



DECEMBER 2019



MARIST INTERNATIONAL CENTRE



A GLOBAL MARIST FAMILY

**BUILDING A GLOBAL MARIST FAMILY
CENTERED ON CHRIST AND OPEN TO THE NEEDS OF THE YOUTH**

EDITORIAL NOTES



Br. Anderson Kafatsa

MIC Digest commission is delighted to present this year’s edition (Volume 9 No: 2) to you our esteemed readers.

MIC Digest Newsletter is a yearly publication and this year’s edition focuses on the theme: Building a Global Marist Family centered on Christ and open to the Youth. This is the MIC Community’s theme for 2019/2020 formative and academic year. All articles are inspired by the very same theme.

This edition also provides some tips on how to make a community life viable through various activities mentioned such as prayer, apostolate, sports, religious and cultural celebrations among others.

We thank everyone who contributed immensely especially those who took their time to write all the enriching articles in this Newsletter, those that took part in editing the articles and you readers for showing interest in reading this publication. We hope to continue serving the MIC Community in the dissemination of information.

Enjoy reading this newsletter!!

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THIS IS THE SEASON! THIS IS THE REASON!

By Br. Peter Awoh, FMS



In the midst of the Christmas celebrations lies the hidden danger of forgetting the link between the crib and cross containing two realities of the mystery of incarnation and redemption, the mystery of joy and sorrow. One of St. Marcellin's favorite meditations focused on the crib, the cross and the altar. He frequently advised the young brothers in formation as well as those teaching to place themselves at these three places.

Around the crib in the darkness and the cold, a little straw has been placed, the divine prodigy took place. About the Crib there is only the warmth of two human hearts, the heart of Joseph, and heart of Mary. On the altar, which is the center of the church, the sacrifice of the Cross is made present under sacramental signs. the altar, the table of the Lord, to which the People of God are invited.

According to Fulton sheen, it was not so much that His birth cast a shadow on His life, and thus led to His death; it was rather that the Cross was there from the beginning, and it cast its shadow backward to His birth. Ordinary mortals go from the known to the unknown submitting themselves to forces beyond their control. But He went from the known to the known, from the reason for His coming to the fulfillment of His com-

ing, namely, the death on the Cross. **According to Gregory of Nyssa** If one examines this mystery, one will prefer to say, not that his death was a consequence of his birth, but that the birth was undertaken so that he could die.

The catechism of the catholic church links the cross and the altar. The key to seeing the relation between Calvary and the Mass is the fact that the same identical Jesus Christ now glorified is present on the altar at Mass as He was present in His mortal humanity on the Cross. The catechism of the catholic church states that on the altar, which is the center of the church, the sacrifice of the Cross is made present under sacramental signs. The altar is also the table of the Lord, to which the People of God are invited.

The rule of life of the Marist brothers reminds the brothers of the three first places in line with the founder's invitation. Marcellin invited the brothers to seek out three places of significance: the crib, the cross, and the altar. In these three places, Jesus is the Centre and in them he reveals God's love to us in a deeper way. In the manger we are invited to discover a God who has pitched a tent in our midst one who comes to us as a brother and friend. Christ on the cross as the most radical sign of a God who is love the altar reveals the gift of the mystery of God, service and presence, food and relationship, sustenance and strength. They are three privileged places where in gratitude you can bring your life and deepen your relationship with Christ. (Rule of life of the Marist Brothers, pp. 16)



COMMUNITY LIVING

DEVELOP A HABIT OF HAPPINESS

By Br. Mark Anokwuru, FMS



People are constantly sad and irritated. Some are not friendly sort of persons. Some are worriers. Some are always depressed. Some

would wake up in the morning and find themselves sad. Why are these so? These are learned behaviors. They are habits we developed from our family backgrounds, from the society and from life experiences. The good news is that we can reprogram our computer or better put, we can do cognitive restructuring. Cognitive restructuring is a technique that can help people identify, challenge and alter stress-inducing thought patterns and beliefs. It is an antidote for depression.

Many people wait for their circumstances to be worked out before they decide to be happy. For example, I will be happy when I take the first position in class, when my enemies have apologized for their wrong doing etc. If we want to be happy, we need to make a decision to be happy right now. Listen! Happiness does not depend on our circumstances; it depends on our will. It is a choice that we make. The popular saying has it that, "Where there is a will, there is a way." St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "The first step to become holy is to will it." Will that you will be happy and you will.

If you want to live a happy life, learn to relax, learn to go with the flow instead of getting frustrated. Believe that God is in control and is the driver and not you. Be grateful for what you have

rather than complaining for what you don't have.

Always remember to do this:

Count your blessings instead of your cross.

Count your gains instead of your losses.

Count your joys instead of your woes.

Count your friends instead of your foes.

Count your smile instead of tears.

Count your courage instead of your fears.

Know that each day is full of surprises and inconveniences. We must accept the fact that my plans are not always going to work out the way I scheduled them. Sometimes, everything can go wrong and when you have one of those days, which you can't change, what will you do? Recite that beautiful prayer of serenity composed by Reinhold Niebuhr, "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference . . ." Then make a decision that you are going to keep a smile on your face, knowing that God is still in control.

We should not allow the days *wahala* to steal our peace, our joy and happiness. We have to make up our minds to be happy whether our plans work out well as scheduled or not. Our attitude each day should be, I am going to enjoy today even if someone insults me, someone embarrasses, injures my ego etc. If we have such attitude, minor irritations or inconveniences that may have stressed us out will cease to be a source of frustration. Know this! Life is too short to live it stressed out. We should learn to go with the flow.

Think about this! Ten years from now, many of the things that we allow to create stress in our lives won't matter. Years ago, the Russian scientist Ivan Pavlov did an experiment by which each time he wanted to feed the dogs, he rang the bell. With time, the dogs get conditioned by this act and each time they hear the bell they started salivating. Pavlov rang this bell at odd time (when the food is not available) and still the dogs still came salivating. Pavlov called this a "conditioned response." We can allow ourselves to develop all sorts of negative conditioned responses. For example, when we get stuck in traffic, we get upset, when somebody who should speak to us but ignores us, how do we feel? We have conditioned ourselves to respond in a certain way (negative). We must retrain those negative responses. We should stop magnifying our problems and start magnifying our God. Let us step out of doubt and step into faith.

When we get out of bed in the morning, let us put a smile on our face. Let us set the tone right at the start of the day. If not, somebody else will set it for us (our inner critic). When we get up in the morning, no matter the circumstances, let us say, "This is the day the Lord has made. I am going to enjoy it. Join Lynda Randle to sing:

One day at a time, sweet Jesus
That's all I'm asking of you
Just give me the strength to do everyday
What I have to do. . .

Above all, let us make use of "reticular activating system." Our brain possess a fascinating system known as the, "reticular activating system." It is a function through which our minds eliminate and debunk thoughts and impulses deemed unnecessary. Let us train our minds so that when negative

and discouraging thoughts come our way, they won't affect us anymore, let us challenge our inner critic. Each of us has an inner critic which identifies and highlights the negative aspects of the things that we do. If you fail to challenge your inner critic, it becomes very easy for you to accept and believe all of the negativity. However, when you take the time to challenge your inner critic, that inner voice that continuously tells you that everything is going to crumble, that the day will be horrible, that your friend is planning to destroy your life, you soon realize that much of the negativity is based on assumptions which are unproven and untrue. 80% of those assumptions do not happen.

Let us therefore learn to be happy because being unhappy in life is contagious. For example, if a student brother is unhappy, his prayer life and formation will be affected, his community activities will be affected, his academic studies will be affected, his relationships will be affected. So, it is with a formator. There is no gain in being unhappy, so be happy!

LIVING A PLEASANT LIFE

By Br. Obinna Chuku, FMS



Today, life seems to be good than before but with challenges. These challenges made many people, old and young, to search for a better way of approaching it. This quest for new style of living puts us into a degree of personal freedom where each person seeks to define a style of life hoping to be a better person.

As soon as we get this new style of life correctly, we start to integrate them in our separate lives in order to make a pleasant living. But if a person does not find a better solution towards living a better life, he or she then ends up creating and living a complicated life full of frustration.

God created us not to live in isolation but to live together as a big family for the glory of His name. Therefore, the only way to fulfil God's plan and to survive in this world is to grow into maturity, get involved in certain actions and strive to live a pleasing lifestyle in the society.

