



# Marist Brothers – Irmãos Maristas

Province of Southern Africa – Província da África Austral

## NEWSLETTER

2021 March - April

Vol.2 #29



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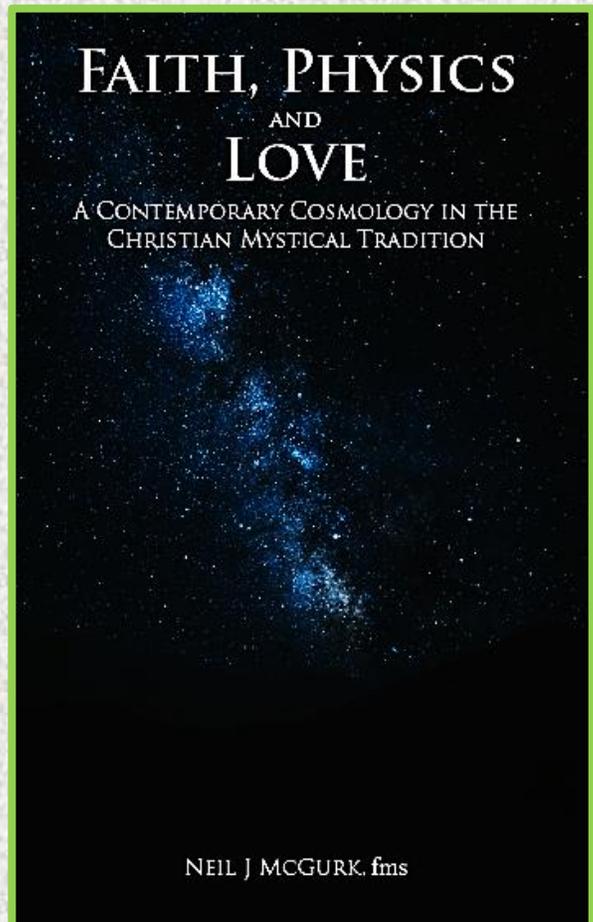
## OBSERVED AT "OBS"



Brothers Christopher, Jude, and Mario recently visited the Grade 1 class



Br Chris and "Georgie"  
Inseparable Companions

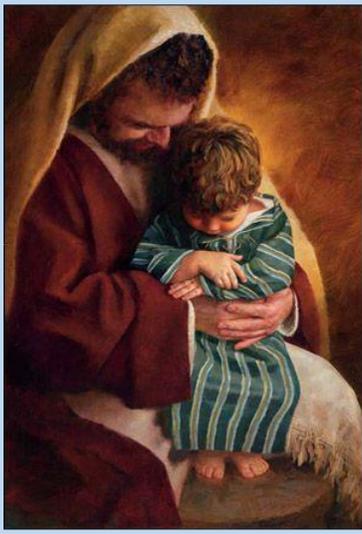


Thanks to Covid-19 Br Neil has had time to write and publish the fruits of his studies and contemplation. The book is available in hard copy and on Amazon Books.

## MESSAGE FROM BR. NORBERT

(Prepared by Br James Langlois at the request of Norbert. Many thanks, James ... Ed.)

### JOSEPH, A SAINT WITH THE TRUE HEART OF A FATHER



To mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as **PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH** by Pope Pius IX, our Holy Father published an Apostolic Letter on Saint Joseph entitled “*Patris Corde*” (*With the Heart of a Father*). In this letter, Pope Francis announced **a year dedicated to the foster father of Jesus, to begin on 8 December**

**2020 and finish on the same date in 2021.**

While the Pope was working on this document last year, the pandemic surfaced, wreaking havoc worldwide. What impressed him was the vast number of individuals who bravely stepped in at great personal risk to meet this deadly challenge: doctors, nurses, storekeepers, cleaning personnel, caregivers, transport workers, priests, religious and so many others. Like Joseph, they were *ordinary people*, often overlooked, yet shaping the decisive events of our history. It is this thought that runs through “*Patris Corde*”. “Each of us can discover in Joseph the man who also went unnoticed in his time, a discreet and hidden presence, and for us an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble.”

