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NEWS BULLETIN



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The New Coronavirus and it's Impact on Society

Receive warm greetings from the District House, Accra. We have heard and read about the devastating effects of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). It was first reported in December, 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei Province, in China. At first, we all thought it was a game play between two world super powers fighting for economic supremacy. We have been proven wrong as the COVID-19 disease has spread and is causing havoc in many countries of the world.

The Marist District of West Africa is feeling the heat of the pandemic as well. Firstly, all the countries in which we operate have closed down Institutions of learning and other public gatherings including gathering to celebrate the Holy Eucharist. These such directives have affected all schools in the District.

Governments and health authorities, in the five countries of the District, are putting in place stringent but necessary preventive measures to safeguard the citizens from devastating effects of this pandemic. For instance, flights and issuance of visas to and from various countries have been suspended and borders have been closed down. Other preventive measures, provided by World Health Organization, (WHO) include but not limited to the following;

- Constantly wash your hands with soap under running water.



- Use hand sanitizers that contain at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your nose, face and eyes with unwashed hands.
- Do not shake hands with other people.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue paper when you cough or sneeze

These and many more have been posted in the different print and electronic media as well as the various social media networks. Even though we are all well informed about this widespread disease (COVID -19), and are taking precautionary measures to combat it, I am also inviting all of us to stay at home and avoid big crowds. There are many carriers or infected people in the system. There is an English adage that says that 'Prevention, is better than cure'.

Currently, some of us are still in school trying to help the final year students as they approach their final examinations in few weeks. As we wish our candidates all the best in their exams preparations, we ask them to also take very good care of themselves and take seriously the measures put in place by their school authorities and in their various homes.

The same goes to our Economy of communities and schools as they daily go out to mingle with people in the markets and supermarkets. Please, I will invite you to buy your foodstuff in bulk to avoid daily contact with people in the market places.

Wishing you all God's blessings as we strive to elude the grips of COVID-19 disease.

Br Cyprian Gandeabo

District Superior

MARIST DISTRICT OF WEST AFRICA

(Cameroon, Ghana, Côte d'ivoire, Libera & Tchad)

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST CORANVIRUS

Coronavirus is a respiratory virus that is transmitted through aerosols that you can come in contact with when you interact at close range with an infected person or touch surfaces that have been contaminated by an infected person.



What is coronavirus (COVID-19) and how can I prepare?

The good news is that Coronavirus is not typically air-borne. But the bad news is that unlike Ebola which made its victims so sick that they were often bedridden before they could spread the virus widely, Coronavirus has an incubation period of up to 14 days during which a person can actively spread the infection at home, at school, in church, in the plane, bus, or train, or at work, without knowing that he/she has it. For every patient that is diagnosed of Covid-19, there is a 2 to 14-day contamination lag period.

According to public health experts, it is likely that the worse is yet to come. Unfortunately, despite the best efforts, it will take a year or longer before vaccines or drugs are available. What does this all mean? That right now, the power to stop the impending global calamity rests in your hands. We can beat this crisis if we implement the commonsense hygienic and social distancing measures that have been recommended by the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control, and other health agencies. It is on this note that people have taken the responsibility to educate communities about their role in

combating the Covid-19 pandemic.

I. Monitor yourself and the members of your household on a daily basis for one or a combination of the following symptoms;

- Fever
- Cough
- Throat sore
- Runny nose.
- Difficulty breathing or pain in the chest.

II. If any of these symptoms appear;

- Immediately quarantine yourself.
- Seek medical attention by calling the emergency number which is available in your location.

III. Implementing the following safety measures will go a long way to keep you safe;

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Where soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Do not travel or attend social gatherings except you MUST.

Finally, If you must go outdoors, make sure you avoid all physical contact with other people by a distance of at least 3 meters and use nose masks and gloves were possible.

REGIONAL AFRICAN COMMUNITY LEADERS WORKSHOP—RWANDA

INTRODUCTION



Participants of the Community Leaders program

The event which brought together a good number of Marist Community leaders of the African Region to reflect on better ways of serving our Brothers was for me a transfiguration on Mount Tabor. The experience was an opportunity for stock taking, a period of renewal and a moment of recollection.

CONTENT

The course content was very comprehensive, loaded with very relevant stuff for participants to absorb, process, synthesise and extrapolate or apply by adapting it to their own contexts or situations. The Superior General in his opening remarks before the beginning of the presentations clearly told participants *“this course is not just about the content to be delivered but rather intended to make participants ‘-do-’ the program”*. This remark set the tone for the course which was definitely tailored to be experiential. We were encouraged to compare notes, share ideas and experiences and find out how it is done in other communities and countries across the region of Africa. Participants were empowered with a plethora of interpersonal and group skills, group dynamics etc, to enable us relate better with people in general. We were also shown the specific Marist leadership style and skills needed in our communities. The use of positive psychology or

affirmative language in the community was clearly underlined during this course. This course was mainly meant for keeping participants abreast of the demands of the XXII General Chapter and the way forward for our Institute.