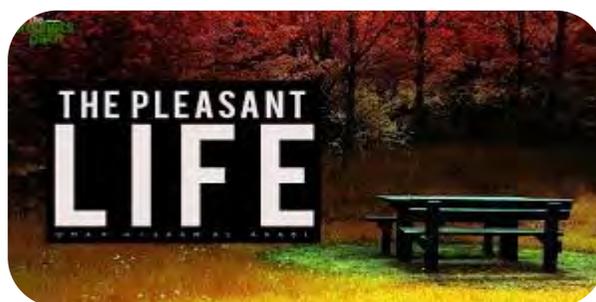
Some people explained pleasant life as a spontaneous and natural display of our hard works which is built on sound principles of moral life. It is more and more of what a person determined to achieve. I can as well add that a pleasant life is the ability to assess other people and situations of the society having in mind the general laws and principles which govern human affairs. Life is not all about "myself alone" but it involves the ability to appreciate the life of others through personal relationship with them. Therefore, a pleasant life is a life of peace, harmony, love etc. with those around you, a life without jealousy.

A pleasant life is related to our everyday living, only wise ones who make effort may acquire the treasures of this life. Wealth does not signify pleasant life, rather a life with peace of mind. In fact, as a person, living a pleasant life is a matter of discovering what are the important needs for life. Living a pleasant life daily helps us to shape in our attitude and behavior. Sometimes, it seems difficult to practice what will lead us to become better persons due to sociological, psychological or biological reasons. We should be guided and corrected by those who are more experienced in life.

A pleasant life can be nourished through proper communication with others, inner silence, peace, good health, generosity, respect, daily meditation, prayer, emotional control, personal relationship with God and others.

A pleasant life is also characterized by sharing. Some people fail to understand that the more we relate to one another and share about our life experiences, the more we understand ourselves, accept and love each other. But the more one keeps moving away from others, the more people suspect that there is something bad in one's life even though there is none.

Nevertheless, lack of pleasant living seems to be part of man's existence. This can be seen clearly in our everyday life. Man is made of two opposing sides; good and bad. If a man allows the bad side to overshadow the good side it is disastrous, but if he allows the good side to overshadow the bad side, life is going to be as sweet as honey and becomes pleasant to all. However, from the time mankind came into existence, there has been so much of craziness. On the other hand, one can cultivate a good pleasant pattern of living which will also enliven the life of that person. This help the person to be accepted by the society. The secret of pleasant life is not hidden rather it is a continues practice of societal values. Since we are living in the society, we need to acquire certain values and reject vices.



MIC Community Life and Celebrations

By Br. Gbulum Moses Sunday , FMS



A Religious Community is a place where consecrated men or women live together to share life in love and more importantly to be witnesses

of the gospel (Vita Consecrata no. 42). The life of a consecrated person is expressed in a Religious Community through the profession of the evangelical counsels of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience. Community living is one of the fundamental principles of Religious Life. Vatican II Council stressed that, Community life is the most crucial element of religious life. This means that, without Community life, there will be no Religious life (PC 15).

Marist International Centre (MIC) is a perfect example of an ideal Religious Community. The Community comprises of Marist student Brothers undergoing scholastic formation and students of Psycho Spiritual Institute (PSI). The Centre is made up of eight Fraternities; Champagnat, La Valla, Lwanga, Basilio, Francois, L'hemitage, Chanel and Maissonette. The Fraternities operate as a single Community under the leadership of the Superior.

There are many simple and ordinary things that are very crucial in keeping the community united and in building Fraternal Spirit. Fr. Dr. Kaitholil calls such activities ingredients of Community living. They include Community celebrations, prayers, meals, meetings, recollections and apostolic activities.

Here at MIC, we share our life through Community celebrations such as Marial feast days,

Christmas, Easter and birthdays. The Community celebrates in a unique way the feast day of St. Marcellin Champagnat on 6th June and foundation day of Marist Institute on 2nd January. The community also celebrates the welcoming of new members at the beginning of every formative and academic year. Community celebration is thus an essential element that builds up Fraternal communion in a religious community like ours. Let us celebrate in the love of Christ.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

By Br. Augustine Okokon, FMS

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

MIC-A CENTRE OF WORSHIP

By Br. Henry Ngeli, FMS



Praising God is contagious, especially for those of us who like to be affected by him echoed Shelena Griffiths. Entering the

Marist chapel on a Sunday morning for the first time, one would think it is one of the biggest parishes within Nairobi, it is really mesmerizing seeing how religious men and women as well as the lay faithful come to discover the presence of God.

Thanks to the Brothers for their generosity for making the Centre accessible to many. This has helped them to deepen their relationship with God.

Being an international Centre with Brothers, Priests and Sisters from different parts of Africa, Marist has gone miles in diversifying liturgical practices. For instance, the liturgical hymns that are sung during Mass are in different languages across the continent. The songs are not only good to the ear; they nourish the souls. The homilies spiritually enrich the congregants to experience God in their lives.

Considering all what is mentioned above and what goes on at Marist, it is notable to point out that Marist International Centre has indeed become the Centre of worship for the people from within and around Karen. The quietness of the place helps people to enter into meditation and the good atmosphere helps the congregation to listen to the voice of God as they enter the premises of Marist. All is done for the glory of God.

WE ARE FAMILY

By: Br. Chikwado J. Ezema, FMS



Humans are, by nature, social beings. Consciously or unconsciously, there is an inner yearning and longing for friendships and relationships. We want to belong to a community because there is something that whispers and tells us that we are incomplete without a family. A home that will allow us to develop a personality structure and healthy lifestyle.

We are a family, though we are not like family. Because we are a family, think of St. Paul's letter to Galatians; when he said, "there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free..." (Gal 3:). Martin Luther King Jr. once said "a nation that one day will not be judged by the colour of the skin but by the content of the character". In the end, it is called family spirit. I am not from Nigeria, you are not from Kenya, Malawi, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Cameroon, etc. instead, you are a citizen of the world, United Nations of the World. MIC accepts this decorum when she upholds internationality.

MIC is not left out in this family spirit conceptualized in the theme: "Building a global Marist family centered on Christ and open to the needs of the youth." Family is not about mere lip service, but to let go tendencies of activism, consumerism and the need for power. To be a family is to free ourselves from stereotypes about people and their culture, religion and denomination, sex and nationality. It involves thinking of people as human beings. To be able to understand why people behave the way they do based on nurture and experiences in life.

Let us all embrace this family spirit, where sorry, thanks and please are used each day.



PROFILE

Know your community members



Meet Brother Gilbert Ndim, a third Year Student Brother at Marist International Centre (MIC). He has passion for God, work and service. For him, MIC is a place to be. He is impressed by its internationality and acceptance of various cultures within the community. For him MIC is a home, for it nourishes him holistically and helps him to develop the sense of fulfillment in his life as a Religious. MIC is a place where Brothers can discover and develop their talents to the full. His desire is that Internationality should always be the source of strength, that Brothers continue to live in harmony with each other and that MIC should really be that place where a young Brother gets convinced about his vocation.



This is Sister Doris David from the congregation of the Sisters of Saint Michael the Archangel (SSMA). She made her first profes-

sion on 6th August 1998 and the final profession on 30th July 2005. She is a Nigerian. As a Christian, and as religious, her aims in life are to please God, to be happy in life, to draw people closer to God and to be with God in His Kingdom.

MIC for her is a place to be. The environment is peaceful and beautified with many flowers and trees planted in a highly aesthetic manner. The physical and architectural structure of MIC is remarkable especially Maisonnette Fraternity. She enjoys very much the liturgy at MIC which helps



her to pray well. She appreciates the way Brothers animate Mass.

As far as the human relationship is concerned, she really feels authentic Brotherhood/Sisterhood in MIC Community.

School life is demanding because the PSI program is intense and it requires a lot of reading.

Lastly, her wish for MIC is that it should always be that prayerful, peaceful and beautiful place where Brothers serve God with their whole self in humility and always be available for people.

Interview with the Administrator. Br. Nicholas Banda, FMS

MIC DIGEST: We would like to know where you have been in your mission before coming to MIC.