Pope Francis focused at length on the unique role Joseph played in the history of salvation by accepting to become the spouse of Mary and the legal father of Jesus. Thus it was that the Messiah grew to maturity in his home. To him, Joseph was a **tender and loving father**. As the Lord had done to Israel, Joseph taught Jesus how to walk, taking him by the hand, raising him to his cheeks, feeding him.

All too often we think that God works through our better selves, yet most of his plans are realized in and despite our frailty. He realized his plan even through Joseph’s fears and limitations. Even in the storms of life we must not be afraid to let him steer our lives, for he sees the larger picture.

As God had done with Mary, he used angels to reveal his plans to Joseph, but only in dreams. Initially he was asked not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife. When Herod planned to kill the child, Joseph was told to flee to Egypt with the child and his mother. When Herod had died, Joseph was informed he should return to the land of Israel. During the journey back, Joseph was afraid when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Israel in place of his father Herod. After being warned in a dream, he went not to Bethlehem, but far away to Galilee, where he made his home in Nazareth. In every situation Joseph gave his own *FIAT* (“Let it be done”. He was **an obedient father**. In his role as head of the family Joseph taught Jesus to be obedient by word and example. At the school of Joseph, Jesus learnt to do the will of the Father. At the most difficult moment of his life, in Gethsemane, Jesus chose to do the Father’s will rather than his own.

In our own lives, things happen whose meaning we do not understand. We may be disappointed and rebel. Joseph instead **was free and open**. Faced with mysterious events, he was able to set aside his own ideas, to search for deeper meaning. Relying on strength in the Lord, he could gather courage and take responsibility for his life. Even if everything seems to have gone wrong for us, we too can embrace reality. Jesus is a gift from the Father who can help us to find meaning in any event, however sad.

If the first stage of true interior healing is to accept our personal history and embrace even the things we did not choose, we must now add another important element: creative courage. In the face of difficulties we can give up, or somehow disengage with reality. At times difficulties bring out resources we did not even think we had. As we read the infancy narratives, we may wonder why God did not act in a more direct and clear way. Joseph was the man chosen by God to guide the early history of our salvation. He was the true “miracle” by which God saved the child and his mother. Finding no lodging where Mary could give birth, Joseph turned a stable into a welcoming home for the Son of God. When the life of the child was in danger, **Joseph’s creative courage** saved the day. Once in Egypt Joseph faced the concrete problems of migrant families to escape misfortune and hunger. God trusted Joseph, as did Mary, who not only saved her life, but always provided for her and her child. In this sense, Saint Joseph is **the Guardian of the Church**, the continuation of the Body of Christ in history.

Joseph was a **working father**, a carpenter who earned a living to provide for his family. From him Jesus learned the value and the dignity of work, the joy of eating bread that was the fruit of one's labor. In our own day, unemployment at times reaches record levels. A family without work is particularly vulnerable to tensions, estrangement and even break-up. The loss of employment has increased as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This crisis of our times is a call to rediscover the necessity of work for all.



Let us implore Saint Joseph to help us find ways to ensure that no young person, no person at all is without work.

In his relationship with Jesus **Joseph was the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father**. One does not become a father by bringing a child into the world, but by taking up the responsibility of caring for that child.

A father is most a father when he becomes “useless”, his child gradually enabled to live unaccompanied. Joseph is traditionally called a “most chaste” father. True love is free from possessiveness. Being overprotective hampers growth into maturity. God himself loved humanity with a chaste love; he left us free to respond or to go astray. Joseph knew how to love with extraordinary freedom. He did not make himself the center of things. He focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus. He found happiness in self-gift. His patient silence led to concrete expressions of trust.

Our world today needs real fathers. It has no use for those who domineer over others as a means of compensating for their own needs, who confuse authority with authoritarianism. Every true vocation is born of the gift of oneself, the fruit of mature sacrifice, and also reveals the beauty and joy of love. In the exercise of our roles with young people, let us all be like Joseph, a “sign” pointing to our loving, merciful Father.

