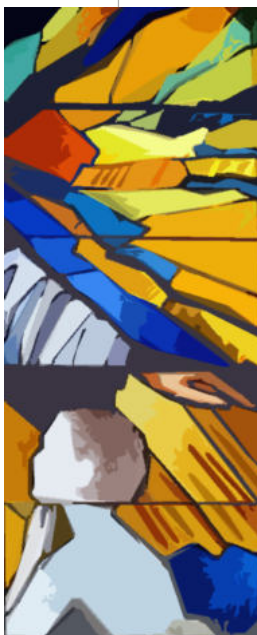
I don't want to be a prophet of doom but expect the community to be challenging. There is a transition from death to life even in the best community you can imagine! Why is this so? Because it is in the community that we reveal ourselves as we are; there is no escaping. The community, therefore, becomes, at the same time, the revelation of mercy. Community experience is so vast in its components that I will only detail a few of them. They all overlap in one way or another. But each of the components reveals to us the presence of Christ in our midst and the meaning of his mission. This community is a life-sharing community, of witness, of work

and of welcome, to mention only a few aspects.

### **To make Eucharist.**

If I use the verb "to make eucharist", it is with good reason. The Eucharist is not only what we commonly call "the Mass", this act, this liturgical celebration that we experience every day, at a given moment. The Eucharist encompasses our whole existence. It

is not just a pious activity; it is something that takes all our being. The missionary offering in the Eucharist is also our self-offering. We are sent to many corners of Africa. We do not send ourselves. We are sent to the people. The Superior General and his Council send us. They have a broader view of the needs of the Church than we do. We are consulted; that does not mean that we decide. It is like leaving our motherland to accomplish the mission entrusted to us. It is the concretisation of our vocation as Missionaries of Africa through our missionary oath, through our freely



proclaimed 'YES'. The offering we freely make to God is ourselves! "I urge you then, brothers, remembering the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, dedicated and acceptable to God: that is the kind of worship for you as sensible people." (Rom 12:1).

### **Meeting the neighbour - far away**

Looking at the Gospel from a new perspective and with more attention, we see that it is made up of a web of encounters. It is a continuous flow of people who enter into a relationship with Jesus. This relationship becomes life-giving. Finally, Jesus did not live very programmed "as we are...". We see that he lives his existence with extraordinary intensity and exceptional availability. He is different and lives beyond our religious universe, the one that is not of the elite... of the house. It seems to me that every missionary should have some attraction to this one. Not only an attraction but a kind of empathetic predisposition... a priority reflex.

The distant other can evangelise us because the Word precedes us in mission. Our work is like that of John the Baptist: to introduce Jesus and let him speak to the people to whom he has sent us (Jn 1:26-27).

In this way, we learn to meet people and to be open to welcoming them. We need to reach out to people, to create links... We should know how to listen to them. The missionary does not have the right to speak about God unless he learns to be more human from his interlocutor.



François-Xavier Bigeziki



## La Plante Community - Namur



La Plante is an old hamlet on the banks of the Meuse (left bank) between Wépion and Namur (in the Walloon Region of Belgium)

We are seven Missionaries of Africa in our retirement home in Namur; our average age is 89. We have three confreres who only make short trips to the pharmacy or the river to say hello to the ducks. A fourth, who loves nature and is economically minded, tend the garden (apples, rhubarb, tomatoes, flowers). Three go out for apostolate, meetings, parish ministry, and to meet people; they go on foot, bike, bus or car. There are three confreres who have difficulty standing on their legs; they have

fallen on several occasions. Two do not have the strength to preside at the Eucharist.

It is not easy to grow old, or to accept the decline in one's capacities when for years we went about, taught, gave formations, and celebrated the Eucharist in large, prayerful and singing assemblies. We felt recognised, respected and loved. Now it is no longer about doing, but about being, a missionary in terms of 'well being '.

I spent 51 years in Africa, committed to the apostolate, parish ministry, formation of the laity, and spiritual accompaniment. Given my good health, I wanted to continue my life in Africa; but while on leave, the Delegate of the Belgian Sector during one of my holidays asked me to join the Namur community, and replace the superior. Detachment and obedience to join my confreres in their evangelical poverty.

### **What testimony?**

How do we observe the evangelical counsels today? If you visit us, you will find confreres who are welcoming, smiling, attentive to each other, with humour, and who tell each other with a mischievous look: "What do you want, my dear, we are little old men". Don't you see this as a testimony to poverty? The people who visit us are not mistaken: "It's nice to come to you, they say. What a simple and warm welcome!"

What is apparent to any eye is that our attachment to Jesus has not aged. Our prayers, attitudes, reflections, and attention to a healthy ecology to save our 'common home' (Pope Francis) bear witness to this.



La Plante - Namur

The love of Christ is the secret of our serenity, our mutual aid, and our chastity. It is the joy of our hearts. We are not embittered old men, we are attentive to those with whom we live, especially the female staff who look after us 'with the utmost care'. We are a family that has grown over the past year with the arrival of six Africans, four diocesan priests and two brothers, students at Lumen Vitae (Higher Institute of Catechesis and Pastoral Care), and one lay student, who is very helpful and gifted in





computers. In all, the community is made up of seventeen people, including the staff, of which fourteen are residents.

Our community life project is not a piece of paper but a way of life. To obey is to accept oneself, accept the other, give oneself time, have a good chat, know how to disconnect, even the devices, contemplate the colours of nature, talk to God, and say thank you, in short, those little things that brighten up daily life, without forgetting to laugh at our foolishness together. A community that does not laugh anymore is in danger of death. Neither dwelling on the past, nor feverishly worrying about the end of life, but a peaceful presence to God and to our neighbour in the actuality of life. A Missionary 'being well'!

However, there is an important and current issue. The Belgian Sector is considering regrouping the communities in Brussels and Varse-nare. So, what future awaits the house in Namur?

Growing old requires courage and humility to allow oneself to be led: "When you are old, another will gird you up and lead you where you do not want to go" (Jn 21:18).



Jean-Pierre Bondue





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## Prophetic witnesses through our lives

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When I decided to be a missionary, in my mind it was to 'conquer the world and win it for Jesus Christ' (song of the time): a conquest mentality. "*To give people to Jesus*"; I had to give these people everything they lacked so that they could go to Jesus.

### **In Mali**

I arrived in Mali and found myself working in primary evangelisation. This all-encompassing work suited me: helping with health care, building a maternity hospital, teaching, and services of all kinds...

But I knew that this was not the main thing. The aim is not to do good to hundreds of Africans, to interest them in what we do or to increase the number of those baptised; the aim is for these people to meet Jesus and for it to be a personal encounter for them.

Activities are only means, what counts is our personal love for Christ that makes us carry out these activities. For this to happen,

it must be concretely manifest in our lives. Witnessing not by words or by activities alone, but by our life.

So. I 'fabricated' a catechism. It was not a question of knowledge or of things to do. I asked the catechumens what they experienced (working in the fields, having a family, raising children, etc.); from there, this catechism invited the catechumens to reflect: how is Jesus concerned by this human experience? My training in the human sciences led me to choose this method of catechism: to start from human realities rather than from the definitions of the Councils (without forgetting them, however).

I would later start a school for novice masters and mistresses. The essential thing was not to give courses on religious life, the vows, community life and the apostolate. But at the heart of these teachings, and above these teachings, this school for novice masters and mistresses was based on fraternal life.



The novice master is not the one who dictates what is to be done, but the one who demonstrates it by the way he lives with the novices.

I agree with what '*Deus caritas est*' says: "Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction".

Before the publication of this encyclical, my time in a mission of primary evangelisation clearly showed me that one should not look for visible things: the things of faith are in the heart; it happens between the Christian and God, a God-made man, Jesus!



### In Care Home

Now, I am in an EHPAD (Establishment for dependent elderly persons); the orientation of my life does not change: my "prophetic" witness is not through actions or gestures that are specifically Christian, but it is always a witness of life: I have no catechism to give, no specialised teaching but simply, I have people to meet, either by mail or right next to my room or at the table where we eat together. It is that confrère that I help to find the fork that he cannot see, the napkin that he has put the wrong way, etc. In all, to consider him as a free man, with dignity: giving him his dignity while helping him.

In this EHPAD where White Fathers and non-Christians live together, the White Fathers' way of



life spreads to the laity (Christian or not). For example, our WF custom was to buy an aperitif on our birthday. But for some time now, other residents have been doing the same thing: it is fortunate that many of us have our birthdays on the same day since there are about a hundred of us, otherwise, we would have an aperitif every three days, which at our age would not be wise! Yes, our life testimony is a good thing!



Yes, I believe in human realities, and I think that is where life in Christ slides in!



Jean Cauvin



## Prophetic Witness through living the Evangelical Counsels

I must say that I was a bit surprised about the topic and still more that this is addressed to a bishop. Bishops, once they are ordained, according to Canon Law, no longer belong to a religious congregation or an institute. I think that most people, when they hear about ‘Evangelical Counsels’ link it with religious life where they take the three vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. How does that then relate to our missionary Society of the M.Afr. and to the life of a bishop?