Br. Nicholas: I have worked in different schools in Malawi. Immediately I was formator at the Marist Postulate in Mtendere in Malawi for three years I taught English, Mariology and Sacraments and also a community bursar. From January 2019 to April I was in Manila EAPI for renewal.

MIC DIGEST: When you were appointed to come to MIC as the Administrator, what was your reaction? Did you accept it or not?

Br. Nicholas: Very much surprised because I have worked here before for six years: 2002 to 2008. At the same time I was provincial bursar for southern Africa for nine years. This time the provincial had told me that I will be on one year sabbatical. But hardly after two months into my sabbatical things changed, I was asked if I could consider coming over to MIC. I understood the need to break my Sabbatical and come over so I accepted to come to MIC. Of course the provincial gave me some time to think and pray over it. After a week I accepted to come to MIC.

MIC DIGEST: Please, we would like to know your experiences since you came to MIC in July, 2019.

Br. Nicholas: It has not been easy getting used to my new role. The last time I was working in MIC I was not directly responsible for ground workers. Another Brother was responsible for maintenance. This time its like I am doing two or more jobs. On the other hand the work is less since there is a full time accountant. It makes it easier. All the same I feel happy with the work am doing. I am also happy with the way different Brothers encourage me in my work this makes my work enjoyable. I have job satisfaction. My little Kiswahili adds to the joy of working with different people.

MIC DIGEST: We would also like to know how you see MIC of today as compared to the one you had as a Student Brother.

Br. Nicholas: The MIC of today has a lot of young Brothers ready to prepare themselves as Marist apostles. Many are really giving themselves to their formation. Many appreciate what is being done within MIC formation. During my time many had already been Brothers for some years before they came to MIC. But the dedication was the same. That time older Brothers found it difficult to adapt to the situation of MIC then.

MIC DIGEST: What are some of the challenges you have experienced so far at MIC in your office?

Br. Nicholas: The challenge has been affording some time to take a rest. I also feel the fraternity bursars need more guidance as a way of preparing them to be community bursars when they return to their administrative Units.

MIC DIGEST: What have been your happiest moments at MIC?

Br. Nicholas: When the Water situation was sorted and then we now have the tank full every day. Then the hot water system seems up and running fairly well. When we had to buy water from outside it was tough situation.

MIC DIGEST: Due to the fact that you have been at MIC for three consecutive moments now, how are you coping with the administrative duties of the Community and the School?

Br. Nicholas: I am coping very well. The three times I have been around I have met and interacted with different people and with different richness. Each time I have come to work except for some workers that have always been here people are different. I must say that the efforts in Kiswahili and French learning are paying off. I am very lucky that among the Marist Brothers of Africa I know most of them especially those that have passed through MIC.

MIC DIGEST: What other things would you like to share with us?

Br. Nicholas: feel more efforts have to be made by the Administrative units so that more Brothers are prepared to be bursar in MIC. It should not be left to just some people. On the other hand am grateful that I am given a chance to serve as administrator and hoping that I will soon have somebody to work with me in view of continuing the service. I am no longer young.

MIC DIGEST: Thank you very much Br. Nicholas for your time and answering our questions clearly.

Br. Nicholas: You are welcome!

INTERVIEW WITH MIC SUPERIOR

Br. Mark Anokwuru, FMS

MIC DIGEST: Good morning Br. Mark, we are members of MIC Digest and we wish to hear more about you.

Br. Mark: Good Morning to you and you are welcome, feel free.

MIC DIGEST: We would like to know where you have been in your mission before coming to MIC.

Br. Mark: I finished as the novice master in Ghana in 2014. From 2015 to 2017, I was loaned to the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation to begin their offshoot men Congregation of Brothers called, Sons of Divine Love.

After two years stint with the Sons of Divine Love, my superior sent me to Comprehensive College Nteje, where I served for two years as the dean of student's affairs before coming to MIC.

MIC DIGEST: When you were appointed to come to MIC as the Superior, what was your reaction? What were your feelings?

Br. Mark: Sometime in January this year, my provincial told me that I may likely go to MIC to work as a formator and that I should start getting prepared. My response was, "Yes Brother." I started getting my papers ready. In July this year, and on one fateful morning, he called me from Nairobi to say that I have been appointed as the MIC superior. My reaction was, "Oh my gosh!" Oh my gosh in the sense that I know that to be the MIC superior is not an easy task. In the final analyses, I said to myself, "That God who has called me to work in his vineyard, will give me the grace of office." And God is already on top of it.

MIC DIGEST: Please, we would like to know your experiences since you came to MIC in August, 2019.

Br. Mark: It has not been rosy though, but I am grateful to God for the kind of Brother formators he has given me to work with. Honestly speaking, the Formators are cooperating and we are working hard to understand one another.

On the side of the student Brothers, I will say that they are happy to have me as their superior and they have shown this by the way they relate to me, listen and cooperate with me.

MIC DIGEST: We would also like to know how you see MIC of today as compared to the one you had as a Student Brother.

Br. Mark: A lot of difference. I came to MIC as a student Brother in 1992. That time, we had a rector who was in charge of the Community and the College. But today, we have the principal who serves the students in the University and the superior who serves the Brothers in the Community. The College was affiliated to the Pontifical University of Urbanian in Rome, where courses were only limited to religious studies. But today, the College is a constituent College of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, where the Brothers have variety of science and art courses to choose from. This for me, makes it a holistic formation.

In the past, the use of mass media was strictly out of bounds for Brothers in initial formation at MIC. The most visited place that time was the letter box in the main refectory. But today, that letter box is better removed because it doesn't have customers any longer. At that time, those who were caught with phone or camera followed the next possible flight to their districts/provinces. But today, there is a paradigm shift.

The Management Team of MIC with the approval of Conference of Superiors of Africa and Madagascar (CSAC) have realized that the world is a global village and that the Brothers, who are going to be apostles of the youth in this global village, should be conversant with the use of mass media. Today, every young Brother is permitted to own a phone. Furthermore, every young Brother is entitled to a Laptop to facilitate his formation at MIC.

For me, what has remained constant is the fact that MIC is a formation Centre, a place where apostles of the youth are prepared for mission. MIC has remained the cultural, spiritual and apostolic heritage of Africa, as well as the focal point for young Brothers in the continent of Africa.

MIC DIGEST: What are some of the challenges you have experienced so far at MIC?

Br. Mark: There is challenge in every sphere of life, MIC not different. The first challenge I faced at MIC was to know the names of 90 Brothers. The challenge continues till today. If we have 90 Brothers at MIC, then we also have 90 personality traits. To establish relationship with everyone is not a child's play. But I believe that if you rub two stones together, initially, the experience will be rough and chaotic, but with time, they would smoothen. So far, the two stones have not completely smoothened, but progress has been made. It is a process. Rome was not built in a day. When this is done, there will be a relationship of trust and when this is established, these 90 personality traits will turn into 90 different gifts and talents which will go a long way towards enriching the community. We are different but complementary.

MIC DIGEST: What have been your happiest moments at MIC?

Br. Mark: One of my happiest moment at MIC was to meet with some Brothers I was their novice Master in Ghana. Another thing that gives me joy at MIC is the rich cultural diversity that is obtainable at MIC. In fact, those who did not pass through MIC missed something. The Sunday Liturgy at MIC is one of my greatest sources of joy here. I am also thankful to God for the gift of vocations. It is a joy to see the number of young Brothers who wish to dedicate their entire life for Jesus. To God be the glory.

MIC DIGEST: Due to the fact that you are new at MIC together with other members of formation team, how are you cooperating with them, the Brothers in initial formation and PSI students.

Br. Mark: Like I have already mentioned, we are 90 Brothers with 90 different personality traits, coupled with the members of the Psycho-Spiritual Institute (PSI). I want to make it clear that I am not alone. In the first meeting of the MIC Formation Team, responsibilities were shared and everybody is faithful in his own responsibility. Everybody is being respected in his own area of assignment.

MIC DIGEST: Any other thing you would like to share.

Br. Mark: I pray for the grace to learn how to be friendly, understanding, tolerant, patient, and to be alert to give service. More so, to cultivate those little virtues that can invigorate family spirit in community such as, I am sorry, forgive me, I appreciate to mention but a few. I think that good human relationships such as those mentioned above can be of help. I rely

heavily on God's help, and on Mary's and Champagnats's intercessions.

MIC DIGEST: Thanks a lot Brother Mark for your cooperation with MIC Digest on this exercise.