Another aim of this course was for the self-transformation of the participants in order that they may be better able to positively influence our various communities. I want to believe that this aim or purpose was met, at least, in my own case, since I am truly or really motivated and resolved to chart this course.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

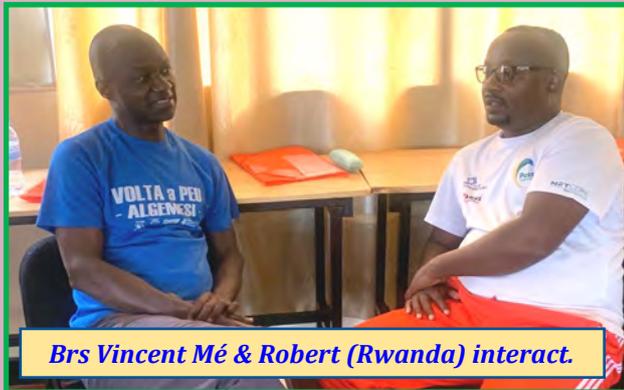


Brs Philip & Linus during a moment of sharing

The approach was very anagogical, combining activity with theory. In other words, it was adult centered; allowing room for the sharing of ideas and experiences interspaced with energizers like games, puzzles short films or videos, miming etc. to whip up and sustain the interest of participants, especially the “muzees” like me throughout the presentations.

It was so revealing to know that the deepest and most effective way of communicating is with our body language - 55%, and not through the use of words which is only 5%. The use of the voice even carries 37 % effectiveness. Participants were therefore challenged to sharpen these skills if they are to succeed in their task as agents of renewal in our Institute.

Reflecting deeply on body language, it dawned on me that this is the very approach adopted by God in the **INCARNATION**. The most eloquent and effective communication of His Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence to us humans was through body language - by taking on our human flesh or body.



Brs Vincent Mé & Robert (Rwanda) interact.

One thing that really opened my eyes to the reality of community life was the clear explanation of the Psycho-Historico-Sociological table of generational brackets, which clearly explained the behaviours of the Brothers of different generational brackets. It was an Aha or a great insight on how to better handle Brothers of the different age groups that often make up a community.

I also discovered the underlining principle to the success of a Marist Community Leader - this example or model of servant leadership of our Lord Jesus Christ or what others choose to call “the revolution of the towel”. The servant or prophetic or shepherd leadership style is preferable because as beautifully put by Henri Nouwen, in this style the three temptations of a leader: the temptation to be relevant; the temptation to be spectacular and the temptation to be powerful are countered with the three kernels of wisdom namely, being prayerful instead of craving relevance, serving rather than desiring popularity and being led rather than focusing on power (leading/influencing). Accordingly, Servant leaders influence more than they direct, and they inspire more than they instruct. It is revolutionary and countercultural - normally the master or leader should be served but, in this model, the

opposite is true. Indeed, Servant leadership denotes humility, a loving and caring heart, just to mention but a few.

It was as empowering as it was challenging, to be reminded by the Superior General himself that we, community leaders, are his representatives at that level of the smallest cell of the Institute. The community leader or animator is the “Anima” or “soul” and “face” of the community and Institute and must act as such. “If we are to revolutionize our Institute / District / Provinces / Communities, we must start with community life. If we do not get our community life right, our Institute risks collapsing”.



Brs Eugene (Nigeria) & Tekay in one of the sessions

The program generally fostered creativity in prayers, provided room for participation by all. It also promoted fraternity or community life as participants happily celebrated the gift and joy of our brotherhood. The outings to the two national museums and three of our Marist schools in different parts of Rwanda was as educative and informative as it was relaxing, and recreating. Participants also had ample time to interact, share ideas and compare notes among themselves to identify best practices. Surprisingly and interestingly I discovered that our stories, difficulties or challenges were so similar and this, for me, was very consoling, encouraging and empowering. Starting the day with a communal contemplation followed by those creative, well prepared and solemn morning prayers by the respective Administrative Units was for me the magic wand for the success of the whole program.

CONCLUSION

The course was so knowledge-packed, insightful, experiential, thrilling and very relevant as it aptly responded to the actual needs of community life today. Besides, the assembly of Brothers and community leaders from all across Africa made the experience richer as we shared very deeply, and discussed crucial community issues.

Brothers during an outing in Rwanda.



In my opinion every Brother is a potential Community Leader and so there is an urgent need for every Brother to go through what we have just experienced. A good grasp of the role of the Marist Community Leader by every Brother of the Institute should help all understand, appreciate and give due reverence to this office, which is but a sacrifice and service. This program is not only necessary and relevant for the transformation of Community Leaders but so crucial to the transformation of every Brother of the Marist Institute.