I would say that as Missionaries of Africa we aim at an apostolic life in community and our primary goal is the proclamation of the gospel in the African world. All our life should be geared towards this. One particular feature for us M.Afr. is that we want to do this as a community which is of course very evangelical. Did Jesus not send his disciples two by two and not as loners? This means that we are called to live the Evangelical Counsels in a particular way different from the way religious

would live this. By the way, the Evangelical Counsels are meant for each and every Christian (see the Catechism of the Catholic Church nr. 915) even for lay people, though they will live it adapted to their way of life.



Cathedral of the Holy Spirit,  
Bethlehem, South Africa

According to my personal opinion, having lived as a Missionary of Africa for many years both in Africa and in Belgium, the two poles around which our life is centered are community life in the service of the mission and proclamation of the good news. What does this ask for concretely? Being free, even from marriage, to dedicate oneself completely to Christ and the people we are sent to, being witnesses to the gospel values summarized in the beatitudes which includes detachment from material things and individualistic tendencies. Community life can help us to grow in this spirit. Community life lived in this way becomes then already a Christian testimony and witness. Of course, the community life I mean is one which is at the service of others and not just a cozy self-centered

cocoon but an open family where Christian love is practiced, a love which is always outgoing. Did Jesus not tell us that fraternal love is to be the mark of a Christian community? “This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15, 12). A popular song expresses it very well: “By this they shall know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another”.

### **What does this mean for me as a bishop?**

First of all, I want to state firmly that I never cut the link with the Society of the Missionaries of Africa. I tried as far as possible to attend Sector meetings and keep up to date with developments within the Society of the Missionaries of Africa. When going on home leave I enjoy the hospitality



Marian Shrine of Our Lady of Bethlehem at Tsheseng, Diocese of Bethlehem, South Africa





In gandoura, the 'pioneers' who founded the formation house in Merrivale, South Africa, where Jan De Groef was one of the first formators.

of the confreres at the Linthout Visitors' house and try to visit the various communities of our confreres in the Belgian sector. What lifestyle concerns I try to limit the expenses paying for some items from my own pocket money. Whenever people give me some money when visiting the various communities/parishes of the diocese on the occasion of ministering the sacrament of Confirmation or for other parish visits, I always make it clear that that money goes to the diocese.

I try to be available at all times when priests want to see me or share some painful or joyful experience with me via the phone or

email. I am part of the WhatsApp group set up as a means of communication between the priests working in the diocese and also to the one set up for the bishops of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conferenc (SACBC).

### ***I miss community life***

I must say that I miss community life. For some years a confrere, Fr. Fons Vander Boer, joined me at the Bishop's house. I enjoyed that time very much having Mass and Vespers together each day (whenever I was at Bishop's house) and having a special time each week having a drink together while sharing unofficially.





When Fr. Fons returned to Belgium there was a real vacuum.

Since several years now there is a diocesan priest staying with me. He came to Bishop's house because his medical condition does not allow him to work in a parish. He has to go three times a week for dialysis. But in this way, I had another companion with whom I could share. He is always in good spirits notwithstanding his state of health, really a challenge to many of us, myself included, who so easily complain when something goes against what we have planned. Concerning contact with confreres, I try to use occasions to visit confreres. When I have to go to Pretoria or Johannesburg or have to fly outside of the country, I often pass at our house in Edenglen (Johannesburg) and often spend the night there which presents an opportunity to share with Fr. Matthieu. When going to Natal, for the SACBC Plenary for instance, which is held in Mariannhill, I try to spend a day at our formation centre at Merrivale near Howick. The rector knows that he can always call upon me for administering the ministry of acolyte or for the diaconate.

What keeps me going as well is a well-ordered prayer life, though I am alone now, daily Mass whether there is a community or not and the breviary next to spiritual reading. What sustains me as well spiritually is my contact with the Focolare spirituality which has nourished me all throughout my life as a missionary and even as a missionary bishop. I hope that very soon I shall be released from my episcopal ministry – as I turned 75 in January this year – and will then be able to return to a M.Afr. community somewhere in Belgium.



Jan De Groef



## Witnesses to Evangelical Life



Pope Francis has reminded us on countless occasions that the Church must renew its missionary impulse and constantly remain "on the move". This is the very character of our Society. The last Chapter has just reminded us clearly: "Mission must be a prophetic witness".

I remember a moment that marked my life. We were in Chapter and, as is often the case in these meetings, we asked ourselves once again: "Who are we, Missionaries of Africa? I will not go into the details of the discussion, but I remember the answer we arrived at: "We are disciples of Jesus who have experienced the beauty of the Gospel; we want to share our happy experience and become witnesses to it in the African world.

However, there comes a time in

our lives when "going out" is no longer about crossing oceans and "mission" is no longer about action; age undermines our strength or failing health diminishes our capacity for action. How then can we remain "prophetic witnesses of the Gospel? It is in the heart of our communities that our "going out" must take place, and through our daily fraternal life we will become communities that are "prophetic witnesses" of the gospel.

When Christ called us, he did not say: "I have chosen you to go and work! Rather, in St. John, we read, "I have chosen you and instituted you that you may go and bear fruit and that your fruit may abide!" Also in the fifteenth chapter of John, Jesus gives us a shortcut to bearing fruit: "What I command you is to love one another as I have loved you!"

Jesus went further: through his life and teaching, he revealed to us the 'spirit' that must animate us if we are to be true disciples, full members of his Kingdom. I would like to share with you what this text suggests to me, and how I try



to translate it into my life, hoping not to get caught up in any strict exegesis.

The first call I feel before this text is an invitation to simplicity, which resounds from the first beatitude: "Blessed are you who are poor in heart".

This is, of course, an invitation to simplicity in the use of material goods! Luke, in his parallel text on the beatitudes, does not say: poor IN HEART, but simply: "Blessed are you poor!" We know how Christ had a predilection for the poor, the little ones, the humble among whom he himself was born.

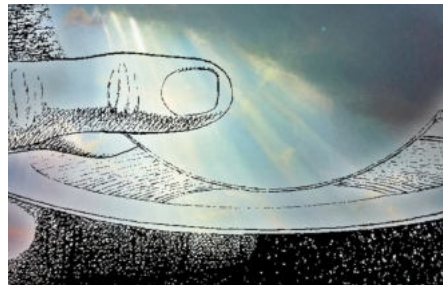
And precisely, material poverty promotes spiritual poverty, the opening of the heart to receive from God the gifts which he wants to fill us. This is undoubtedly what Matthew wants to highlight, by adding poor "of heart", inspired no doubt by the tradition of the "little

remnant", of the "poor of YHWH", of the "humble" of which Zephaniah speaks in his second and third chapters.

I would even venture to add: the beatitudes invite simplicity in relationships. Who recognises one's own limitations, weaknesses and poverty, meets the other person with gentleness, and without pretension. Of course, some people are gifted with very special talents and are called to more important tasks in our communities, whether ecclesial or civil. Both Paul and Peter take this into account when they list the charisms! However, Christ cautioned these people: "Whoever wishes to become great among you must become your servant".

### ***The path of the beatitudes***

Another call that I feel in this account of the beatitudes is an invitation to "come out of myself", to "be open to others", and to "care for the common good". "Blessed





are the poor in spirit, blessed are the meek, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the peacemakers, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice. To live the beatitudes is learning to step aside, to make room for the other; it is being truly present and attentive in every encounter; it is having a benevolent attitude towards the other that does not judge, that sees the good rather than the shortcomings of the other; it is always being ready to render a service.

Moreover, I am convinced that embracing the attitudes that Jesus describes to us in his sermon on the mount is not only drinking from the source of our personal happiness. It is at the same time creating a new community, a living cell of brotherhood radiating Christ.

The path of the beatitudes is the path of what is sometimes called the "little virtues": simplicity, humility, patience, self-giving, forgiveness, and joy, which transform daily life into an evangelical life and make our communities "prophetic witnesses of the Gospel".



Denis-Paul Hamelin



## Prophetic Witnesses through our Lives

The story tells us that St Francis, when he was sending out his brothers on their first mission, said to them: “Preach the Gospel at all times; use words when they are useful!” He sent them out, not so much to preach the Word, as to BE Good News. They were to be witnesses of the Gospel in everything that they did and said; they were to proclaim the Gospel by their very way of being. And the same can be said of us. We too are called to be witnesses of the Gospel, not only when we preach in Church on Sunday but by our very way of being.