Br. Mark: You are welcome and thanks for all that you are doing in your commission.

MIC FORMATION TEAM MEMBERS



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BR. PATRICK BWALYA
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BR. SPIRIDION NDANGA
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News in MIC Community

Nataka kuzungumza Kiswahili:

“I want to speak Kiswahili”

By Br. Kra Benjamin, FMS

Good and innovative initiative from MIUC Principal, Brother Albert NZABONALIBA. He succeeded in organizing Kiswahili classes for the Brothers so that they can communicate easily in Kiswahili. Kiswahili is the National Language of Kenya and it is widely spoken in some East African countries. The class takes place every Thursday in the afternoon and it is divided in two sections. The first section is for the Brothers having the background of Bantu languages and the second section for Brothers who do not have any knowledge of Bantu languages.

Asante for this good initiative.



THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OF BR. SPIRIDION NDANGA

By Br. Norbert Ndilon Afoni, FMS

On Sunday 27th October 2019, the entire community of Marist International Centre (MIC) celebrated the Golden Jubilee of Br. Spiridion Ndanga. The celebration began with Holy mass at 10:00 a.m in the MIC Chapel. The mass was attended by religious men and women in and around Karen, staff, and students of MIUC and the Rwandan community in Nairobi.

Rev. Fr. George Ehusani, the main celebrant, alongside fifteen other priests concelebrated the Eucharistic celebration. Father George in his homily reminded the faithful that they have gathered to celebrate Br. Spiridion's commitment, faithfulness, perseverance, and love for God and His people. In the course of the homily, Br. Spiridion shared his experience as a Religious Brother for the last 50 years, affirming that he stood as a witness of God's grace and power. In his words, he understood his vocation simply as "God's work" (Ephesians 2:10).

Narrating his vocational journey, he admitted that it has not been easy but God in His faithfulness has been with him all the way. His vocation journey was fraught with difficulties. Initially, he wanted to become a Priest but was disqualified on account of age. After wavering and putting his decision on hold on several occasions to join the Marist Brothers, on the 4th Sunday of Easter, 1967, he became convinced beyond doubt that

God was calling him to dedicate his life to His service when he heard the priest say in a homily “God is still calling the youths, but some of them have closed the ears of their hearts”.

After the sermon, he felt confused, became restless and had no peace of mind. He decided to apply to join the Marist Brothers, a decision that brought him inner peace. He joined the faithful to pray for such youths today who are in similar circumstances as he was some years ago, that they may listen to the voice of God.

Br. Spiridion confided that his secret of perseverance and joy in religious life has been prayer by alluding to the words of the founder of the Marist Brothers: “Prayer is the essential point in religious life”. His joy has been in serving the people of God, to serve God is our lasting joy. He ended by encouraging everyone to persevere for the God who has called us is faithful and will see us through.

Br. Dr. Albert NZABONALIBA speaking in the capacity of one who has known Br. Spiridion for a considerable length of time in several capacities as his novice master, as his superior and member of the formation team, described Br, Spiridion as a man of prayer, patience and discernment, a man of obedience and leadership, and lastly, a man of action and vision. He reiterated that Br. Spiridion leads by example. He intimated that Br. Spiridion is a man of action with lots of entrepreneurship skills. Finally, he used the priestly prayer of Moses (Numbers 6:24-26) to invoke the Lord’s blessings on Br. Spiridion. Br. Mark Anokwuru, the superior of Marist International Centre, offered words of gratitude for the years well spent in the vineyard of the Lord.

The Eucharistic celebration was followed by photographs to consign the day to posterity. A family meal to commune with Br. Spiridion was offered to all men and women who were present at the occasion. In a typical African style, traditional African dances concluded the occasion.

Br. Spiridion Ndanga was born in 1946. After his primary education, he trained as a primary school teacher and worked for a year as a teacher. In 1967 he gained admission to the postulancy of the Marist Brothers. He made his first profession in 1969 at the end of the novitiate. After three years of studies and a year of ministry, he made his final profession in 1974 and the vow of stability in 1998. After his course in catechetics in 1977, he worked as a secondary school teacher and held the office of a community superior. From 1980 to 1989 he served as a master of novices. On completion of his formation course in Rome, he became first, postulant master from August 1991 to July 1992 and secondly for the second time, novice master from September 1992 to August 1994.

He was appointed superior of the District of Rwanda from 1994 to 2000. In April 2005 he became the superior of Marist International Centre until July 2011. He returned to MIC as coordinator of the Marist Patrimony for Africa and Madagascar and as member of the formation team in 2017.



Visit of Our Superior General Brother Ernesto Sanchez Barba

By Br. Modestus Osuji, FMS

Since his election as a Superior General, Br. Ernesto Sanchez has not visited Marist International Centre in Nairobi, Kenya, a place he has known for some years now. On his way to the 8th Provincial Chapter of Southern African Province in Malawi, he made a stopover at MIC for a couple of days to visit the biggest post Novitiate center in the whole institute. It was a great moment for the student brothers to interact with the Superior General. He arrived at Marist International center on 23rd October 2019.

After the usual midday mass on Thursday, 24th October 2019 at MIC, he thanked the Members of MIUC Staff and the students who were present at the Mass. He invited all to have the heart of Mary, that to live according to Mary's heart is the greatest gift St. Marcellin Champagnat left for us. Mary's Heart is a heart of joy and generosity, he concluded. In the evening of that day, he met with the student Brothers in the Lecture Theatre. The meeting was an interactive one, where our superior shared about the five pillars that are vital to our vocation as Marist Brothers. The Five pillars are: Deepening our experience of God, Communities as real homes; where the genuine relationship should be found, Vulnerability as a source of fruitfulness and freedom, Global availability and working alongside with the poor, finally, healing our wounds; promoting human dignity and caring for our common home. Many Brothers asked him questions about formation issues and thanked him for the support and love for the young Brothers.

On Friday, 26th October, Brother Ernesto met with the Formation Team in the board room. In the evening of Saturday, 27th October, Brother Ernesto met with the whole Marist Community and later with the Formation team and student Brothers. Brothers Ernesto used this moment to share about the situation of the Institute. He did not shy away from the dwindling number of Brothers in Europe and the growth of the lay groups.

He gave a brief rundown of statistics of the Brothers and the people the institute ministers to. According to the statistics given by the Superior General there are 2,900 Brothers, 70, 000 laypersons, 320 Groups of Lay Marists, 500 Schools with 450,000 students, 27 Tertiary Institutions with 100,000 students, 160 Social works with 60, 000 children and young people. The Institute care for 420,000 young people in the Youth Ministry. Brother Ernesto expressed his joy about the enthusiasm of the African Mission and called it "Hope" for the Church and the Institute. He promised to equip the formation house with the musical instruments which the young Brothers had requested from him. He concluded by sharing to all present an Icon of Mary, the Madonna.

In one of his works, Twelfth Night, Shakespeare through the words of Malvolio says "Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them". This is true of Brother Ernesto Sanchez Barba, the current Superior General of the Marist Brothers of the Schools. He joined Marist Brothers in 1978. He has served in various capacities but more recently he served as a General Councilor. On October 3, 2017, he was elected the 14th Superior General of the Marist Brothers Institute.

SABBATICAL PROGRAMMES FINALLY TAKE OFF IN MIC

By Br. Albert NZABONALIBA , FMS



For the last few months Marist international Centre has paid host to a couple of religious men and women and the lay men and women who have been privilege to savor the new package of sabbatical programme carefully packaged for those seeking change and have the courage to do something about it. In the space of four months a number of religious men and women and some lay men and women have taken advantage becoming privy to these packages designed for renewal and change.

These programmes are more and more attracting many religious and priests from different countries of the world: Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda, South Soudan, Philippines, Brazil, Italy, Vietnam, USA, ... and soon in April 2020, we shall receive also those from Pakistan, Cameroon, etc. Our last group undertaking a Short Sabbatical and Renewal Programme was in November 2019. It comprised Brothers and Sisters coming from different Congregations.