(Bro. James Langlois)



### **PRAYER TO ST JOSEPH (Pope Francis)**

We need only ask Saint Joseph for the grace of graces: our conversion. Let us now make our prayer to him:

***Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.***

***Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,  
and defend us from every evil. Amen.***

## BIRTHDAYS

MARCH	
01-03-1998	David Kayola (nov.ad.2020)
03-03-1958	Anthony Clark (Int.Com.)
03-03-1986	Tererai Gijima
03-03-1991	Raphael Time Kenneth
07-03-1973	Leonard Brito
11-03-1973	Emmanuel Mwanalirenji
12-03-1964	José Antonio Pascual
13-03-1984	José Gemusse
19-03-1995	Mariana Morones (Int. Comm.)
20-03-1974	Francis Jumbe
25-03-1932	James Langlois
25-03-1997	Brave Chisomo (nov.ad.2020)
28-03-1961	Nicholas Banda
28-03-1990	Golden Tati

APRIL	
02-04-1982	Witman Phiri
04-04-1989	Ângelo Cassinda
05-04-1968	Patrick Bushilya
05-04-1972	Evans Musakanya
09-04-1935	António Pisco
12-04-1969	Patrick Bwalya
18-04-1993	Pascoal Tchaculanda
21-04-1966	Auxensio Dickson
21-04-1973	Paul Bhatti
23-04-1977	Reuben Banda
24-04-1969	Norbert Mwila



## PRAYERS REQUESTED

### INTENTIONS OF POPE FRANCIS

#### MARCH

That we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God. Amen.

#### APRIL

That those who risk their lives while fighting for fundamental rights under dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and even in democracies in crisis. Amen.

### REMEMBER BROTHERS WHO WORKED IN OUR PROVINCE & ARE RECENTLY DECEASED

2020-10-26 – Deodato Magomero

2021-01-15 – Gérald Morin

2021-01-22 – Raphael Tremblay

2021-01-28 – Joseph Murakho

2021-01-28 - Fernand Benoît

### PRAYER FOR A SENSE OF HUMOUR

Grant me, O Lord, good digestion, and also something to digest. Grant me a healthy body, and the necessary good humour to maintain it. Grant me a simple soul that knows to treasure all that is good and that doesn't frighten easily at the sight of evil, but rather finds the means to put things back in their place. Give me a soul that knows not boredom, grumbling, sighs and laments, nor excess of stress, because of that obstructing thing called 'I'. Grant me, O Lord, a sense of good humour. Allow me the grace to be able to take a joke and to discover in life a bit of joy, and to be able to share it with others.