### ***My own experience***

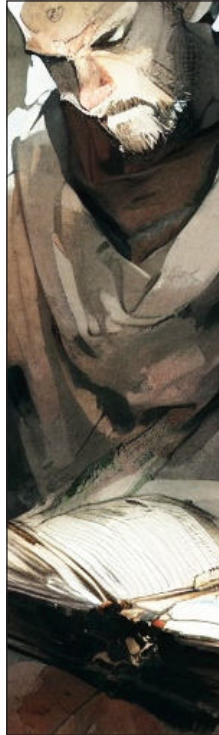
When I look back at my own personal history, I realise that there have been a number of such witnesses of the Gospel who played an important role in my life. In the early seventies I was going through a period of confusion. I had been a candidate of the M. Afr. but had

left. I returned home and did a degree at the local university. But I did not know what I wanted to do

in my life: should I find a job in Ireland and get married or return to the Society and become a missionary? It was with this question in mind that in 1974 I went as a lay missionary to Uganda to work as a teacher in the minor seminary of Kabale.

During the week I was busy teaching but on the weekends I had nothing much to do, so on a number of occasions I accompanied one of the Fathers who used to animate days of recollection in the Poor Clare monastery in Mbarara. I was particularly struck by the Poor Clares

who welcomed us. They did not speak much. But I saw that they lived a very radical style of life: working in the fields or singing the praises of the Lord in the chapel, but all the time they seemed joyful and serene. Seeing them I asked







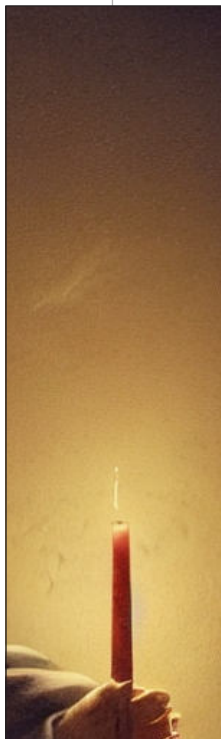
myself why they were so joyful in spite of (or maybe because of) their radical lifestyle and why was I less joyful (in spite of the fact that my life was less radical and demanding). The silent joy and dedication of the sisters challenged me. They, like St Francis' first disciples, preached the Gospel to me even though they used very few words. Sometime later, during a retreat, it became clear that my vocation was to be a missionary and the rest is history! I can say in all truth that I am a Missionary of Africa today thanks, at least in part, to the witness of joyful and dedicated Poor Clares.

The example of those sisters illustrates for me what prophetic witnesses of the Gospel look like. They are people who, in spite of human limitations, live the Gospel and put it into practice in the reality of their lives. They live what they say and say what they live. Their life is characterised by an authenticity and an inner coherence – without any ambiguity or “short-cuts”. And they are joyful.

### **What are the witnesses of the Gospel?**

Witnesses of the gospel are characterised by a certain “lightness”. They hold the things that they possess in open hands and are ready to share without any self-centred calculation. They are deeply committed to whatever they have been appointed to do, but they are ready to move on if and when they are asked by the church or the Society to undertake a new task. They have some warm and healthy friendships, but without any unhealthy clinging or manipulation.

Another essential characteristic of a witness of the Gospel is joy. The witnesses of the Gospel whom I have known personally are basically happy people. They are happy in their Christian lives and in their vocation - which does not mean that everything is necessarily working out well for them or that they don't have from time to time to face serious challenges. But they have an inner peace – which is not surprising since “peace” was the







first gift that Jesus gave to his disciples after the resurrection. These are people who, by their way of living, convey the message that the Gospel really is Good News – and that cannot be done if they have a perpetual scowl on their faces, if they are grumpy and sad and if they are constantly complaining about this or that aspect of life.

A credible witness of the Gospel lives what Jesus said: “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” (Jn 15:11)

This joy will, in my experience, express itself in simple ways such as a smile, a friendly word with a confrère at the breakfast table, a cheerful and constructive presence at a community meeting. It is said that Teresa of Avila repeated: “a sad nun is a bad nun”. We could

just as easily say: “a sad missionary is a bad missionary!!!”

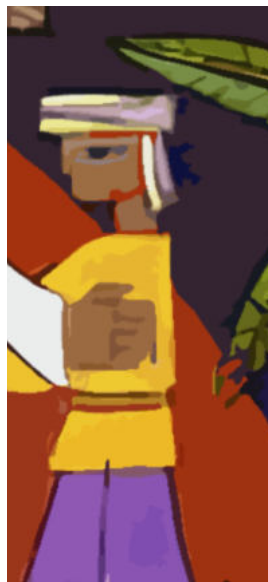
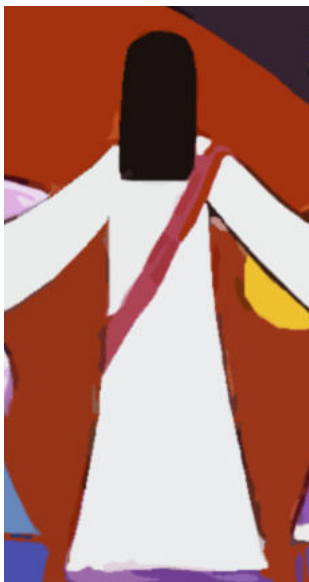
May we be authentic, zealous and joyful followers of Jesus who live what we say and who say what we do! And may we bring the good news of the Gospel to our world, not just by our words, but by everything that we are.



Dave Sullivan



## Dreams of Emmaus



One-night last week I dreamt that I met with the late Cardinal Martini. We were happy at the encounter, and we embraced. I felt delighted and woke up with a smile, but also surprised, wondering...

That same day I received a message from the Petit Echo asking 'to participate in the animation of the confreres by contributing with an article on the theme: Prophetic witnesses through our lives.' And somehow, prophetism and my dream with Martini connected. I remembered how during the Eu-

ropean Synod of 1999, Martini made a memorable speech in which he began saying that, like Cardinal Hume in a previous Synod speech, he also had been dreaming. His dreams, like that of Cardinal Hume, concerned prophetic signposts for the future.

### ***The first of three dreams***

There were three dreams. All embodied in the experience of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. The first of the dreams concerned Christians becoming



more familiarized and illumined by the Bible. In a society and a time when so many seem to go searching on the road without actually finding... When so many feel unsatisfied, disappointed, and angry... At a stage when all seems relative, transitory and untrustworthy... In times like these, Martini said, 'I would not entrust myself to wise formulas of doctrine or to a detailed collection of do's and don't's. One needs to be touched by a power capable to change the perspective, capable to make the heart ardently burning, to light the imagination and open new possibilities to hope. Only the Bible, with its stories and narratives... Only the word of prophets and apostles... Only the word of Jesus can offer the light, the consolation and the capacity to be born to a new spiritual journey.

In a world indifferent or partly hostile, we have to make our proposals clear, warm and convincing because they are a witness, the film of a real experience... like the one the Emmaus pilgrims met on the road. All formulas can be argued; the only power we now have is that of the Holy Spirit. The Scripture is normally its spark.

## ***The second dream***

The second of the dreams, is about the Encounter. A biblical spirituality enables Christians to cross ecumenical bridges: 'We have found in the Bible a very broad terrain of understanding with other Christian communities' a reformed protestant said. Or like a Greek orthodox put it: 'Contemplating the Word of God we give you the icons and you give us the *lectio divina*'. As prophetic witnesses we should meet anyone not in the abstract -as belonging to a group or society described by scholars- but as persons, living in that group or society, with many desires, hopes and expectations as well as skepticism. And like this, sitting and sharing at the same table -caressed by the word of the bible- we may find common ground.





## The third dream

The third dream comes when the experience is interiorized, and we together become ready to confront issues together and freely cooperate in different activities in our search to turn history into holy history. The Word turning into Action. I find the *Lectio Divina* a good, practical, venerable method:

- Lectio*: reading respectfully every word, listening to any verb, watching any character in the story.
- Meditatio*: permitting the *lectio* to touch me in my circumstances, offer me an insight, realizing how this or that seems to have been written for me now with this particular aim.
- Contemplatio*: as at the table of Emmaus, remain for a time quiet, focused, letting everything really go in and become part of me, changing me.
- Discretio*: permit the experience to discern for me a road to take, what to do or how to do it.
- Deliberatio*: becoming ready, decided to follow that road with its imperfect sides... and at last the *Actio*: go back to the road and share and proclaim in Jerusalem, Galilee and to the ends of the earth. Prophet proclaiming the word of Another, word which has become my word.

I wonder if these lines meet somehow what I have been asked: to share something about how I see the theme “Prophetic Witnesses through our lives”.

Emmaus is the chosen icon, painted by the Chinese He Qi in those two images. The word dream goes well with the biblical prophets, often people with a dream, often illumined and ready to act as prophets through a dream. The presenting the story in team with Martini was something given... in a dream!



Jesús Maria Velasco

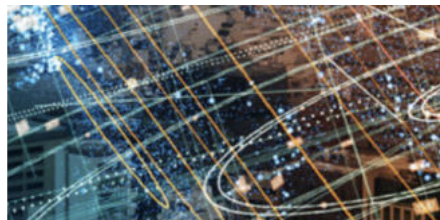
## The effects of posting our activities on social networks

Are we valued or judged by the number of things we post on social networks? Will our assessment of a confrere's pastoral commitment be based on the images posted on WhatsApp, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, Imo, etc.? What should I post and why should I post it? Who are the beneficiaries of my posts?