So far, the following are the Congregations that have already benefited from our Programmes: Marist Brothers of the Schools (FMS), Brothers of our Lady Mother of Mercy (CMM), Loreto Sisters (IBVM), Daughters of Mary Immaculate (Dimesse Sisters), Franciscan Elisabethan Sisters, Canossian Daughters of Charity, Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions, Benebikira Sisters, Sisters of Mary Mother of Good Counsel, Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers), Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM), Medical Missionaries of Mary (MMM), SVD Fathers, Comboni Missionary Sisters, Poor

Servants of the Mother of God, Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate Fathers, Daughters of St. Paul, Carmelites, Foreign Mission Society of Quebec (SME), and Diocesan priests.

Marist International Centre (MIC) is a post-Novitiate Programme that offers religious and professional formation to our Young Brothers from Africa and Madagascar. It started in 1986 and today, we are 86 Brothers, 76 Brothers in formation and 9 Formators.

MIC has a capacity of 100 plus accommodation rooms and many facilities. With the permission of the Conference of Superiors of Africa and Madagascar (CSAC) in 2018, MIC has opened its doors to spiritual Programmes seekers: Short Sabbatical and Renewal Programmes (6 - 7 weeks), Perpetual Vows Preparations (6 - 7 weeks), Community leaders Programmes (2 weeks in December), Formation Skills for Today's Formators (2 weeks in April), MIC Mentoring Best Practices on Saturdays (on request), Guided and / or Preached Retreats (on request), ... **For more information: www.miuc.ac.ke**

Under the supervision of Bro. Albert NZABONALIBA (fms), MIC has a team of Marist Brothers and part-time Lecturers from the Psycho-Spiritual Institute (PSI / MIUC) that offer different facilitations. Our Programmes provide inputs and experiences that make one renewed, re-tooled, and rejuvenated for the Mission. You are most welcome! KARIBU at MIC.

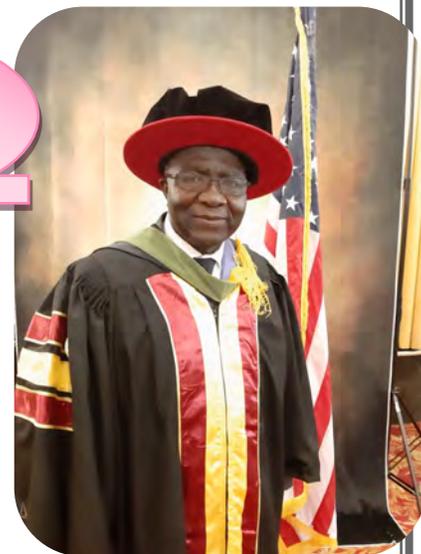


CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATES OF 2019

The Marist international Centre celebrates and heartily congratulates Br. Dr Francis Veye for obtaining a PhD in education from Atlantic International University. Brother Francis Veye has put together a 337 compendium of educational administration and management. This is his area of specialization. As an entrepreneur he has pioneered a couple of projects in MIC. The aqua Marist water project, as an ecological advocate he has planted several trees and initiated the Charles Howard park in the same campus among many others.

By Br. Peter Awoh, FMS

**KUDOS!!
Br. Francis**



DRS AND LIFE SKILLS GRADUATION

By Br. Norbert Ndilon Afoni

The entire MIC community celebrated with joy the graduation of sixteen student brothers with a Diploma in Religious Studies. The graduation ceremony took place on 4th October 2019 in the auditorium. It was attended by members of staff, students of MIUC, friends of graduands and well-wishers.

The Diploma in Religious Studies programme is a three-year program of religious studies offered by the Marist International University College. Some elements of the content of the diploma in Religious studies cover areas of theological studies such as sacramentology, ecclesiology, moral theology, Pauline and Johannine literature, church history, moral theology, Christian anthropology, Christology, African Traditional Religion, catechesis, prophetic literature among others.

During the graduation ceremony, the graduates expressed their gratitude to God, to their various provincial superiors and the lecturers for having helped them go through this enriching program. Br. Cylas Yenwong speaking on behalf of the graduating batch said all of them who were presented as qualified catechists, were simply harvesting what they had planted over a period of three years. The proclamation of the graduating class as catechists was an affirmation of the thorough training in Religious Studies the brothers had gone through.

He then went further to render immense gratitude to the Superiors for granting them the opportunity to be equipped for the noble mission that awaits them as Marist Brothers and as teachers of the faith. Alongside 16 Graduates with a Diploma in Religious studies, were two other Marist Brothers who graduated with a certificate in life skills. The occasion ended with a family meal in the main refectory in the evening.



2019 DRS GRADUATES



LIFE SKILLS 2019 GRADUATES INCLUDING BRS. HENRY (5th position) & IGNACE (2nd Right)

A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE

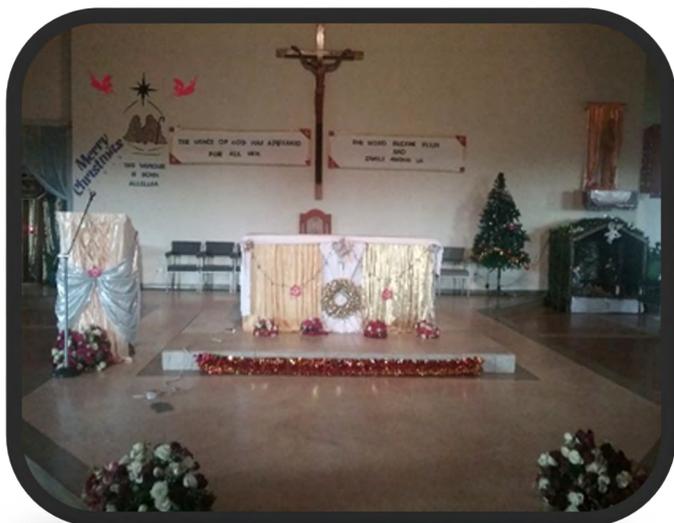
By Br. Blessed Vambe, FMS

The student Brothers in initial formation express their gratitude to Fondazione Marista per la Solidarietà Internazionale (FMSI) and the Superior General for the kind gesture towards the purchase of the musical instruments of the community. Many thanks to Brother Vincent de Paul Kouassi who played a significant role in the process of purchasing the instruments. At present, the community is blessed with 15 pianos and 25 guitars. This gesture will go a long way to assist us in our community liturgy and apostolates. We feel that every Brother will now have a chance to play a musical instrument.

The Music Department in the name of the community promises to make good use of these instruments and, most importantly, make efforts to learn them.



2019 CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AT MIC IN PICTURES



THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Our attitude towards Creation

By Br. Marriot Tembo, FMS



Pope Francis, in his encyclical letter entitled 'Laudato Si' states "that our planet is a homeland and that humanity is one people living in a common

home. God gave human beings the responsibility of being masters of all that He created: birds, fish, cattle and all the wild animals (no: 2). Therefore, man is a steward of God's creation.

Making the environment a better place for living is the attitude one has to cultivate. We do not know how to use our land. We think we are the masters of the land, but the opposite is that the land is our master. We also think that we can use the land the way we want without considering other living things around us. The environment is the totality of both living and non-living things. All these have an equal share to the environment and contribute to the life of each other. To prove that the environment is our master, we can look at the changes in our weather patterns, rising temperatures and natural disasters like floods, droughts, earthquakes, and many others. We have no control over these calamities, and this is to say that the environment defeats us, hence it becomes our master.



Therefore, we may ask, who is the cause of all these disasters to the environment? We of course, who think we are masters of the environment. We have exploited the environment. In some places there are no green fields, trees, and grass that would give fresh air to living things and good rest; instead they have been cleared. Pollution is everywhere especially our greenhouse gases which pollute the environment and destroy the Ozone layer which protect us from ultraviolet Sun rays.

This is why the earth has turned against us because we think we are the masters of the environment. It is time to change our mindset towards the environment. Let us see ourselves as stewards of God's creation not as masters of the environment. We can contribute to the environment by planting trees and develop attitude of proper waste disposal. We are not Masters of the Environment but Stewards of God's creation.