*(Attributed to St Thomas More)*



# FUNERAL OF BROTHER JOSEPH MURAKHO

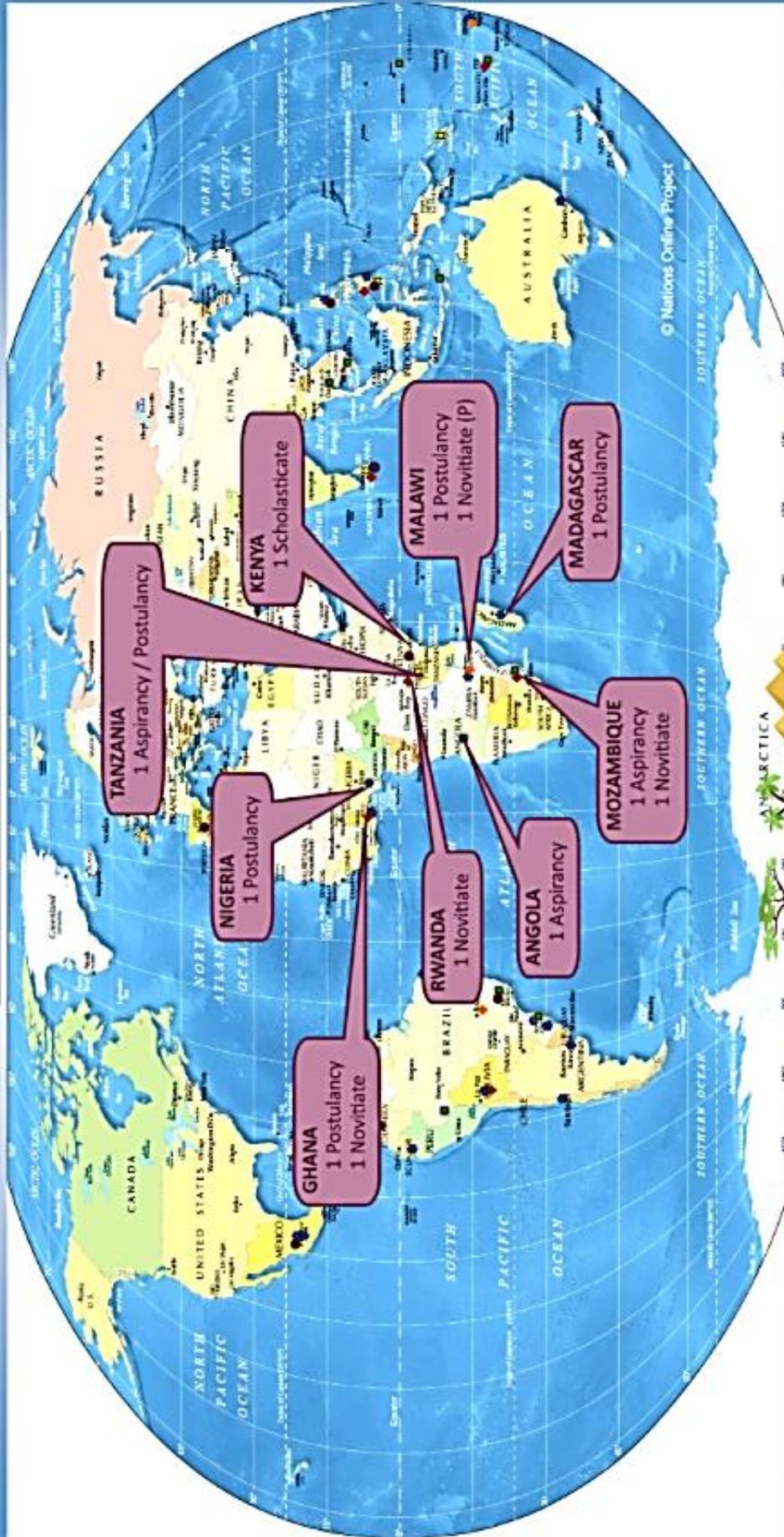


Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon him.  
May his soul and the soule of all the  
faithful departed, through the mercy  
of God, rest in peace. Amen.