I am so grateful to our Almighty Father, for making it possible for me to be part of this experience. Thanks to our Good Mother for her constant intercession and for her hand in this renewal of our Institute. I am equally grateful to the District Superior, Br. Cyprian Gandebo and his Council for considering me for such a wonderful program. I thank all the Brothers of the District for your support, which brought this program to a very memorable and successful end. Keep praying that the participants of this course may truly be your servants in the communities.

Br Philip Ninfaasie

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK AT OUR GOOD MOTHER SCHOOL - ASHALAJA



Education is one of the priorities of the Catholic Church in Ghana. Catholic Education seeks quality and holistic Education as a tool for development of the nation. It is in this light that every year a full week is dedicated to Catholic Education in all Catholic Schools all over the country.

The Catholic Education week was celebrated at Our Good Mother School – Ashalaja from February 2-9 2020 in a grand style. The theme for this year's celebration was “*Combating Corruption in Ghana, the role of Catholic Education*”

The celebration was launched at All Saints Parish – Ashalaja in the presence of the teachers, the parents and some students on Sunday 2nd February 2020. The following day there was a march pass from Ashalaja town to Ashalaja school park. The students displayed their talents with the brass band to the satisfaction of the spectators.

The subsequent days were marked by series of activities and talks on the theme of the year. Friday was particularly marked by the career day. The students came to school with the attire of the career they want to undertake in the future. The day was really colourful and all the students were very happy.

Br Yao Aristide

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK AT MCS - BUOKROM



St. Marcellin Champagnat School community celebrated the Catholic Education Week from Monday January 27th to Sunday February 2nd 2020, under the theme; ‘**COMBATING CORRUPTION IN GHANA, THE ROLE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION**’. A number of premeditated happenings gave the week-long celebration the grandeur it deserved.

Mr. Hans Appiah, the Assistant Headmaster launched the celebration in the School. In his opening remarks, he briefly exemplified what corruption is, stating the different facets in which corruption manifests itself, most especially how the seed of corruption is progressively sown in a learner which eventually becomes the way of life of the said learner. Thus, in the future, such a person’s way of discerning issues will only be informed and steered by unethical patterns of thinking and consequently, the person will be wholly devoid of any kind of decorum.

Mr. Hans further stated the various ways in which Catholic Education is combating the above tendency by investing in an all-inclusive education in the hearts and minds of its pupils and students so that they can be morally upright. This

in turn achieves Father Champagnat’s philosophy of Marist Education which is to develop good Christians and Citizens through Eucharistic celebrations, recollections for students and staff, teaching of catechism as well as Moral Instruction in our school.

The second day was devoted to Careers in which the pupils/students, as prearranged, came out with costumes or attires of various professions/vocations which they aspire to be, stating why they yearn to serve the humanity in that profession / vocation and how they intend to serve with a corruption-free attitude.



Pupils during Sporting activities

Day 3 of the celebrations saw the pupils / students showcasing their talents in sports through the inter-house football competition. A debate, for and against the motion; **COMBATING CORRUPTION IN GHANA, THE ROLE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION** was held on the fourth day together with a role play, which drew inspiration from the theme of the celebration and centering on the menace of corruption in a school community. The finals of the inter-house football competition were held on the fifth day, with Joseph house emerging victorious. To bring the curtains of the week-long celebration to an end, the pupils/students attended thanksgiving services in their various Parishes on Sunday February 2nd 2020.

Br. Conrad Tameh (f.m.s)

WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE



The Marist Community of Bouaké were present.

The Marist Brothers in Bouaké joined the Religious men and women from the Archdiocese of Bouaké to celebrate the World day of Consecrated Life on February 2nd 2020 around the theme 'the impact of the modern technology on the Religious life'. On the 1st of February 2020, all the Religious gathered together with the Bishop for a recollection at the Benedictine Monastery facilitated by the abbot of the Monastery. In his intervention, he decried the fact that the poor usage of phones, internet and social media has reduced the quality time that Religious should spend together and hence each community ought to adopt appropriate use of social media and technology for the benefit of a healthy community life. The afternoon of the day was also used to meet the youths of the diocese who turned out in their numbers. It was an opportunity for Religious to talk about their charisma and apostolate to the youths and so encourage them to think about joining the Religious life.

On the 2nd of February 2020, all the Religious gathered in the cathedral where a mass was celebrated with the Bishop. The Bishop used the opportunity to talk to the Christians about the beauty of the Religious life. He reminded them that a Church without Religious is lacking in an

essential element of its life. He thanked the Religious men and women for all that they are and all that they do in the life of the Church and reminded them that the quality of a good Religious is one who spends enough time at prayers, meals and other community activities.

After the Mass, there was a moment of sharing and entertainment among the Religious. Let us thank the Lord for the gift of consecrated life to the Church and pray for more vocations to the Religious Life.