In fact, no person of goodwill would deny that the development of science and technology has helped us a great deal in some respects, especially when it comes to sharing information. Today, we can know what is happening all over the world in a short time, thanks

to the various modern means of communication. A lot of people inform their colleagues about various events happening in their mission, their joys and sorrows, happy days and difficulties, successes and failures, disappointments and encouragements. Through social networks, we can exchange ideas to improve our performance or service where we are sent.

We learn something new usually when we listen to or read about the activities of our confreres in different parts of the world and in different fields. Thanks to what we see, we can improve our activities or advise them to do better since what they share is often accompanied by small videos or photos. The new evangelisation advises us to use new methods to announce the Good News. By sha-

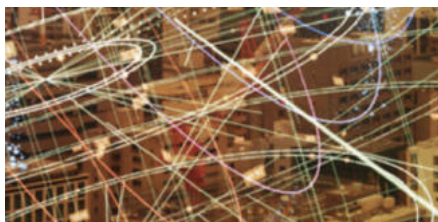






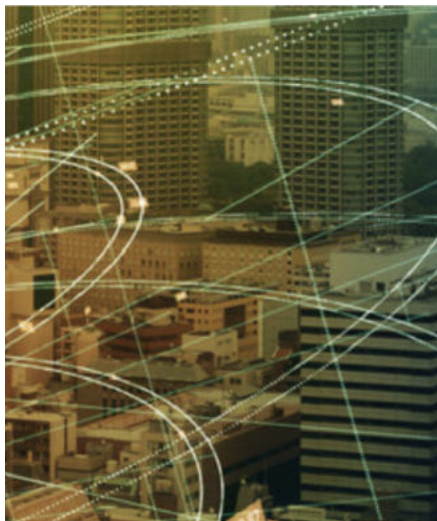
ring with our confreres what is happening in our mission countries or provinces, we help them to learn something good from us, and we also give them the opportunity to advise us on how we can improve. Why not imitate the good things that are done elsewhere? For example, in our M.Afr. Society, only PAC had the propaedeutic; but today, this formation phase has been implemented in almost all the provinces. This happened after seeing the benefits of this formation of future M.Afr. Good things are easily copied; that is why it is advisable to share them with others.

Thanks to social networks, vocational animators are also doing their work very effectively today. Young people get to know the Society through the various events posted on social networks, such as diaconate and priestly ordinations, and the calendars posted, even if some of the photos posted on these calendars make us wonder about the motivation of the person who published them.



## ***Some Critical Questions***

The many benefits of the use of science and technology mean that we must evaluate each publicity with great care. Before thanking, judging and praising someone for what they have posted on social networks, we must first assess the authenticity of what they post. The questions asked by some confreres of goodwill who want to know what other confreres are doing in their mission country: what are you doing? where are you? we don't see you and we don't know what you are doing, have pushed some confreres to start posting different events of their pastoral activities, without even considering the sensitivity of the beneficiaries of our pastoral services.





We are slowly being pushed to make ourselves known, appreciated and praised through our posts. We are already in danger of rushing to post our activities. A few examples: you visit a sick person at home or in the hospital; then you take photos, and short videos, of the sick person, and then you post them without even asking the person. You go and bless a house or a car, and then you post the pho-

tos without the owner's consent. The reactions of some of the people whose photos we posted on social networks were not positive. Why do we post and what do we post? These are the most important questions to answer before we post anything. We are not there to market the services we provide to our brothers and sisters. Nor are we there to expose the state of our brothers' and sisters' lives without their consent. There are things we can share with confreres in our social networks, and others we should not even dream of doing, out of respect for the beneficiary of our services.

### ***Other considerations***

When we base our assessment of someone's commitment and pastoral effectiveness on what they post, we risk entrusting responsibility to someone who will not be able to meet the demands of the apostolate. Let us thank God for the efforts of our leaders to visit each community and witness what is happening there. Through the posts we share on social networks, we give the impression of being very effective and our names are sung and praised everywhere when the truth is quite different. Many confreres do wonderful work in





silence for the glory of God; they don't want their left hand to know what their right hand is doing. Why use the media to impress people about our pastoral commitment, and abuse the media to achieve what we want? Are we going to rely on pictures posted on WhatsApp, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, Imo, etc. to assess the pastoral commitment of a confrere?

The proper use of media will help us to improve our pastoral engagements. We can learn from each other through what we share in the media and learn the good things that others are doing, imitate them and endeavour to do them where we are. But to post the activities done by others in our own name, without even mentioning the names of those who worked for the success of that activity, is an abuse; I call it glory-seeking and

praise. So the question remains: are we going to rely on what is posted on WhatsApp, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, Imo, etc. to evaluate the pastoral commitment of the confrere?

I wish us all good use of social media.



Elias Peter Kapange



## It's all in the look



Is there anything more important in life than human relationships? I don't think so! Everything else is important. And how we look at each other plays a significant role, and it greatly influences our human relationships. Looks do not deceive; they're the revelators of our most hidden thoughts and feelings. The main organ of vision is our thought; we see with our ideas.

We sometimes need to realise that our interpersonal relationships change according to the messages our eyes communicate. Looks that can be admiring, benevolent, approving, etc., but can also be suspicious, accusing, incredulous.

I am in my eyes, in my gaze. My body tells me about the quality of my relationships with others. Certain attitudes, such as trust and kindness, are fundamental in our human relations. Trusting someone, the quality of their presence, and the authenticity of their words is paramount; it makes that person feel safe. Kindness, which consists of wanting to do good to others, is also one of the fundamental attitudes; it is the most radical aspect of love. At the end of my life, I will strip myself of everything except one thing: the love I have received and the love I have given during my life.



Pope Francis said: "In a civilisation paradoxically wounded by anonymity and, at the same time, obsessed by the details of other people's lives, the Church needs to contemplate, stop and be moved by the other, whenever necessary". His motto also speaks about looking: 'I am a sinner on whom the Lord has turned his eyes'.

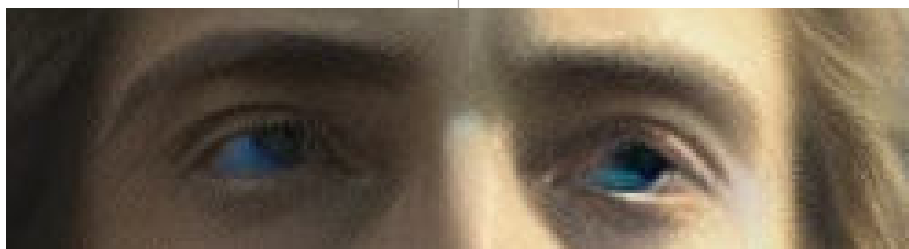
A look can establish a bond; very often, a look says more than all the words in the world. There is no need to speak when you have a look that speaks volumes, and we know very well that what the voice can hide, the look delivers. The possibility of living begins with the look in the other's eyes. There is strength in the eyes. A look of hatred destroys; a look of love changes a life. To live, you must have been looked at at least once, loved at least once, and carried at least once. Once you have been shown this, you can stand alone. Love, esteem, and self-respect, these feelings arise in us and make us aware of our dignity. We

now know we have a reason to exist since we exist for another.

A loving look captures in the other person the brilliance of their inner treasure; the eyes distinguish what is best in them. A look that overflows with love is clear; it does not lend intention; the authentic look does not judge. A friend, a true friend, is also a witness, someone who helps us to evaluate our own lives better.

It is a fact that others influence us, that the tone of their voice moves us, and that their look intrigues us. A Flemish proverb says that words awaken, examples attract, and their works transport us. It is also true to say that the look in other people's eyes is a pressure from which it is difficult to be completely free. Even when we pretend to be, it rarely leaves us indifferent.

The need to please and the lack of self-confidence create expectations and make us very sensitive to how others perceive us.



A productive look, a gesture, or a genuine word frees us from these expectations and makes us more confident, responsible, and supportive.

In the loving gaze of another person on us, the most marvellous thing is what we discover from this gaze and what we learn about ourselves. You look to love, but you also love to look.

I followed with great interest what the media told us about the departure of one of our best hockey players, Guy Lafleur. He was good on the ice, said one journalist, even better off the ice. Another interesting comment tells us: "He loved everyone; it showed in his eyes, and everyone loved him. Guy, it was said, was much more than the guy who scored goals; he was the guy who touched lives. During his funeral, the beautiful song, 'l'essentiel', which was composed by Charles Aznavour and the lyrics by Michel Jourdan, was sung by Ginette Renaud and was thought-provoking:

"The essential thing is to be lo-

ved, contrary to all that one can say. It's not fortune or fame that is just wind and fury".

What has been happening on the international scene since February between Russia and Ukraine makes us discover another view that one can have of the other.

This look of superiority, domination and jealousy that some Russian leaders have for their Ukrainian sisters and brothers divides instead of uniting, provokes war instead of peace and hatred instead of love, and sows a climate of terror, fear and anxiety throughout the world.