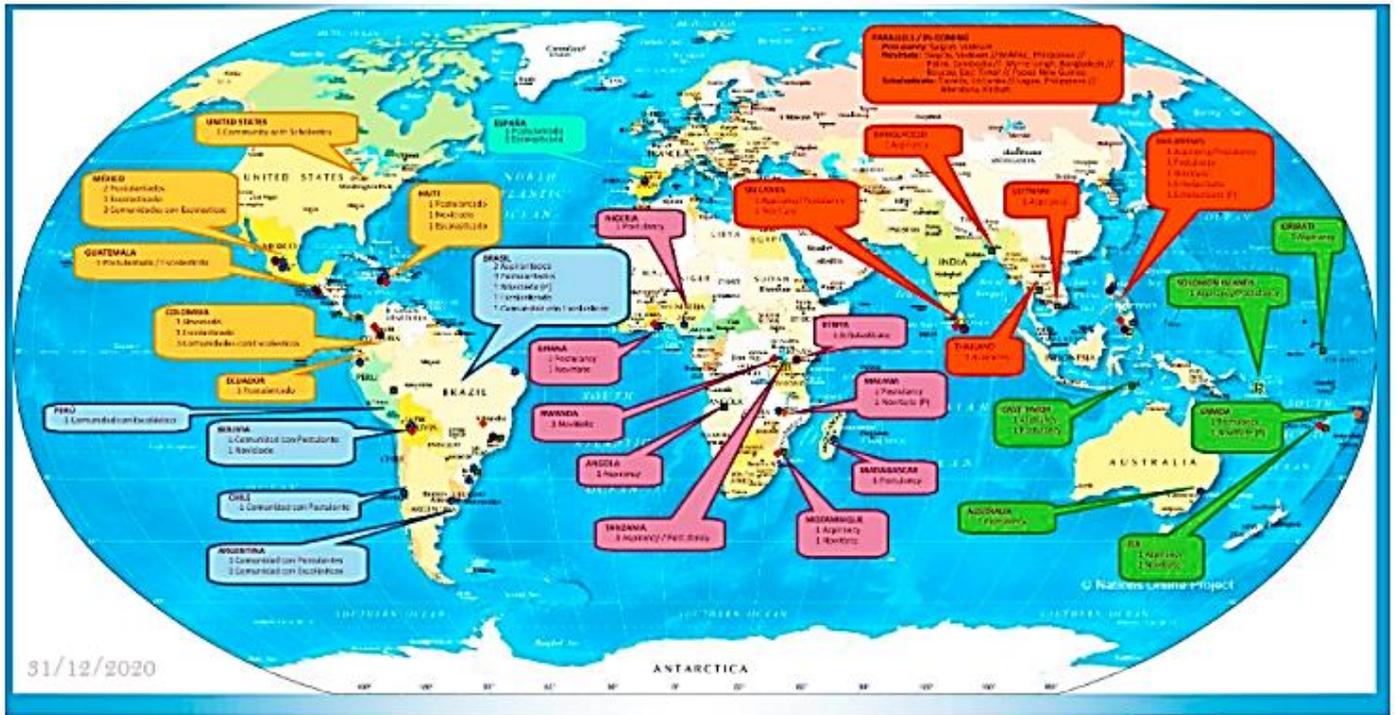
# MARIST BROTHERS INITIAL FORMATION IN AFRICA

Map of Initial Formation - AFRICA  
December 2020



- ASPIRANCY
- ASPIRANCY/POSTULANCY
- POSTULANCY
- NOVITIATE
- PROVISIONAL NOVITIATE
- SCHOLASTICATE
- PROVISIONAL SCHOLASTICATE
- APOSTOLIC COMMUNITIES WITH SCHOLASTICS

# WORLD MAP OF MARIST INITIAL FORMATION



## MADAGASCAR – PERPETUAL VOWS

Br. Randriamihaja Jean Michel made his perpetual vows on 8 December 2020



The Lord is my shepherd,  
I lack nothing.  
*Psalms 23:1*

## MARIST BROTHERS ZAMBIA – DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

1. The first Marist Brothers foundation in Zambia took place at Chassa in 1954 by Canadian Brothers who had already been in Malawi since 1946.
2. Brother Angel Mansoa arrived in Rhodesia now Zimbabwe in the year 1969 and later moved to Zambia in 1972.
3. St. Paul's Secondary School Mulungushi, Kabwe was founded in 1960 by Brother Paul. The first community consisted of five Canadian Brothers and Brother John Heng, Malaysian, of Chinese origin.
4. In December 1973, the Spanish Marist Brothers from the Castilla Province took over the responsibility of St. Paul's from the Canadian Brothers.
5. The Marist sector of Zambia was constituted on December 8, 1973. It was attached to the Povince of Castilla now Compostela.
6. The postulancy and Inter-regional novitiate of St. Paul's Mulungushi was opened in February 1980 with Brother Luis Sobrado as the first Master of Novices.
7. The first four Zambian Brothers made their first profession at St. Paul's Kabwe in 1983.
8. In 1990 the Southern Africa Marist novitiate was moved from Zambia to Kutama, Zimbabwe with Brother Angel Mansoa as Master of novices. Among them were six novices from Zambia.
9. Brother Daniel Sakala is the youngest among the current Zambian Marist Brothers. He is currently a second-year student Brother at MIC.
10. The late Brother Abdon Nkhuwa participated in the first congress of Anglophone Marist Africa in Enugu, Nigeria in December 1980.
11. St. Paul's Marist Primary school at Mulungushi, Kabwe was officially opened in 2000 with Brother Norbert Mwila as the first school director.
12. St. Marcellin Day Decondary School in Chibuluma was opened in 2006 with Brother Evans Musakanya as first school head teacher.
13. Brother Golden Tati is the only Zambian in the fourth year at MIC.
14. There are four Marist communities in Zambia - Lusaka, Chassa, St. Paul's and St. Marcellin.