Br Cho Nchang Atzi-nwi

CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S DAY



Final year students who animated the conference

Students of Marie Ke Tal organized a conference to mark the celebration of the International day of Women's rights. The theme which focused on equality amongst men and women as an advantage for all was attended by over 150 students from the college as well as other nearby college students. Participants were encouraged to take their studies seriously so as to be the leaders and decision makers of tomorrow. It should be noted that this conference was organized by some female students in the college in collaboration with the school administration.

Br Alfred Ngaro

Young Brothers Meeting - Bouaké



A young Brothers meeting was held in the Marist Community of Bouaké from the 17th to the 19th of February 2020. It was a very profound experience and the first of its kind where we Brothers Deric, Aristide, Asante and Lawrence got to meet each other and share our experiences. This encounter was animated by Brothers Germain Beda, Vincent Mé and Cho Nchang.

The first day focused on Community life and was facilitated by Br Germain Beda who reminded us that our initial call is to be Religious Marist Brothers. He encouraged us to always be present at all community activities and further invited us to feel free with our brothers and live community life to the full. In his conclusion, he stressed that community life requires obedience to the rules of the community which are stipulated in our constitutions and in the life plan of every community.

The second topic of sharing based on the life of our founder and our Marist Mission was animated by Brother Vincent Mé. He invited us to share our experiences especially our joys and challenges since our first profession. In response to this, we had a flashback of the various stages of formation. In conclusion I can say that whatever we are and all that we have achieved is all by the grace of God, He has been our source of inspiration. With our weaknesses and limitations, God has given us strengths and energies to move on. We have received love, care and encouragement from each other, friends, students, brothers, parents, lecturers and from our current community members.

The last topic which focused on carrying out our

mission with zeal and enthusiasm was facilitated by Brother Cho Nchang who shared the inspiring story of Brother Peter Tabichi the Kenyan Maths and Physics teacher won the Global Teacher prize in 2019 in a rural milieu by inspiring young ones to believe in themselves. We shared and learned a lot from the life of Br Tabichi and his impact in his mission. We were thus encouraged to be assets and to add value to our communities and schools as well as areas of our mission.



Our last activity was an outing to the Basilica in Yamoussoukro where we had a brief moment of adoration and a tour of the basilica. We wish to express our sincere thanks and appreciations to the District Superior and council, the Marist Community of Bouaké for hosting us, the Brothers who took time to animate the various talks and Mary our Good Mother for her constant care and protection on us all.



Young Brothers during an outing at the Basilica.

We have learnt so much from one another, our facilitators and we were able to challenge one another. May Jesus, Mary and Marcellin see us through in our desire to follow Christ.

Br. Lawrence Doe

Brothers & Lay Marists together for a common Mission-Champville

First and foremost our community comprises of twenty-two members; seven brothers, three families with six-children, six energetic young men and three other committed members.



Enlarged community at Champville

Community life: How do the Marist Community of Champville live her community life? The Lay-Marist are part and parcel of the Marist Community but do not stay in the community for all year round like the Brothers do. The program offers them the opportunity to strike a balance between their family and community life, as the community keeps exploring better ways to journey together. Therefore, the Lay-Marist come and live with the Brothers for one week every semester and during this period, they follow the daily schedule of the community. They attend community meetings once or twice per month to discuss issues concerning community life.

Apostolate: As Marist educators, our mission is in school. In Lebanon, the brothers are advanced in age and cannot be effective in school like in the past. We thank God for the commitment of the Lay-Marist who oversee the affairs of the college, especially in sensitive positions with the aid of the community at large. Majority of the community members are involved in the school. For example; in the school administration, spiritual groups

(Scouts, GVX and MEJ) and sports. It is important to note that the Marist bond between the Brothers and ex-students is very strong, thousands of ex-students are still part and parcel of the spiritual groups in the college, to a greater extent attending meetings and spiritual activities once per week. For example, you can see a pupil of ten years old in the same group with an adult of fifty years old, this has helped to keep the Marist tradition. It is interesting to note that, Lay-Marists do play a vital role in coordinating some of these activities.



Conclusively, the enlarged Marist Community of Champvielle is blessed. The Community has been fortunate to have some Brothers and Lay-Marist from the Province who come on several occasions to share their personal experiences with them. From the shared experiences of the Brothers and Lay-Marist from the Province, the Marist Community of Champvielle is progressively becoming stronger.

A Marist community is one of those places in life where the mind and heart of God are made manifest. Jesus is present there, in our midst (cf Mt 18:20), uniting us in one heart, pouring out his Spirit upon us (cf Jn 20:22), sending us out to announce that in Christ, we are all brothers and sisters, children of the same Father.

[‘Extracts from the rule of Life No 36 para 2’](#)

Br. Tomla Elvis

Meeting of Provincials and District Leaders in Rome



The second meeting of the General Council with the Provincials and District Leaders of the Marist Brothers Institute started on 2nd and ended on March 7th 2020. A “**Leadership that cares for life**” was the theme for this year’s meeting.

In his welcome address, the Superior General, Br Ernesto Sanchez used the opportunity to outline the three objectives of the conference:



Br Ernesto addressing the Leaders in Rome.