What about the look in Jesus' eyes? "He who went about doing good and healing all who had fallen into the power of the evil one" (Acts 10:38). Meeting a good

person is contagious; Jesus was that bonding figure; his look, his example, and his words attracted many people. It is good to stop and capture the looks of Jesus through the Gospel stories, knowing that as Christians, as well as observing the looks of Jesus, we are







invited to pass them on by seeing others as He did.

The tender look he gives to Mary Magdalene: "Mary" (John 20:16). The merciful look he gives to Zacchaeus: "I must stay with you today" (Luke 19:5). The questioning look he gives Philip: "I have been with you so long, and you have not recognised me" (John 14:9). His compassionate look at the blind man: "What do you want me to do for you? Let me see again" (Mark 10:51). This gaze of Jesus on others, this gaze of the Triune God on each of us, his children, is awe-inspiring: to discover oneself worthy of being loved in this way is capable of making love spring up in a heart, as from a rock, a spring.

Nelson Mandela said: "We should have luminous eyes because by making our light shine, we offer others the possibility to do the same". And I like this African pro-

verb from Burundi: "The light of God shines in the eyes of every child". You have to know how to look at life with children's eyes. Only a child dares to look into the distance, sure of the arms that support him and the love that carries him.

I like to end my article with this beautiful song: "Do not be afraid, let yourself be looked at by Christ, let yourself be looked at, for he loves you".



Gabrielle Lepage,  
MSOLA

## Missionary Societies want to think mission from Africa



The continental meeting of Missionary Societies of Apostolic Life (MISAL - SMVA) is held every two years, explained Father Stanley Lubungo, a Zambian priest and Superior General of the Missionaries of Africa, commonly known as White Fathers. It brings together about ten missionary societies, mainly founded in Europe. Co-organised by the Missionaries of Africa (M. Afr) and the Society of African Missions (SMA), the 2023 edition brought together 12 superiors and vicars general from eight of these congregations. They

are the leaders of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME), the Paris Foreign Missions (MEP), the Society of the Priests of St James (SPJ), the Mill Hill Missionaries (MHM), the St Patrick's Missionaries (SPS). Representatives of the Missionary Society of Saint Paul, founded by the Nigerian Bishops' Conference, were also present. According to the White Father, others could not attend due to administrative problems.

### **Thinking “Mission from Africa”**

“Mission from Africa” was the theme that animated the exchanges, sharing and reflections during this meeting. The participants wanted to reflect on what the increase in the number of members of African origin in their Societies signifies and on the opportunity it represents. These congregations, Father Lubungo noted, began with members mainly from Western countries. Over time, and especially after the Second Vatican Council, they opened their doors to Africans. For



the Missionaries of Africa, as for the Society of African Missions, the number of African members has increased, with significant participation in the mission, said the Zambian missionary. This is why these societies focused their reflections on what this growth brings and “the contribution of Africans to the universal mission,” he said.

### ***Challenges and opportunities***

For the Superior General of the Missionaries of Africa, the presence of African members in these Institutes “is a great opportunity for the universal Church to grow because the Churches in Africa still

have many vocations and they are young and dynamic “. Another advantage, he stressed, is that Africans have become missionaries themselves and “this offers the opportunity to deepen the work of evangelisation started by our Western confreres. The latter did an enormous and much-appreciated job, “but they did it as foreigners”. Although Africans are also “foreigners” in other African countries where they go on mission, they are better placed to initiate and continue the work of inculturation of the good news, having a better knowledge and closeness to their cultures, he argued.



The participants of the continental meeting of the Missionary Societies of Apostolic Life, visited Cardinal Jean Pierre Kutwa, Archbishop of Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

Among the challenges, Fr Lubungo highlighted the tribalism that also affects members of these Institutes. He called for going beyond this vice, living true solidarity, often recognised as one of the qualities of Africans. Another problem, he noted, is financial issues. The missions in Africa have “remained dependent for a long time on the contributions of Western confreres”. Therefore, he said there is a need to work and educate members and collaborators on good management for the mission to move forward.

### ***Collaboration in formation and solidarity among missionaries***

Among the prospects for the future, the White Fathers’ General mentioned the collaboration in formation that these missionary Societies wish to increase.

They especially want to work on a formation programme to help Africans become missionaries in Africa. They also think of promoting “a fraternal solidarity that must be lived on the mission field” because “an isolated missionary is in danger”. It is a question of encouraging “collaboration on the ground and not only in meetings”, said Father Lubungo. He shared that the members of these Societies are proud to be missionaries and hopeful that the mission will continue, especially with the large number of vocations in Africa and Asia.

Stanislas Kambashi, SJ  
Vatican City

<https://www.vaticannews.va/fr/afrique/news/2023-04/les-societes-missionnaires-veulent-penser-la-mission-a-partir-d.html>



## Candles offered for you at St Anne's, Jerusalem



Lord...

May this candle, which I now inflame, be a light through which you enlighten me, in all my difficulties and decisions,

May it be a flame by which you burn away my pride, my egoism and every impurity within me, a flame through which you warm my heart and teach me to love.

Lord...

I cannot stay long in your Church, but I wish to offer you a part of myself, which will remain here with this burning candle. Help me to continue my prayer in the deeds and work of this day.

Lord...

A candle stands before me. It burns restlessly, sometimes with a small, sometimes with a larger flame. Lord, I, too, am often restless. Let me find rest in you.



It gives me light and warmth,  
Lord, let me, too, be light for the  
world.

It burns away and consumes  
itself in its service. Lord, often I  
have only an eye to my own inter-  
ests. Let me be a servant to others.

This candle can be used to light  
other candles. Lord, let me be-  
come an example for others.

Candles themselves cannot  
pray, of course, but they can help  
us to pray. Candles have various  
meanings in people's lives: Each  
candle is in some way a reflection  
of that light which came into the  
darkness of our world in Beth-  
lehem. A candle also reminds us of  
Baptism, the beginning of our way  
with Christ and the call to life, to  
eternal life.

May you discover more and  
more the meaning which light has  
in your life !

Peter Smith





## Fraternal and synodal communion



The permanent consecrated persons of the Diocese of Laghouat-Ghardaia, originating from 5 continents: Africa, Europe, Asia, America and Australia.

The commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops took place on Saturday, 17th October 2015, in the Paul VI Hall in Rome. "From the Second Vatican Council to the present Assembly, we have experienced in an ever more intense way the need and beauty of 'walking together'", said Pope Francis. The Church, God's family, has been called to a Synod from October 2021 to October 2023.

### What is a synod?

The word "synod" is ancient and venerable in the Church's tradition; it draws its meaning from the most profound themes of Revelation. It indicates the path along which the people of God walk together. It also refers to the Lord Jesus, who presents himself as "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6), and to the fact that Christians, his disciples, were initially called "followers of the way" (cf. Acts 9:2; 22:4; 24:14).

## What does synodality mean in concrete terms?

It is the process by which all the people of God walk together, listening to the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, participating in the mission of the Church in the communion Christ has established among us. This journey of walking together is the most effective way of manifesting and putting into practice the nature of the Church as a pilgrim and missionary People of God (PD, 1).

Synodality refers to that particular style that characterises the life and mission of the Church, expressing her nature as a people of God who walk and gather to-

gether, called by the Lord Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel.

Between Monday 13 and Saturday 18 March 2023, our small Church in the largest area of the Algerian Sahara had a unique and memorable experience of fraternal and synodal communion.

This year in our annual assembly, which resembles and moves all the permanent members of our Diocese of Algeria, we were assiduous like the apostles of the first Christian community. We began with a day of spiritual recollection inspired by the Acts of the Apostles 2:42: "They were diligent in the apostles' teaching, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayer"



The White Fathers in the Diocese of Laghouat-Ghardaia after the Chrism Mass, 2023



Like the Apostles, illuminated by the light of the Risen One, we shared fraternally about our life in the Church and our spiritual life: the meaning of the Eucharist in our present-day context (joys and challenges), among other exciting topics.

Our bishop, in calling the assembly, wrote: "This year I want it to be simply a time to be together, as in a family, to share our lives, one by one or in small groups, of prayer together", in short, experience a deep fraternal communion. Our "walking together" is what best expresses the nature of the Church as a pilgrim and missionary people of God.

### **Ecclesial formation**

The question then is: "How does our Church community train its pastoral workers so that they are more capable of "walking together", listening to each other, participating in mission and forming themselves?

To answer this question in our Diocese of Laghouat-Ghardaïa, our Ordinary stated for this year of the synod: "The main purpose of our assembly is to bring us together, the fifty or so 'permanent' members of the Diocese of Laghouat-Ghardaïa and as many of our other lay people as possible, for a "family" fraternal time to know each other better and share our lives and charisms etc."

Thus, for a synodal church: where communion and participation reign, for a fruitful and flourishing MISSION, we are invited to love each other as he has loved us (Jn 13:34) and to learn to walk together in truth.