If you did not know, now you know!

*(Brother Henry Ngeli)*



## A MARRIED COUPLE'S EXPERIENCE IN ATLANTIS

**DIOGO GALLINE & JULIANA FONTURA** a married couple from Brazil, members of the **ATLANTIS LAVALLA200>** community, were interviewed by the General Administration after the expiry of their two-year contract. They were given the same questionnaire. Significant extracts from their responses are given below:

### Q. WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LAVALLA200> PROGRAM

**DIOGO:** I have been involved with Marist life for 30 years and I have been able to experience it in different ways (as a student, volunteer, co-worker, lay person). I have incorporated Marist values into my life goals in the course of this journey. At a certain point, my wife Juliana (also a Marist) and I reflected on our desire to take a further step and 'move into deeper waters'. In 2015, we came across the letter of the then Superior General, Br. Emili Turú – called "The Dance of Mission", which gave us fresh impetus. The phrase 'What would you do if you were not afraid?'

**JULIANA:** In 2017 we read the letter sent by Br. Emili Turú entitled "The Dance of Mission", with its invitation to all Marists, brothers and lay, "to discern, before God, whether they feel the call to leave their country of origin to be part of an international community in another region of the world." Diogo and I were newlyweds, with our whole lives organized (apartment, stable work...), but we felt that we were missing something to feel complete in our Marist life. We were missing an experience of committing ourselves to the Marist mission in a different way ...



**DIOGO GALLINE**



**JULIANA FONTURA**

**Q. What was most significant of living in community?**

**DIOGO** If I had to highlight one facet of my community experience, it would certainly be the relationship I established with Br Pietro Bettin – a kind Italian character, almost seventy years old, with a huge heart and full of wisdom! I made the choice (unknown to him) to spend at least one morning a week with him in his tasks (Pietro was in charge of the gardening and external areas of the house). I tried to lend a hand following his instructions: sometimes pruning the trees, sometimes collecting sticks and dry leaves, sometimes watering the flowers. With Pietro I learned to connect with the subtleties that nature offers us: the flowers that start to bloom, the gracefulness of animals, the moon rising in the sky. Pietro, for me, is the human embodiment of Laudate Si'. And I should add that the most important moment always came at the end, almost a ritual: 11am coffee served by an Italian coffeemaker using Brazilian coffee. A celebration of life around the table!

**What was your role in the ministry of the community?**

**JULIANA** Our ministry also had a strong element of fraternity. I had the opportunity to work as an art teacher in a public school and, through this experience, I was able to participate in the lives of the children and understand the difficult circumstances of life that they faced. In our classroom, they could be themselves as children; a safe space where they could express themselves creatively, without fear. In the same way, I was able to work with Maria in St. Clare's Sanctuary for women who had suffered domestic violence and their children. They stayed there for 3 months until they could find a safe place to live away from the abuser. In our time with them we focussed on being a sisterly presence of acceptance and trust. We were able to do things to restore their femininity and strength to move forward. Both experiences taught me a lot and profoundly transformed my view of the world.