- To reflect and share on the theme of **CARE**, from the perspective of leadership: care for new Marist life, care for people, for minors, for our common home, for our mission, for our goods and resources, and for personal care.
- To exchange ideas on the processes of Regionalization / Structures at the service of our Marist life and of the Global Family.
- To share information on specific topics of interest to our worldwide Institute.
- To enhance focused discussions, the Directors of the Secretariats and Departments of the General Administration were invited to participate and facilitate sessions at different times during the conference.

Br Cyprian Gandeabo

THE WORK OF OUR HANDS

Following the example of Father Champagnat, work is a pleasant duty to us in Korhogo. All the Brothers are classroom teachers and to make sure that we have something on the table from our own hands, a small garden is been managed by the community garden commission where we have so far been enjoying some nice vegetables. It is not only helping us to have fresh vegetables but contributes in its own little way to minimizing cost in the community. The garden also helps as a powerful area for meditation during weekends when the students are away.



Br Deric attends to the garden in Korhogo.

Demonstrate your commitment to the integrity of creation and care of the earth by engaging in sound ecological practices and the careful use of everyday goods.

[‘Extracts from the rule of Life No 50 para 3’](#)

Br Ndi Deric Ngong

Micro Project : Towards a Self-Reliant Community

Our recent District Chapter identified economic autonomy as one of the areas of our concentration in our administrative unit. Rightly placed, this priority is a wheel upon which the would-be Province of West Africa would drive. As part of our way of achieving economic independence, the Ahwiren Community decided to embark on some income generating projects that have been yielding some gains.



Chickens ready for the market.

The community thought of Poultry farming: production of chicken and eggs. Our original aim was for our own consumption. However, the project turned out to be a business venture when the suppliers of the chicks could not sell less than 50 chicks. Between August 2019 and February 2020 we produced almost 80 birds (broilers) with over 50% profit margin. Besides, from the few layers, the community has gathered more than 20 crates within one and half months.

Our garden and farms are not only sources of food but also places of collecting some coins to keep us alive. From the vegetables such as lettuce, tomato, cowpeas and 'njamajama' we have not only been able to improve the quality of our meals but saved some money. Recently the community is able to supply lettuce to our one-time supplier at the Bekwai market.

At a point the community saw the need to go into beverage production when we realized we could

not consume the quantity of oranges from the orchard. Thanks to one of the postulants who specialized in catering and the support of others we are able to make juice and 'sobolo' for sale. Our main target in this business is St Joseph Senior High Technical School, and especially the sports festivals that often take place at the same premises.



Brs Divine & postulant harvesting vegetables

The community has so far made substantial gains in these projects; we are hopeful to expand these businesses in the near future if we have more manpower. In the light of the successes made we would like to encourage communities to think of income generating projects; in this way our economic emancipation would not be a wish but a reality.

Br. Augustine Naatey

Together with Marcellin, our Brothers realized that manual labor was not just something to talk about. There are lessons to be learned from working with your hands. At times, simple labor conveys truths that words fail to describe. Like the first Brothers, realise that showing concern for the care and cleanliness of the house helps to build fraternity.

['Extracts from the Rule of Life No 50 para 1'](#)

Cultural Anthropology and Inculturation to Formatees in Kumbo



Br Ivo & the Tertiary Sisters Novices.

As a result of non-functioning of most of the schools due to the crisis, the brothers "challenged themselves to give another image of brotherhood through service to the local Christian community and young people in general". In addition to what the three brothers are already doing, Brother Ivo Njongai, making good use of the insights, knowledge and the enrichment he obtained from the seminar on cultural anthropology and Inculturation at the Christian Village in Kumasi - Ghana, in January, 2019, has further challenged himself by developing his own course on the same topic. He has therefore become a resource person of the course on cultural anthropology and Inculturation. Four religious congregations in the diocese of Kumbo are the first to benefit from the services of Br Ivo Njongai.

A two day seminar was given to their candidates in initial formation at the noviciate formation house of the Tertiary Sisters of Saint Francis in Shisong. The participants were: the novices of the Tertiary Sisters of Saint Francis, the Postulants of the Capuchins' fathers, the novices of the Daughters of the Cross and the Postulants of the Sisters of our Lady of Mount Calvary. It was a very enriching and spiritually fulfilling experience for both the candidates and the facilitator. Brother Ivo Njongai intends to continue doing more

research and reflection on this important field of study, and also make himself available to other religious formation houses in the Ecclesiastical Province of Bamenda who might be in need of his services.

Objective of the Course: The objective of the course is to give participants some basic insights on how to know the people, their cultures and the society in which they live so as to be more effective in their ministry of bringing the message of the good News to those being sent to. It is about Evangelization, which is the commission of Jesus for us to go out to the whole world and proclaim his message, the good News of salvation.



Br Ivo with the Capuchin Novices.