Vincent Kyererezi

# Jubilee of 60 years of St. Stephen's parish

## *A thanksgiving to the Lord of the harvest*



St Stephen's Parish, Kinshasa

60th anniversary of the parish of St Stephen: thanksgiving to the Lord of the harvest.

If for the Lord, "a thousand years are like a day and a day like a thousand years" (Ps 90:4), for man, time is measured in seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years. It is in this perspective of time that the Lord has led his mission, through the power of the Holy Spirit and through the daily efforts of the missionaries of Africa, to live as authentic witnesses of Christ, in the unity of soul and spirit, with and among the people

of Kisenso for 60 years now. The jubilee year was officially launched on 23 January 2022 with the theme: "Self-help: participation of each Christian for the development and progress of the parish". It was first to remember in order to know each other better, then to give thanks to God and finally to project ourselves into the future.

### **Remembering**

The duty of memory consists in remembering the history of this parish. It all began between November 1959 and May 1962: in November 1959, at the request of Father Alphonse De Coninck, then parish priest of Saint-Alphonse de Matete, Father Paul Warmoes, M.Afr, a teacher at the University of Kinshasa, started "a regular Sunday service" on the hill of Kisenso. At that time, there were only about thirty families, a small number of Christians. Little by little, Kisenso grew due to the rural exodus. A pastoral ministry began to emerge. The land for the parish was acquired on 24 October 1960 by the signing





From left to right: Michel Agoh, Jean Paul Cirhakarhula, Richard Ujwigowa, Paschal Bapuoh, Alphonse Somda, Armand Dakuou, John Mitumba, Alex Manda and Prosper Mbusa

of a deed of gift from the then chief of the land of Kisenso to Father Warmoes. Erected on 6 May 1962 and placed under the patronage of Saint-Etienne by Mgr Félix Scalais, the first bishop of Kinshasa, the parish was initially a branch of Saint-Alphonse parish. To show his closeness and love for the people of Kisenso, Father Warmoes thought of helping the population through social works: building a primary school, a social home for women, a mutual aid society for the needy and unemployed through Caritas-Kisenso and a first aid service every Sunday. Father Albert Devos, also M. Afr., succeeded Father Warmoes as administrator in 1968. Father Paschal Bapuoh is the present parish priest. The parish has seen many leaders and pastoral

advances. It has given birth to other parishes such as St. Mary Magdalene, St. Felicity, Good Shepherd, St. Cyril, St. Trinity, St. Thomas, St. Ambrose, etc.

### Thanksgiving

There are 21 Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC's) in the parish and more than 15 commissions. The parish has also had several original sons and daughters enter the religious and priestly vocation. It should also be noted that the parish houses confreres in two parishes: St. Stephen's and St. Felicity. It has also contributed to providing drinking water to the population through a project to distribute spring water to fountains in the neighbourhoods. All its social, edu-

cational, charitable, catechetical, and pastoral works and the life of its predecessors have been, for the faithful and the Missionaries of Africa, a reason for thanksgiving. It was in this joy of thanksgiving that the Jubilee of 60 years of existence of St. Stephen's Parish was held on 11 September 2022. The mass was celebrated by Fridolin Cardinal Ambongo, Archbishop of Kinshasa. It was a question of saying thank you to God for the existence of the parish, for what has been done by the Missionaries of Africa and all our predecessors (priests, brothers or lay-people, living or deceased): they have done hands and feet for the work of evangelisation in this underprivileged area of the city of Kinshasa.

The thanksgiving celebration was preceded by many activities since its launch on 23 January 2022. Before the celebration day, spiritual and cultural activities took place in the framework of the 60 years: inter-group and inter-parish tournament, recollections and retreats around the theme of the Jubilee, days of prayer and adoration and choir concerts. In order to give visibility and colour to the celebration, the organising committee made loincloths and T-shirts. All these

pre-festival activities already put the faithful in the joy of thanksgiving for these 60 years. The reception of the cardinal in the parish touched the faithful: they believe that he not only saw the reality of their life in the commune of Kisenso, but beyond the precariousness of the road, he sacrificed himself to reach them and share with them the joy of the benefits of God in their environment for 60 years.

It was also an opportunity to install the new parish priest. This installation did not leave anyone indifferent, as they learned about the responsibilities of the parish priest. In order for those who are outside the country to participate in these events and celebrations of 60 years and many other activities, the parish has intensified the use of its Facebook and YouTube pages which already existed during the confinement to evangelise and also to reach the sons and daughters of the parish who are absent.

### **What future?**

In the future, St. Stephen's wants to go further and reach the borders of Kisenso. One of the burning desires is that one day the faithful will learn the gratuity of praying and and for each group to be self-supporting., to be self-supporting



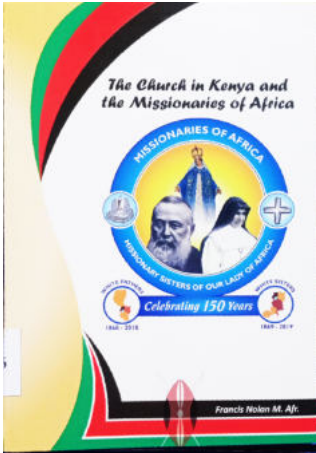
at the level of each group. The confreres have given themselves the mission to do even more to root the faith of the faithful in Christ. With a view to evangelising in depth, they plan to build a chapel at the water source, in order to reach out to the faithful living far from the parish. In this way, they will be able to have regular celebrations. For this reason, they are asking for help from anyone of good will, as the financial participation of Christians in this project is very minimal, given the standard of living of the population.

The Missionary of Africa community of Kisenso is grateful first of all to God for his presence in the mission, for the strength of the Holy Spirit who continues to revive in them the desire to do even better.

The confreres and faithful of Kisenso also express their gratitude to the Society of Missionaries of Africa, especially to the communities of the Kinshasa sector, for their multiple and multifaceted support for the smooth running of the Jubilee. Finally, the Christian community of Saint-Etienne and the Missionary of Africa community entrust to the mercy of God the soul of the parish assistant, Jean Nkongo Lejeune Mizele, who died after a short illness on 21 July 2022, while he was leading the organising committee of the 60 years.

Through the intercession of Mary, Our Lady of Africa, may the law of charity of her Son win hearts and unite them for the greater glory of God.

Simon Dandeyi Tengbani	Jean-François Banse
2 <sup>nd</sup> year stagiaire	2 <sup>nd</sup> year stagiaire
Saint Stephen's parish	Saint Félicité parish
Kinshasa	



Francis Nolan, *The Church of Kenya and the Missionaries of Africa*, Missionaries of Africa, Eastern Africa Province 2018, 110 pages.

The earliest missions of our Society in East Africa were all around the Great Lakes, yet now, in 2023, we have a major commitment in Kenya with twenty-four confreres appointed there. This short history describes how this came about. The earliest missionary work in Kenya was done by the Spiritans, expanding their apostolate northwards from the mission in Zanzibar, and

then along the railway to Lake Victoria. Our Society's presence goes back to those early days.

Fr Ruby M.Afr. bought a plot in Mombasa and founded a procure there in 1903 which was active for twenty-five years. After independence and the old vicariates had become Africanised dioceses, the Society spread out from its early missions. Chaplaincies, teaching, refugee outreach and ministry to street children drew a number of Fathers to Nairobi. Interservice was founded to supply goods to Uganda. The Gaba catechetical institute moved to Kenya after General Amin took power in Uganda. Responsibility for Eastleigh and South B parishes was undertaken. As Nairobi became a centre for theological studies, Balozi seminary was founded for our theology students and staff was provided for the development of the Catholic University of East Africa and Tangaza College. How all this came about is explained. The history concludes with the disastrous fire which consumed the parish church at the South B. A fine new Church would arise phoenixlike from its ashes.

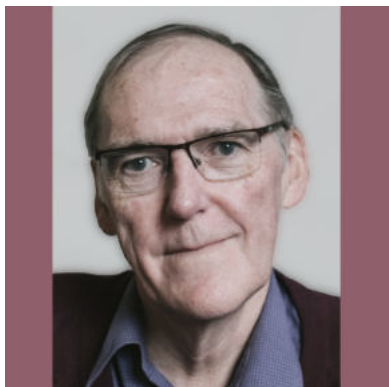
Copies of the book are available from the Provincial of East Africa for a modest price. (PO Box 21030 Nairobi).

Francis Nolan



## Stanley Dye

### 1953-2020



<b>Born in:</b>	Sunderland, Great Britain on 16/05/1953
<b>Sp. Year:</b>	Kasama, Zambia on 01/10/1983
<b>Oath:</b>	Totteridge, Great Britain on 05/12/1986
<b>Priesthood:</b>	Sunderland, Great Britain on 18/07/1987
<b>Died at:</b>	Wales, Great Britain on 06/12/2020

He had been thinking of voluntary service overseas and at the end of his teacher training he joined the Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM). Many of their volunteers were sent to our missions. In 1975 Stan was sent to Katoke Seminary, Rulenge Diocese in Tanzania to teach science. He taught there for three years. One of his pupils was the recently deceased President of Tanzania, John Magufuli. There were several Missionaries of Africa still on the staff there. He felt drawn to the missionary life as a priest or brother but in the end decided to do another three years as a VMM. In 1979, he went to Lacor Seminary in Gulu Archdiocese in

Uganda. He was there during and after the war with Tanzania. Arriving back home in 1982, he decided to ask to join us. He started in Totteridge in 1982. In 1983 he went to Zambia for the Spiritual Year, one of the pioneers and “builders” of Kasama.