VANITY, ALL IS VANITY

By Br. Eric Konate, FMS



The Book of Ecclesiastes chapter 1: 1-11 tells us that all is vanity. As Christians, it is good that we have this in mind and therefore

seek the things that will last forever. In other words, we have to seek the things that will warrant us eternal life just as our Lord Jesus Christ tells us in the Gospel of Matthew 6:19-21: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths

and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also". Further, in Matthew 6:33, Jesus tells us: "Seek ye first the Kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given you as well". Let us therefore fix our eyes on God and seek to do His will in our lives. In the same line of thought, Barrack Obama once said:

*When I think of the depth of the grave and the pounds of sand that will be thrown at us, no need to harm my brother.
When I think of the darkness that will invade the grave after closing, no need to*

*hurt my sister.
When I think of the heat repressed by the soil and the amount of water that will drown me during the rains in the tomb, I cannot make my neighbor suffer.
When I think that I will be alone, abandoned by all, I prefer to enjoy communion when I am alive.
When I think that my relationships are mowed by my past,
I wish to perfect my future.
If I could be reborn to resume everything, from scratch,
I would no longer make mistakes in my actions.*

After a long meditation, I understood that all is vanity on earth. May God help us to cultivate humility and love to our neighbors because vanity of vanity, everything is vanity.

REVERENCE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

By Br. Mary - James Ikebuna, FMS



'Holy things must be treated in a holy way and this sacrifice is the holiest of all things.' (Council of Trent)

In the Old Testament, God taught the Israelites how to show proper reverence by giving them hundreds of laws related to purity, holiness, and worship

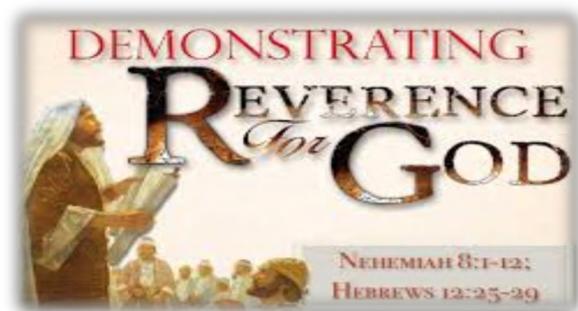
(Deuteronomy 5). His presence dwelt with Israel in the Ark of the Covenant, and they were not to touch it as a matter of reverence. The Holy of Holies inside the tabernacle also required the highest level of reverence (Leviticus 16:2). Whoever disobeyed God's command about entering the Holy of Holies died instantly (Leviticus 22:9; Numbers

4:20; 1 Chronicle 13:9–10). The purpose of such strict rules was to define holiness and impress upon mankind the necessity for reverence in the presence of the Lord.

In the New Testament, reverence for God is demonstrated by the willingness of Christians to voluntarily die to self and obey His commands (Galatians 2:20; 5:13; James 2:12). He taught the disciples to begin their prayers with "Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Matthew 6:9–13) as a sign of reverence. Reverence for God is demonstrated by the way people live. Reverence for God is shown by learning how to truly worship Him. Jesus said that the Father is seeking people who will learn to worship Him "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). True worship is not about one's favorite song. It is not confined to an emotional experience and is not synonymous with tingly feelings. True worship is a lifestyle or Attitude.

Attitude towards the presence of God, especially in the places of worship where people pray is becoming scandalous. If not for anything, prayers (being with God) should be the main bases for good moral conduct and a deep love for one's vocation. Some persons would argue, that If people are indeed conscious of the presence of God and truly respects his majestic presence before us (especially in the Blessed Sacrament, reposed in the chapel) why would they want to wear sports Attire or bath-room slippers to mass or and to fraternity/ community prayers when we have better dress, shoes, and sandals that can make us presentable before God.

According to Vita Consecrata "Religious, in conformity with norms of their institute, may dress simply and modestly, with an appropriate symbol, in such a way that their consecration is recognizable. An institute which from their origin or by the provision of their constitutions, does not have a specific habit should ensure that the dress of their members corresponds in dignity and simplicity to the nature of their vocation. (VC no. 5) The constitution of the Marist brothers of the schools relates that our habit may be a type of attire, such as a suit, which is appropriate for a member of an institute of brothers. (C61.3)



Beyond the elements relating to dress during liturgical services, is the complacent and passive behavior at liturgical functions. ignorance

concerning genuflecting before the tabernacle, arriving late at liturgical functions, carefree and nonchalant behavior inside the chapel during cleaning and even during prayers all portray the degree of lack of reverence before the sacred. Bodily demeanor (gestures, clothing) ought to convey the respect, solemnity and joy of the moment when Christ is our guest. (CCC no. 218).

Modesty should be highly esteemed in our churches, chapels and oratories. Modesty inspires a way of life which makes it possible to resist the allurements of fashion and the pressures of prevailing ideologies, inside the church or chapel as it inspires one's choice of dressing, appearance before the presence of God. (cf CCC no. 2522)

Discretion should be exercise and caution exercised when entering into places of worship. At the same time discretion concerning modesty, which concerns the manner of dress, talking, posture, and general conduct of one's self should be carefully considered. The modesty indeed takes several forms and what is considered decent and respectful vary from one culture to another. Everywhere, however, decency and respect exists as in intuition of the spiritual dignity proper to man, hence it should be received with the awakening consciousness of being a subject, for if man can be decent and respectful in the presence of God in the place of worship, he will be decent and respectful towards himself and towards the people he prays with. (cf CCC no. 2524).

Reverence God in Worship

"God is to be greatly feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those who are around Him." Psm. 89:7

YOUTH MINISTRY

The conditions of the youth

TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM OF VOCATIONS MINISTRY: A SUMMARY

By Br. Tiamaro Alphonse, FMS

I present here a summary of an article written by Brother Alberto Parise, mcccj, (a Combonian Brother) who is currently working in Europe but he lived and worked in Nairobi Kenya as well, involving himself in the field of youth ministry. He wrote a long article: Towards a new paradigm of vocation ministry. It is an attempt to propose another way of looking at youth ministry and vocation ministry in the Church today. I hope this summary will help all Marists concerned with youth and vocation ministry as well as those teaching in schools to deepen their understanding and commitment to this noble task.

As we have mentioned in the opening article (editorial), last year, the church organized the synod for young people in Rome (October 2018). Inspired by the preparatory document of this synod, and the final document of the synod and the post-synodal letter, *Christus Vivit* by Pope Francis, the author, reflecting on the reality of youth and pastoral experiences throughout the world, wrote this document one year later after the synod, and gave it a title, TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM OF VOCATIONS MINISTRY. I will summarize important points raised by the author to help Marist youth animators or ministers in the Marist Provinces in Africa.

The author begins his reflection by pointing out the conditions of the youth in the world today. Young people in today's world are affected greatly by the dynamics of globalization in different forms. Globalization on its dark side, triggers the mechanisms of exclusion of the dominant economic system that generates violence, impoverishment of the majority of the world's population and environmental devastation as Pope Francis denounced in *Evangelii Gaudium* and *Laudato si*

The author pointed out that among the most significant consequences of this "globalization of indifference" (Pope Francis) are precariousness and insecurity experienced by the youth in many parts of the world. *"the insecurity of working conditions and the social precariousness block every medium and long term project. The journey of young people is marked by the difficulty of planning the future,* the author insisted. The impacts of these realities are on both psychological and cultural. Psychologically, it lessens self-confidence and the possibility of pursuing one's dreams and life plans. Culturally, it creates a kind of a new culture, the culture of "multi-belonging" adopting and feeling in two or more different cultures or different lifestyles, rather an identity confusion which becomes *the normal way* of "feeling and moving around the world".

Another consequence of these realities is the growth of disenchantment with the institutions such as the Church. Young people feel that these institutions *are increasingly distant, insignificant and based on a top-down or authoritarian power.*

The author recognizes that young people rather value equality, pluralism of thinking and acting and greater inclusion. Therefore, young people listen more and attach themselves not to an institution but to individual people who communicate values through their lives.

Despite all these realities, the present and the future are not all bleak. With young people in the world, a new world can still be possible. There are signs of growth of solidarity, community ties, spirituality, social commitment as well as the fundamental value of welcoming, friendship and mutual support. Young people simply long for participation and leading role in the society desiring to make use of their giftedness, skills and creativity. Many express their commitment towards the poor as a way of discovering faith and God's call.

Four challenges of the Youth Ministry (YM)

The author then gives four responses or challenges to consider if Youth Ministry is to be relevant and to respond to the situations of the youth today.