The course, therefore, is mainly concerned with two concepts: the concept and meaning of culture, and the concept of Inculturation with other important related aspects added to deepen the learner's understanding of African cultural values, and how Christ's message could be well known and effectively practised by people receiving it. After doing the course, participants would be expected to love, value, respect and appreciate more those they will be sent to minister to in their respective areas of apostolates after their religious formation and academic training.

Brother Ivo Njongai

FROM CLASSROOM TO PEACEROOM

In recent months, violence in the school environment has become the order of the day in Cameroon. Parents send their children to gain knowledge and learn and should not have to worry about their children's safety. However, we have witnessed violent confrontations at different levels and amongst different persons in the school milieu.



Staff of Notre Dame de Nations—Yassa

According to the statistics from Cameroon's Ministry of Secondary Education, there has been a record of 40 violent attacks by students on their peers, 22 attacks on teachers and 15 attacks by parents on teachers within the past months. The question one needs to pose is; **“why is violence in the school milieu on the rise”?**

It is on this framework that on the 16th of February, a team of men and women of goodwill engaging in the project Called **“From Classroom to Peace Room”** organized a one-day seminar in Our Lay of All Nations Catholic Bilingual College Yassa. This initiative was aimed at advocating for peace and sensitizing against violence, bullying and promoting academic excellence.

The seminar was started with the Holy Mass in the school main Chapel. This occasion was also aimed at celebrating the world day of prayer against human trafficking. During the course of the seminar the students were asked to denounce violence in the school milieu, obey their teachers and administrators and to show respect for school

authority. They were also cautioned to say no to drugs intake and other forms of drugs abuse. This was done through demonstration of non-violence phrases on placards. The organizers created a network of non-violence with students and some few staff members at the end of the seminar which is to be followed up in the coming months.

The speaker of the day also pinpointed some of the causes of violence in most of our schools in Cameroon as identified below:

- The abuse of drugs and alcohol. Students who are intoxicated tend to lose control of their inhibitions and often act in an irrational manner. This can therefore serve as a catalyst for violent behaviours in school.
- Another possible cause is lack of proper education at home; Parents are not doing enough to educate, discipline and train children to love, have empathy and to be tolerant towards others. Some of the parents spend little or no time with their children and therefore certain traits of violence in their children remain unchecked.
- In some institutions, there is a lot of bullying taking place among students. This means that some students might be violent as a response tactic to those who bully them. Others may find themselves caught in the web unknowingly.

The above are just few of some of the causes of violence in schools among others. This reality may be shared across the globe in many countries too. But the questions one could put forward are; **“Are we free of this phenomenon? What is our own place as Marist in the midst of all these social problems? What could be the new tactics of handling indisciplinary cases in our schools so much so that they won't erupt to violence”?** As educators; we need to make our classroom **“peace rooms”**. And where there is a need we need to take the lead.

Br. W Therenca Banseka (fms)

SENSITIZATION ON DRUG ABUSE AND NON VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOL MILEU

Students of Forms three and four of Champagnat Bouaké were sensitized on the risks involved in abusing drugs and depicting violent behaviors on their peers on Wednesday January 29th 2020 by Miss Reine Kouamé a jurist who works in a judicial clinic in Bouaké. In her presentation she identified the various types of drugs as well as their effects on the youths. She equally explained to them the different types of violence such as verbal, physical, material, sexual, social and cyber violence. She encouraged students to always resolve conflicts amicably and use non-violent techniques as much as possible.



In addition, Miss Reine Kouamé cited the Ivorian penal code to explain the various risks involved in abusing drugs and inflicting harm on others. Some violent behaviors carry a sentence of up to five years' imprisonment and a student who is guilty of violent behavior and drug abuse can become a school dropout and risk his future. At the end of the presentation, students were given a chance to ask questions for clarifications. Students then took the resolution to choose to remain sober and non-violent for their success as they were the leaders of tomorrow. After the talk, students were treated with snacks and they all went home very happy

and satisfied.



This seminar was made possible thanks to the collaboration between Centre Scolaire St Marcellin Champagnat and the JEC (Catholic Youth Students) of St Paul de Gonfreville – Bouaké. We would like to thank SED through the Real Madrid Foundation which currently supports sports and extracurricular activities in Marist schools in Cote d'Ivoire. We pray that this seminar will have a lasting impact on the lives of the students of Champagnat Bouaké so that they can be agents of change and development in the society. This seminar will be extended to the students of forms one and two in the month of February in order to continue with the desired impact on student's behavior.

A moment of sharing after the seminar.



Br Cho Nchang Atzi-nwi

MARDI GRAS / FAT TUESDAY CHAMPAGNAT—BOUAKE



Mardi gras is the day before Ash Wednesday and is also known as Fat Tuesday. It is a day when people take time to feast as the following day is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of a long fasting period for Christians. In addition to fasting, Christians also give up something special that they enjoy. So, Fat Tuesday is a celebration and the opportunity to enjoy that favorite food or snack that you give up for the long Lenten season.