Stanley Dye, known as Stan, came from Sunderland on Wearside where the great monk and Northumbrian saint, Bede, lived. He was born on the 16th May, 1953 to Stan and Pat. His father started his working life as a blacksmith in a crane builder, later moving to office work because of a back problem. His mother worked in the local hospital. He had two sisters, Joyce, the elder and Allison, the





younger. His family was always close and important to him. He was educated at St Thomas Aquinas School in Sunderland before going to Manchester to study to be a teacher at Hopwood Hall, run by the De La Salle Brothers.

He came straight back to St Edward's, his six years as a Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM) being counted as his time of apostolic training. He was fully involved in all aspects of life during his time there, community responsibilities, pastoral activity and studies, completing his STB in 1987. It would be true to say that his pastoral involvement in Kentish Town Parish was very important to him. The friendship he made with the then Parish Priest, Fr George Stack, the actual Archbishop of Cardiff,

Wales, gave him a firm grounding in his priestly life and, as we will see later, was extremely important for his post Sudan life. Stan was already a good example of prayer to other students and the go-to person for advice on good books for spiritual reading. His oath and diaconate took place in December 1986. He was one of eight that year. Priesthood ordination followed in July 1987 in his home parish in Sunderland.

### **Short stay in Sudan**

He was appointed to New Halfa, Sudan. He had two years in PISAI to prepare him for this. He left for Sudan in September 1989. It was not his first visit though as he had managed to go the previous year during the summer break from PI-



5 December 1986, missionary oath at St Edward's College, London.

From left to right: Clyde Marklew, Stan Dye, Claudio Zuccala, Richard Baawobr, Matthew Pathilcirayil, Michael Mawelera, Damien Rwabukamba and Serge St-Arneault.



SAI. He managed a headline in his local newspaper: *Wear priest helps Sudan flood victims*. He was less than two years in New Halfa having to be accompanied home with a kidney problem and a disease infecting the muscles in his spine. The former took months to treat, involving the removal of a kidney. It was over two years of medical interventions before one doctor was able to control the muscle wasting in his back. By that time his mobility was compromised. Many who met him during home leave in 1993 thought that they would never see him again.

Stan would be in pain for the rest of his days. Others would have settled down to a life being helped by others - not Stan! He learned to move well on his crutches, in a wheelchair and to continue to drive a car. He was based in Oak Lodge where he became superior in 1995. You could never ask Stan if you could help make him a cup of tea or get something from the fridge for him. He would do it by himself and make your tea.

George Stack, now administrator of Westminster Cathedral, was a great help to Stan. He started by inviting him to hear confessions a few days per week in the Cathedral.

Doing this, saying Mass at the Sisters in Whetstone, and being near our students in St Edward's, he developed his pastoral skills as a spiritual director. In 1994 he was invited to become a judge on the Westminster Marriage Tribunal having done the relevant preparation. He was a valued member of the tribunal for more than six years.

### **Long apostolate in St Beuno**

In 2000, Stan followed a course in St Beuno's Ignatian Spirituality Centre in Wales. At the end of the course, he was invited to do further training with a view to joining the staff of St Beuno's. He became full-time there in 2003 and was there until his death. He became the longest serving staff member, finding a new path in his missionary vocation. He did not need to do missionary journeys. People from all over the world came to him on their faith journeys. Fr Roger Dawson SJ, the Director of St Beuno's wrote the following appreciation of Stan.

Stan will be a huge loss to us all, personally and collectively. We all knew him for his wisdom and good sense on so many counts, both personally and collectively. He was one of the most compassionate people I have ever met,



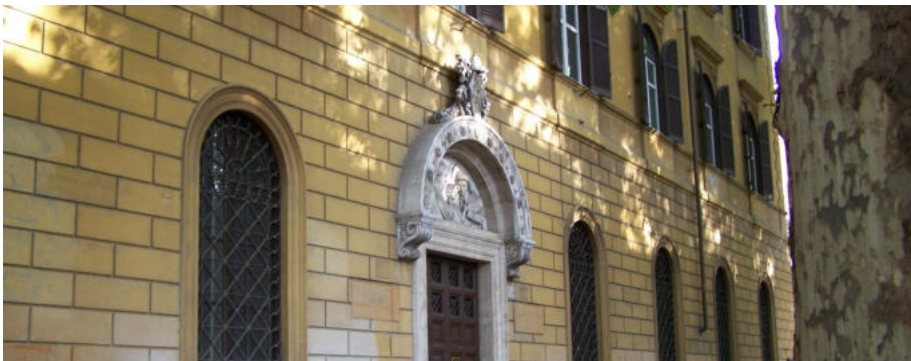
and it is no coincidence that he was sought out as a confessor.

Penitents knew that they would encounter the compassionate heart of Christ in Stan. He was a very gifted spiritual director with huge experience of the Exercises and he provided so much 'spiritual ballast' for St Beuno's. He has probably directed thousands over nearly twenty years here and so many will remember his wise and gentle direction with great gratitude. He suffered enormously in his life. After many years of missionary work in Africa the serious illness that disabled him left him in constant pain. He bore this stoically and with dignity, never wanting to draw attention to himself or seeking special treatment, and with an iron will and resolve that astonished me until I just got used to it. The pain and the suffering is at last

over and we commend this good and merciful priest to the goodness and mercy of God.

Many posts on the St Beuno's Website and on the book of condolences confirm what Fr Roger wrote.

Near the end of October 2020, Fr Roger phoned to say that Stan had been taken to hospital. Covid was suspected but it turned out to be pneumonia and kidney problems. I phoned the hospital asking if we could send somebody down to pray with him the next day, only to be told that it had to be that night. Terry Madden managed to cross the border from Liverpool to Wales and prayed at his bedside. Stan was unconscious. In the morning he was awake. Until he died on the 6th December he would be good for a few days then bad for few days.



PISAI today



Covid made it a hard time for him, his family, friends and confreres. Nobody could visit, neither confreres, neither family nor the Jesuits from St Beuno's. On the Thursday before his death, we were told that he was critical. On the Saturday, his sister Allison came down from Sunderland I went up from London. Stan and I celebrated the sacrament of the sick together. When his sister came, we talked together for a while before I left them together. Stan passed away early on the Sunday.

His funeral on the 16th December in our local parish in Brentford was very simple due to COVID restrictions. Stan would probably have chosen it that way but with just 20 mourners we managed to cover all the families and stages of Stan's life.

His sister Allison came down from Sunderland. As well as this blood family, four former VMMs, three confreres and one MSOLA, represented the VMM family. Confreres and MSOLAs were there from his Lavigerie family and the Jesuit Assistant Provincial and a layman who had been with Stan in St Beuno's represented his Ignatian family.

Stan had a full life despite all the obstacles encountered in his path. He suffered a lot for a large part of it, without complaining, imitating his Lord, who Stan helped many to come closer to. May he rest in peace!

Christopher Wallbank



## Guido Stuer

### 1934-2023



<b>Born in:</b>	Lierre, Belgium on 03/09/1934
<b>Sp. Year:</b>	Varsenare, Belgium on 07/09/1956
<b>Oath:</b>	Heverlee, Belgium on 02/07/1960
<b>Priesthood:</b>	Heverlee, Belgium on 02/02/1961
<b>Died at:</b>	Bruxelles, Belgium on 19/03/2023

Guido's parents lived on Borsbeek Road in Boe-chout, a few hundred metres from our philosophy house. After his classical studies in Berchem and Borgerhout, he entered the White Fathers in Boe-chout in September 1954. After the novitiate in Varsenare, he studied theology for four years in Heverlee, where he pronounced his missionary oath on 2 July 1960 and was ordained a priest on 2 February 1961. During his formative years, Guido received a positive evaluation: he was hard-working, enterprising, self-confident and charitable. He was somewhat impulsive and sometimes overly categorical. He talked easily and was pleasant in the community.

### **Many years in Zambia**

He attended pastoral training in London in September 1961, and in December, he was in Zambia and studied the language (Cibemba) in Ilondola. He also learned Cimbambwe. He was appointed vicar in Mulilansolo in the Diocese of Abercorn in August 1962, where he was the first Belgian White Father. The posts in Abercorn were usually about 150 km apart. In 1964 he was sent to Mambwe and then to Mbala as parish priest. He returned there after his first leave. "Here, it is still real bush work. I pass each day with my people in this enormous parish of 60,000 inhabitants, of which 5,000 are baptised. I speak two African lan-



guages, and I can confess in a third, which is also spoken here. In 1970, Guido escaped an appointment to Belgium. From Mbala, he prepared the foundation of Mpu-lungu, Stella Maris, on the banks of Lake Tanganyika. As parish priest, he built a beautiful church and a convent for Sisters. In 1989, after 15 years of presence, the parish passed to the local clergy.