The first response consists of narrowing the distance between ministers and the young people. There is a need to "go out towards them". The author argues that *being part of their world implies learning their languages, the cultural horizon in which they move, inhabiting their spaces - often characterized by their own rules of interaction - with an open, respectful, non-judgmental attitude, but capable of appreciating their values.*

The reality is that at times the majority of young people in parishes, schools and youth movements remain uninvolved or accounted for in the

traditional youth ministry. That is why, according to the author, Pope Francis recommended that youth ministry should consider two broad lines of action: "*research*", that is, *the invitation to attract new young people to the encounter with the Lord, and "growth", that is, the development of a path of maturation for those who have already lived that experience (Christus vivit 209).* In the mind of the Pope, "research" pushes for "popular youth ministry" that should be broader, more flexible, in places where young people can be found in order to knit relationship with them, to listen to them unconditionally, to awaken their deep desire to enter into dialogue with the gospel through their language and life. "Growth" on the other hand is not about indoctrination but deepening the faith experience, fraternity and service of the young people.

The second response, according to the author, is a call to be prophetic. If the church wants to remain relevant in the eyes of the young, it has to live the gospel values radically, *embodying an alternative way of life: fraternal and supportive, sober, sustainable, consistent, and making common cause with the least and the excluded.* The church has to overcome clericalism, a mentality of exclusion, imposition of hierarchy and domination so that the church of the service can emerge, a church in communion with the people, and in solidarity with the poor.

The third response is accompaniment. Young people are in dire need of group/community and individual accompaniment. The author argues that pluralism and multi-culturalism, which young people wish to embrace, may not always be easy to assimilate, and uncertainty, confusion and violence may not be far off.

Therefore, *prepared companions are needed, credible witnesses who can communicate humanity, and who can facilitate a critical reading of reality and its complexity.* This form of accompaniment must be integral, taking into account all dimensions of life, human, social and spiritual, capable of reading the signs of the times. Companions will help young people lead a life of prayer with the concrete situations as well as a process of entering into dialogue with God in light of the gospel. The fourth response consists of appropriate vocational discernment. At times, vocational discernment limits itself to the call to priesthood and consecrated life. It has to be broader than that, to *call to life, which invites young people to a response that can take very different forms...an approach aimed at facilitating awareness of one's deepest and most authentic identity, to be cultivated according to the invitation of the Spirit.* A good vocational discernment, on the other hand, should help see vocation not as a fixed destiny, a plan that is already written and must be carried out *but rather an open path without any predetermined form but must be built step by step by listening to and obeying the Spirit.* The author stresses that *discernment is therefore a continuous, fundamental process, in which there is no map that defines the paths from the beginning, but a compass, the invitations of the Spirit to follow Jesus, to respond with faith, creativity and availability, overcoming the planning mentality that, if exasperated (or frustrated), leads to narcissism and self-closure.*

Features of a renewed YM

If then Youth Ministry has to be prophetic and to reach its objectives namely, the integral growth of the person, the fostering of the personal encounter with Jesus in the Word and in the exclud-

ed, promoting the critical mind of the youth and vocational discernment, YM must have some fundamental characteristics:

1. Testimony and consistency of life from the Youth Ministers

Pastorals programs must be coupled with visible and lived values such as simple lifestyle, closeness to the marginalized, coherence, adherence to the values of fraternity, justice, social responsibility and sustainability. *Young people have great expectations of seeing new ways of daring in both community life and ministerial service: attempting new paths, going out to situations of periphery, changing the structures whose injustice, unsustainability and emptiness they perceive,* the author insisted.

2. Protagonism of young people

This means fostering as much as possible the contribution of the young people. They have to take initiatives, develop creativity and autonomy in all activities in where they are involved and where they are properly accompanied. Their perspectives and sensitivity must be respected so that they engage themselves freely in all activities such as community involvement, meetings, sharing of life history, reflection and prayers. Only through this freedom will they experience meaningful interpersonal relationships and build their identity.

3. Collaborative Ministry

The author expresses that YM shareholders must bring their respective contribution because YM is a community responsibility. Moreover, *as a community, we create the conditions for an*

attractive YM for young people by creating an environment of fraternal relations and an incarnate spirituality, attentive to history, to life and to the presence of the Spirit in it. YM shareholders are schools, youth groups, and local churches.

4. Welcoming spaces

Another important feature that makes YM attractive to the young people is when they feel welcomed as they are. The author argues that a particular "free space", in which young people can reflect, pray and experience themselves in a community dimension without pressure.

In fact, young people without exception grow in their self-esteem in places where they can meet with joy and experience fraternal love.

Conclusion: Practical questions for reflection

For us who have been involved in youth ministry directly, there is an invitation to reflect on and to refocus our ministry to the youths of today. The following questions may be of help in such reflection.

How do we effectively renew our Youth Ministry and Vocation Ministry in our local context?

What are the economic, social, religious and cultural challenges that young people face in their areas?

What kind of structures can we put in place to welcome, to listen, and to accompany young people especially those not attending our schools?

How can Youth Ministry and Vocation Ministry be inserted in our formal education programs? Pope Francis puts forward "popular Youth

Ministry" that take into consideration "research" and "growth". How will this be practical in our local context?

MARIST YOUTH MINISTRY



F I C T I O N

PROFESSOR MALIRO

By Br. Dominic Zgambo, FMS

"Dad, don't forget to tell me the story you promised." echoed James. " Don't worry my son, I will narrate after I finish packing this delicious food down my throat." After Maliro finished eating, he gulped a cup of water and violently cleared his throat.

"Son you asked me to explain to you why I am referred to as Professor, yet I have never stepped into the university corridors. Actually, I have been to the university before, but it was to visit a friend. Let me now tell you what happened, my son. "Dad I want you to make it more interesting than the story you told me yesterday. " said his son. " I think the best way to explain this story to you is to read for you the letter I wrote to my father twenty years ago. Just wait for a moment." After saying this Maliro carried his 206 bones into the house to look for the letter. It was a 20-year-old letter, looking dusty and torn like the Hebrew manuscripts of the Torah. Maliro planted his body on a wooden stool and began to read the letter.

"Dear my lovely father, I hope all is well with you back home. For me things are not quite okay here at school. I am not sure whether I will finish writing my exams or not. As you know, my IQ is below average so I decided to find other means to help me pass my form four exams. I had planned to carry a *Mwakenya* during exams, but I was told that six police officers including constable Jere will be coming to supervise us. Immediately I heard that constable Jere will be around I

brushed the idea of cheating aside. That police officer is cruel; cruel more than the devil himself. Some of the harsh things he does even do shock the devil to the core. Jere is dark from inside to out and the very devil incarnate in flesh and bones.

So, I thought of visiting a witch doctor to give me some *juju* to pass my exams.

'Can I help you young man?' queried the witchdoctor in a husky and deep voice that sounded like an old generator. His physical appearance, disposition and paraphernalia that lay around his habitat painted a perfect picture of his witch doctor profession. He had a wide and flat nose that covered 30 percent of his face. He was tall and potbellied. 'I have come for help. I am a student at Luvwate Secondary School and I need some medicine to pass my form four exams.' I said. 'Don't worry young man I will help you' he said. His lips were very dark and heavy, though not darker than mine. I guess he was born like that. But as for me, you know already that my lips were never as black as they are right now. My lips are dark because I smoke *marijuana* in plenty and with a good appetite at the same time. As I write this letter to you Dad, I have just finished my cigarette. Sometimes I suspect that Marijuana deleted the little intelligence I had before I joined secondary school and I have a conviction that my mental faculty has to be formatted once again. I fell for Marijuana because of the curiosity about its ability to multiply one's intellectual performance. Do you remember the old adage that curiosity killed the cat? Yes Dad, your little cat is about to be consumed by marijuana because of curiosity.

I know you are surprised to hear that I smoke, but that is the truth. After a few minutes the witchdoctor started mumbling some strange words. It appeared as if he was praying in tongues, but I realized he was praying in lips. He gave me a charm and told me to tie it on my waist. ‘make sure that you should be the last one among the candidates to enter the exam room, otherwise you will run mad.’ he said, his voice with some kind of finality and his lips shaping every syllable. Those words sent a chill down my spine. I wanted to give him back his charm. ‘but...’ he interrupted, ‘no buts young man. Now go !!’ he exclaimed, sounding like the devil incarnate. I hurriedly gave him his money and left.