At Champagnat Bouaké, on the 25th of February 2020 which was the Tuesday before Lent, we used the opportunity to celebrate our cultural diversity with our nursery and primary pupils. On this day, the children and teachers turned out in their diverse traditional regalia to show-case the value and beauty of being Africans and Ivoirians in particular.

The day commenced with the assembling of the children at the entrance of the school. In a word of prayer, the head of the Institution Rev Br Germain Bery Beda invoked God's guidance and protection through the intercession of the Virgin Mary Our Good Mother. This was followed by a marching and dancing procession along the road out of the school premises led by the Bras Band. It was a colorful event as one could see the children a

ccompanied by the teachers and Brothers in their diverse traditional outfits, dancing and singing. This caught the attention of everyone on the road as was expressed by the smiles on the faces of onlookers.

After the parade, the children all gathered at the school multipurpose stadium for photographs, dancing and amusement while others could not stop staring at the drone which was rather entertaining them. The day came to an end with a special meal of fried rice popularly known as 'riz gras' accompanied with a soft drink. Each child went home smiling, feeling loved and happy being part of Champagnat's family.



Br. Tansam Elvis (fms)

A God who calls for hope.

Your passion for God and for humanity lies at the heart of your religious consecration as a Brother. You are sent to be the presence of the risen Jesus and to anticipate God's Reign by loving others and offering fraternal service, particularly to those who are on the margins, the borders, the existential peripheries.

'Extracts from the Rule of Life No 10'

Academic Research Workshop

A second workshop on academic research was held in the Marist International University College precisely in the computer laboratory of the college on the 29th of February, 2020. The workshop began exactly at 9: 05 am. The highlights of the workshop were: 1) Academic writing 2) Design and use of E-portfolio in 3) Concept mapping.



The facilitators of the workshop were; Br. Vincent De Paul Koussi, Br. Albert Nzabonaliba and Mr Alphonse the college computer technician. The workshop was in three parts: the first session was conducted by Bro. Vincent De Paul on the methods and ways of writing good scholarly articles. During the first session of the workshop, he urged the students to be aware of who is going to read any piece of work they are writing before writing. He also urged the students to take note of some key points when writing a piece of work to make their work scholarly interesting to the reader. He elaborated on the use of conventions, the use of acceptable language such as adjectives in scholarly writing, the use of software needed for scholarly writing such as Grammarly and Zotero, the use of jargons and idiomatic expressions, the first person singular, and first-person plural, the use of the passive voice, contractions, the use of citation guidelines of

American Psychological Association, proper paraphrasing, and avoiding plagiarizing, in the writing process.

The second session of the workshop started at 11:55 am. The facilitators of the second session were the principal, Br. Albert Nzabonaliba and Mr Alphonse the college computer technician. The second talk was on the creation and the importance of an E-Portfolio. Br. Albert Nzabonaliba took time to explain the meaning and the importance of having an E-portfolio. Mr Alphonse then took the students through the process of creating an E-portfolio account. The workshop ended at about 1:30 pm with a word of appreciation from one of the members of the staff, Madam Joyce Githinji to both the facilitators and the participants. The students expressed their appreciation through one of theirs, who expressed gratitude for the great initiative taken by the college to organize such an important workshop to improve their academic skills and creation of the E-portfolio.

Br Peter Awoh

Be aware of your limitations. When you are in need, rely on your brothers and curb any tendency to reserve things for your exclusive use.

Sometimes an excessive desire for security can cause you to accumulate possessions or to become attached to certain places and works. On other occasions, you can become selfish about sharing your personal time, wanting to reserve it for your private use alone. In some cases, your insistence that we are not trusting enough in God might be nothing more than an excuse for avoiding responsibility or demanding from the community excessive protection.

'Extracts from the Rule of Life No 20'

THE WISE TEACHER

I read this story from the internet and I felt it would make an impact on someone’s life just as it did for Johnny. Therefore, I encourage you to take some time to analytically read it, ponder over it and then answer the provoking questions that follow.

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Johnny was at a wedding. He saw Mr. Clark, one of his high school teachers. Johnny said to him, “Do you remember me?” Mr. Clark answered, “Not really. Who are you?” Johnny introduced himself. “Ah, you were my student... third grade... you were my student. Wow! I have not seen you for so many years. How is your life? What are you involved in?”

Johnny said, “I’m a teacher.” “That’s wonderful!” said Mr. Clark. “What inspired you to become a teacher?” “What inspired me to become a teacher was you”, Johnny continued. Mr. Clark said, “Tell me, how did I inspire you to become a teacher?”

Johnny said, “I saw what an impact you had on me and I realized what an impact I could have on children and teenagers. I decided to go into education.” Mr. Clark said, “So what type of impact did I have on you?”