After a long updating period in Belgium, Guido was appointed to Serenje in August 1990. However, he had to return to Belgium in 1992 for health reasons. He was temporarily appointed bursar in Antwerp. He left again for Zambia in July 1993, but due to health reasons, he had to go on leave more and more often. A change of diocese in 1999 did not bring any improvement to Ilondola in the Diocese of Mpika.

It took several years before Guido discovered and accepted that he was suffering from alcoholism. It had probably started when he was still in Mambwe: "At that time, lions were still roaming around the villages, and I was often alone at home. There was no electricity, and I was afraid, but the fear stopped after a bottle of beer. Alcohol even helped me to prepare

my Sunday homily in the local language! So, alcohol became my friend, and I was unaware of the consequences". When later he was seized by tremors and felt ill, he thought it was malaria: "I took chloroquine with a whisky, and the tremors stopped".

### **Treatment in Belgium, then Zambia and elsewhere**

The superiors then sent him back home with the advice to seek appropriate help. The spiritual and radical change began in the abbey of Orval, which he had been visiting for several years. He entered a coma a few days later and woke up in the Pittem Neuropsychiatric Institute: "I felt ashamed, angry and lost. Here I was after 30 years of missionary life! That afternoon I went to the chapel, where I stayed for I don't know how long: 'Lord, I'm stopping the fight. I've been trying to quit drinking for years; I've been to Jerusalem... Please take this alcohol away from me,' and God did. I felt liberated, and never - I repeat, never until today - did I feel that irresistible urge to drink", Guido noted on 7 October 1992.

With the support of the Pittem specialists, Guido was able to return to Zambia at the beginning of





**LORD, I GIVE UP THE FIGHT.  
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO QUIT DRINKING FOR YEARS.  
PLEASE TAKE THIS ALCOHOL AWAY FROM ME.**

**GUIDO STUER**

July 1993, more precisely to the parish of Ilondola. He returned every year for a check-up. Guido spent several months in the United States from June 1995 for a conference in San Diego. He thought about the possibility of helping other alcoholics. He moved to Lusaka as an addiction counsellor in December 2002. In this capacity, he visited all our formation centres in Africa and elsewhere, religious communities, parishes and schools to give his testimony and talk about his experience with disconcerting simplicity and openness. He stayed in Zambia until July 2012 before moving to Antwerp, where he continued his mission.

His health was such a problem in the last few months that he asked to be allowed to join our community in Evere, a nursing home. He arrived there on 13 February but was rushed to the Saint-Luc University Clinic in Woluwe-Saint-Pierre on 21 February and died there on the night of Sunday to Monday, 20 March.

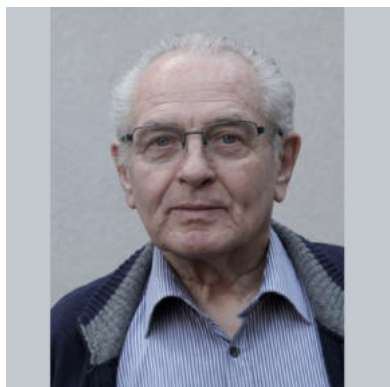
The funeral took place on 23 March in our chapel in Varsenare, followed by burial in our cemetery.

Jef Vleugels



## Heinz Ehrhardt

### 1936 - 2023



<b>Born in:</b>	Bochum-Linden, Germany on 25/01/1936
<b>Sp. Year:</b>	Hörstel, Germany on 08/09/1959
<b>Oath:</b>	Heverlee, Belgium le 28/06/1963
<b>Priesthood:</b>	Großkrotzenburg, Germany on 04/07/1964
<b>Died at:</b>	Trier, Germany on 29/03/2023

Heinz is one of the German Missionaries of Africa from the Ruhr area, an industrial region where heavy industry and coal were the rhythms of social life. He was born on 25 January 1936 in Bochum, in the northern part of the industrial area. His father Heinrich was a postal officer while his wife Luise, née Fietze, looked after their two sons and their daughter. The family lived in and with the Catholic community.

Heinz entered school in the autumn of 1942. The entry into school coincided with the start of the bombing of the Ruhr by the Allies. As a result, he spent more hours in the mine shafts than in class.

His parents sent him to live with relatives in central Germany in 1944. In the summer of 1945, he returned to Bochum and from the autumn of 1945 onwards, he again attended regular school classes. The chaplain helped him to attend the White Fathers' secondary school in Rietberg from Easter 1950 onwards, and in 1953 he moved to the secondary school in Großkrotzenburg, where he graduated in 1958. Life with the Missionaries of Africa in Rietberg and Großkrotzenburg reinforced his desire to become a missionary. He enrolled in Trier and studied philosophy between March 1958 and July 1959, followed by the novitiate in Hörstel and then, in July 1960, began his theological studies in



Heverlee. He took the missionary oath on 28 June 1963 and was ordained a priest on 4 July 1964 in Großkrotzenburg.

### **In Rwanda**

Heinz was appointed to Rwanda and began his language studies in Kigali on 1 October 1964. This was followed by five years of pastoral work in the parishes of Rushaki and Muyanza, where he worked for two years as curate and, in 1970, became superior of the community. In 1973 he moved to the Diocese of Kabgayi and worked in the parish of Kanyanza. A year later, he moved to the parish of Nyagahanga in the Diocese of Ruhengeri. And two years later, in 1976, he was appointed to the parish of Rwaza. All the parishes he worked in were large parishes, divided into outstations and

organised under the direction of a catechist. The priest visited these communities regularly to celebrate the Eucharist and administer the sacraments of baptism and marriage.

Besides his pastoral work, Heinz started a publishing business in Rwaza. He set up an offset printing house to supply Christians with liturgical texts and Christian literature in Kinyarwanda. These were either his own works or translations. His work was necessary because the Church increasingly emphasised the formation of the laity, who had become real actors in the grassroots communities. Five employees in the offset printing shop assisted Heinz in this work. Heinz interrupted his years in Rwaza in 1977 to participate in the great retreat in Jerusalem.



Lac Kivu 2010



## ***In the Congo***

Heinz had to change his direction again in 1992. He was appointed to the Congo and took over the Saint Paul press in Bukavu, Kivu-Presse. Kivu Press was a large enterprise supported by seven dioceses. For the first few months, Heinz moved back and forth between Rwaza and Bukavu. In Rwaza, he organised the transfer to the parish while at the same time initiating himself into the administration of Kivu-Presse in Bukavu. He discovered that the materials needed to run a printing house could only be found on the black market in the Congo, whereas in Rwanda, despite the war, everything was available in the shops.

Moving back and forth between the two places facilitated the purchase of the material needed for the printing shop.

In 1996, political unrest broke out in the Kivu region; Heinz had to leave in October for six months, first to Uganda, then to Germany. During his absence, Kivu-Presse was closed but survived the political turmoil; Heinz returned in April 1997 to resume his work.

## ***In Germany***

The 36 years spent in Rwanda and Congo left their mark: Heinz returned to Germany in 2000. However, he did not yet feel called to a senior life, so he returned to pastoral work. His home diocese, Essen, took him on, and Heinz was appointed vicarius cooperator at the parishes of St Albert the Great and Holy Spirit in Essen, as well as chaplain for the French-speaking African Catholics of the Diocese of Essen. He served in this capacity until the age of 75 when, according to the rules of the Diocese of Essen, priests retire. Heinz nevertheless remained in the parish for a few more years.

His strength diminished, making Heinz join the community in Cologne in 2016. He integrated well into the community and participated in the daily tasks of the house. When the decision was made to close this house for the St. Mary's retirement home, Heinz preferred to join the community of the retirement home in Trier. The move was his last challenge. On 29 March 2023, Heinz joined the Lord in his kingdom.

Hans Vöcking

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## Missionaries of Africa

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**Father François Jaquinot** of the diocese of Belley-Ars, France, died in Bry-sur-Marne, France, on the 20th of April 2023 at the age of 97 of which 73 years of missionary life in Burkina-Faso and France.

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## Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa

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**Sister Johanna van Oostrum (Alphonse Rodriguez).** She died in Boxtel, The Netherlands, on the 21st of April 2023, at the age of 90 of which 64 years of religious missionary life in Congo R.D. and The Netherlands.

**Sister Georgette Léonard (Pascale).** Entered life in Evere, Belgium, on the 22nd of April 2023 at the age of 83 of which 59 years of religious missionary life in Rwanda, Canada and Belgium.

**Sister Felisa Garcia Galan (Belén).** Entered life in Evere, Madrid, Spain, on the 23rd April 2023 at the age of 83 of which 59 years of religious missionary life in Burundi and Spain





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