The day of exams finally came, I woke up very early, entered the shower room and began soaping myself. I took my breakfast and rushed to the exam hall. I stood at a stone throw distance waiting for everybody to enter first. All the students entered except one girl who also stood at a distance pretending to be busy. I tried to wait for her but I got tired and I decided to move closer to her. ‘what are you still doing outside go inside quickly!’ I said to her, with anger well written on my countenance. ‘what about you? Can’t you go first? as for me I am busy,’ was the response. ‘what are you busy with? I asked. ‘what is your problem can’t you mind your business. Useless man!’ I lost my temper with her response. I gave her a slap, then followed by a blow that landed on the bridge of her nose. She then grabbed and pushed me down. I landed like a piece of log and great pain danced all over my body.

‘ You fools! Are you here to write the exam or fight? Get inside quickly before you are

disqualified.’ Fumed the invigilator, a tall and dark homo sapiens. I evaporated from the scene and condensed in my room and did not return. Dad that is how I failed to write the first paper.

On the second day I deliberately went very late only to find the same girl standing some few meters away from the exam hall and I just decided to go back to the hostel to sleep. On the third day the same thing happened. It then dawned on me that probably the girl went to the same witchdoctor and was given the same instructions. Both of us probably were afraid of getting mad. I haven’t entered that exam hall since the exams began Dad. I better not write than become mad. I remember I promised you that one day I will become a professor but please forgive me for this marks the end of my academic life. Next week I am coming back home but please Dad welcome me I am still your son. As for the professor thing, you can still call me professor. I wanted to send you some money; part of the school fees you gave me. But unfortunately, I remembered after sealing the envelope already. I have learnt that there is no any other medicine to pass except hard work but it is already too late for me.

Yours John Maliro.”

“So, my son that is how the nickname professor came.” “interesting, I will make sure for your sake I become a real professor.” Answered James with seriousness scribed on his countenance.



PLEASE! READ ME!

1. Start your day with breakfast.

Breakfast - fills your "empty tank" to get you going after a long night without food. And it can help you do better in school. Easy to prepare breakfasts include cold cereal with fruit and low-fat milk, whole-wheat toast with peanut butter, yogurt with fruit, whole-grain waffles or even last night's pizza!

2. Get Moving!

It's easy to fit physical activities into your daily routine. Walk, bike or jog to see friends. Take a 10-minute activity break every hour while you read, do homework or watch TV. Climb stairs instead of taking an escalator or elevator. Try to do these things for a total of 30 minutes every day.

3. Snack smart.

Snacks are a great way to refuel. Choose snacks from different food groups - a glass of low-fat milk and a few graham crackers, an apple or celery sticks with peanut butter and raisins, or some dry cereal. If you eat smart at other meals, cookies, chips and candy are OK for occasional snacking.

4. Work up a sweat.

Vigorous work-outs - when you're breathing hard and sweating - help your heart pump better, give you more energy and help you look and feel best. Start with a warm-up that stretches your muscles. Include 20 minutes of aerobic activity, such as running, jogging, or dancing. Follow-up with activities that help make you stronger such as push-ups or lifting weights. Then cool-down with more stretching and deep breathing.

5. Balance your food choices - don't eat too much of any one thing.

You don't have to give up foods like hamburgers, French fries and ice cream to eat healthy. You just have to be smart about how often and how much of them you eat. Your body needs nutrients like protein, carbohydrates, fat and many different vitamins and

minerals such as vitamins C and A, iron and calcium from a variety of foods. Balancing food choices from the Food Guide Pyramid and checking out the Nutrition Facts Panel on food labels will help you get all these nutrients.

6. Get fit with friends or family.

Being active is much more fun with friends or family. Encourage others to join you and plan one special physical activity event, like a bike ride or hiking, with a group each week.

7. Eat more grains, fruits and vegetables.

These foods give you carbohydrates for energy, plus vitamins, minerals and fiber. Besides, they taste good! Try breads such as whole-wheat, bagels and pita. Spaghetti and oatmeal are also in the grain group. Bananas, strawberries and melons are some great tasting fruits. Try vegetables raw, on a sandwich or salad.

8. Foods aren't good or bad.

A healthy eating style is like a puzzle with many parts. Each part or food - is different. Some foods may have more fat, sugar or salt while others may have more vitamins. There is a place for all these foods. What makes a diet good or bad is how foods fit together. Balancing your choices is important. Fit in a higher-fat food, like pepperoni pizza, at dinner by choosing lower-fat foods at other meals. And don't forget about moderation. If two pieces of pizza - fill you up, you don't need a third.

9. Make healthy eating and physical activities fun!

Take advantage of physical activities you and your friends enjoy doing together and eat the foods you like. Be adventurous - try new sports, games and other activities as well as new foods. You'll grow stronger, play longer, and look and feel better!

10. Drink enough water daily

A good number of people know the importance of water in their bodies for it the largest part of our bodies. But due to laziness, negligence and lack of consistence, they end up drinking a lot of alcohol instead of water. Drink at least 2 litres of water each day.

Sport activities in MIC and MIUC

By Br. Kudakwashe Blessed Vambe, FMS

Life is sports and the importance of it for every person cannot be exaggerated. As the adage goes, 'a sound mind in a sound body,' sport remains one of the activities which brings the MIC community together. The popular sport activities include football, basketball, volleyball and table tennis. Some Brothers are equally fond of jogging in the early mornings of Sundays or taking long walk on different days of the week.

Each year, as part of integrating Brothers into the life of MIC, they enter into competition with the rest of the community in disciplines like football, volleyball, and basketball. The tradition has been that the new Brothers always lose. This tradition has been unbroken and we look forward to the group that will prove the contrary. There is also the annual competition among fraternities. It covers football, volleyball and basketball. To make it exciting we have witnessed the participation of some animators like Brother Patrick playing soccer. Lwanga fraternity had been dominating this tournament for some time but Chanel fraternity brought this winning streak to an end. We hope that the Sports Commission will expand this tournament to include indoor games like chess and table tennis.

MIC has had a long record of playing second in group stages of Tangaza soccer tournament. We managed to beat St. Patricks, Bakanjas, Friars Minor Capuchin but we lost to our neighbours the Friars Minor Conventual 2-1. The match we played with the Friars Minor Capuchin was a controversial one. The match was played on the

feast of St. Francis of Assisi and the other families of Friar came to support their Brothers as a way of marking the feast of their founder. It was only after 74 minutes of playing that the community scored the goal that paralysed the Friars, for some reasons they could not continue. The loss made everyone know that St. Francis of Assisi is not only for the Friars but for the whole church. Due to some reasons beyond our control we could not make it to the final, therefore we played for third position with the Friars Minor Conventual and we won 7-3.

The volleyball Team of MIUC is equally vibrant, it is made up of Brothers and lay students. Each week we witness a couple of students joining the training particularly for fitness. We train daily from Monday to Thursday. The volleyball team has played few games with Hekima and Tangaza University Colleges. The results were not outstanding, although we were clinical in the way we played. We are however yet to improve enough in basketball for us to compete in the inter-congregational competitions. This require adequate preparation, participation and strategy.



Sport activities in MIC and MIUC



I thank God for having granted me the privilege of serving the MIC Football Team as coach for the past 2 years. I also thank the entire MIC community for trusting me to serve in this capacity. It has not been an easy task. In the beginning I faced a lot of challenges, most especially in making right line ups so as to have a flowing game with players understanding each other. It has been a very wonderful experience for me because I learned a lot through this work.

Statistically, we managed to win 95% of our matches. The most exciting match for me since I started coaching was during the Tangaza tournament of this year 2019, when we played with the Friars Minor Conventuals (FMC) and eventually won them 7 – 3 and took the third position of the tournament. Finally, I wish to thank the players for their collaboration, commitment and fighting spirit. I encourage them to keep the same spirit with the new coach and always train, for practice makes perfect. Asanteni Sana.

Br. Marius Kossonou N'guettia Kouassi, Fourth Year Student Brother.





WELCOMING OF NEW MEMBERS OF MIC COMMUNITY (2019)



GOLDEN JUBILEE OF BR. SPIRIDION



Br. Ernesto Sanchez, S.G in MIC Chapel on 24th October, 2019.

BUILDING A GLOBAL MARIST FAMILY CENTERED ON CHRIST AND OPEN TO THE NEEDS OF THE YOUTH

Other photos of interest





For comments, sending of more articles, feedback or suggestions kindly write to
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