Johnny went on to say, “One day, in between classes I stole a beautiful, expensive pocket watch from Fred, one of my classmates. It was his mother’s birthday present to him. Fred showed up after lunch break, telling you and the whole class that somebody had stolen his watch.” Johnny continued, “I remember vividly how you addressed the class that afternoon asking that the watch be returned. I was too embarrassed to fess up and return the stolen watch.”

John went on to say, “You, Mr. Clark, you locked the classroom door and asked the class to line up

and close our eyes. And you went from pocket to pocket. You came to my pocket, you found the watch, and you gently pulled it out. You did not stop there. You continued, moving from pocket to pocket all the way to the end of the line. And you told us that it was OK for us to open our eyes.

You returned the pocket watch to Fred! On that day you saved my soul. You saved my dignity. You never said anything about the incident to anyone, not to Fred who was happy to get back the pocket watch, not to anyone, and most surprisingly, not even to me.”

John, with a hint of tears in his eyes, went on to say, “Wow this is what a teacher is. This is what a real educator is. This is what I want to do with my life.” Mr. Clark, listening attentively, says, “That’s amazing, but truth be told, I don’t remember much of the story you just shared with me.”

John, curious, and wanting to learn, said, “But tell me Mr. Clark, you really do not remember the story? You do not remember even when you see me and hear my name? I am sure you remember the story... that I stole the pocket watch! I am sure you remember that unique and unusual ritual of lining us up and how not wanting to embarrass the ‘thief’, you asked everybody to close their eyes! You really don’t remember that I’m the person who stole the watch.”

And Mr. Clark said, “Actually I don’t. I don’t remember!” “Why not? It’s a pretty dramatic story” Johnny said. And Mr. Clark concluded, “As I moved from pocket to pocket my eyes were closed too.”

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**Think about this:
What do you think? If you were the teacher in that classroom, how would you have acted? What would you have done differently?**

Br Cyprian Gandeabo

RANDOM PHOTOS OF INTEREST



Students & Staff of Notre Dame des Nations Yassa during a peace talk.



Br Elvis playing soccer with students in Champville.



Giving a facelift to the roof of the District House.



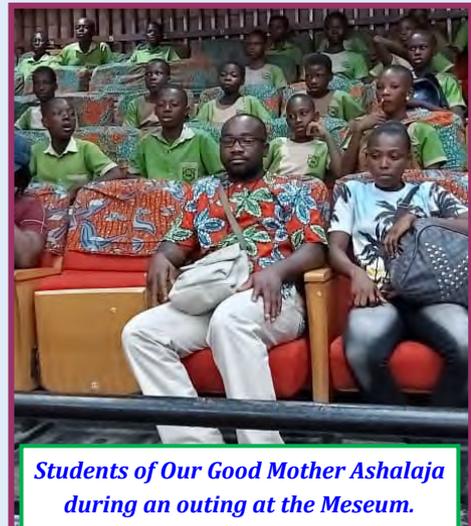
Pupils of MPS during the Catholic Education week.



Women's day conference in Marie Ke Tal.



Sports day at Chmapagnat Bouaké.



Students of Our Good Mother Ashalaja during an outing at the Meseum.

BIRTHDAYS

MARCH

March 12 th	Mbiatem Eyong
March 13 th	Simon Kanjam Lawrence Doe
March 24 th	Tansam Yuonji
March 29 th	Wiysenyuy Habib

APRIL

April 2 nd	Francis Lukong
April 5 th	Gilbert Asong Samuel Stephens
April 12 th	Pascal Koffi Kouadio
April 14 th	Emmanuel Dorbin
April 17 th	Etienne Balma

MAY

May 2 nd	Stephen Kpansa
May 4 th	Sylvain Yao Kouassi
May 28 th	Theddy Gilles

PRAYER REQUESTS

- ⇒ For the peaceful repose of all who have died due to the Coronavirus and for a lasting solution to this epidemic.
- ⇒ For the peaceful repose of the soul of the the brother of Br Martin who passed away recently in Cameroon.
- ⇒ For all countries experiencing conflicts especially Cameroon, that through the intercession of Our Good Mother, peace may once more return to Cameroon.

Superior's Calendar of Activities

March 17 th -20 th 2020	Visit to Buokrom C'ty.
March 23 rd -26 th 2020	Visit to Kwadaso C'ty.
April 28 th -May2 nd 2020	80DCM in Nairobi.
May 18 th -May23 rd 2020	Visit to Brothers in MIC.
May 26 th -May29 th 2020	Visit to Yassa—Douala.

REMINDERS !!!!!

- **April 15th** : Deadline for submission of reports of reflections on creation of a new Province to Coordinators and District Council.
- **April 20th** : Deadline for submission of evaluations for temporary and final vows.
- **May 10th**: Deadline for submitting articles for next publication of the Newsletter.

MARIST DISTRICT OF WEST AFRICA

Communication Commission

For comments, sending articles
or suggestions write to:

chochobr@gmail.com

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on : Mai 20th 2020.**