**Q. How did the experience help you to grow in your Marist Vocation?**

**JULIANA** I revert here to the image of a global charismatic family. It was truly remarkable to be part of an INTER (national/generational/vocational) experience. Five nationalities from four continents living together in a country known for its diversity as the 'Rainbow Nation' (namely: South Africa has eleven official languages, with a real respect for its multicultural character). In addition to our Atlantis community as such, we also had an 'extended community' by joining quite often with the wonderful Marist Brothers of the Cape Town Community (Rondebosch). These months have stretched my mind about our diverse ways of being, believing and living. I

feel proud to be acknowledged as part of this great global family!

Another point was how my faith journey became more intense: in very tough situations, where no solution seemed better than to pray, I went back within myself to the time of Champagnat and was inspired by him and his unbreakable faith in Mary when confronted with dilemmas. I imagine it was not at all easy during the shortage of vocations (1822), in his near-death agony (1826), or even in the countless frustrated attempts to get approval for the Institute. ... This experience only reinforced what I already knew: Mary is always in the lead!



**2020 ATLANTIS & RONDEBOSCH COMMUNITIES**  
**Tony, Maria, Fortune, Pietro, Misheck, Nnodu, Peter, Diogo, Juliana**

**EDITOR'S COMMENT:** It is worth reading the testimonies of Juliana and Diogo in full. Here are the LINKS: .....

**DIOGO** - <https://champagnat.org/en/diogo-galline-lavalla200-is-an-experience-that-leaves-lavalla200-is-an-experience-that-leaves-deep-marks/>

**JULIANA** - <https://champagnat.org/en/juliana-fontoura-galline-two-years-in-the-community-in-atlantis/>



## **KIDS' ANSWERS TO A BIBLE QUIZ**

**K**ids were asked questions about the old and new testaments. The following ten statements about the Bible were written by children. They have not been retouched or corrected. Incorrect spelling has been left in.

1. In the first book of the Bible, Guinness, god got tired of creating the world so he took the sabbath off.
2. Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was Joan of Ark. Noah built an ark and the animals came on in pears.
3. Lot's wife was a pillar of salt during the day, but a ball of fire during the night.
4. The Jews were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with unsympathetic genitals.
5. Sampson was a strong man who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.
6. Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the apostles.
7. Moses led the Jews to the red sea where they made unleavened bread, which is bread without any ingredients.
8. The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert. Afterwards, Moses went up to Mount Cyanide to get the ten commandments.
9. The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
10. The seventh commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.

## BROTHER EMMANUEL LAPOINTE

ST PAUL'S KABWE 7 December 2020

BROTHER NORBERT communicated as follows:

“In the last two weeks we have been very concerned about Bro Emmanuel's lapse of memory.

When I suggested that he go back to Canada for a thorough medical check-up, he became very emotional he struggled to come to terms with the whole issue. Eventually he accepted the idea that he was offered some time off for holiday.

At the time of a farewell gathering in his honour, he was so emotional that he failed to say anything.

He left for Canada on 4 December (as an assisted passenger) and arrived safely on the following day.”



Br Patrick Bwalya  
saw Brother Emmanuel off at the Airport



## OUR FIRST PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETS IN KUTAMA IN 1999



*Council Members L to R*  
**JUDE PIETERSE (Provincial); LAWRENCE NDAWALA (Malawi);  
BRENDAN O'SHEA (RSA); MUNDO PUENTE (Zambia);  
CRISTIANO DA COSTA (Mozambique); EMMANUEL LA POINTE (Zimbabwe).**  
*(Note: Angola was not yet part of the Province of Southern Africa)*

## BR. CHRISTIAN MBAM, 8 YEARS IN SOUTH SUDAN



**B**rother Christian Mbam, from Nigeria, has been in South Sudan since January 2013. He finished his mission in the Inter-Congregational Project “Solidarity with South Sudan” on January 11. He spent the first year in the community of Malakak and 7 years in Riimenze. Here he shares with the Marist family his experience.

### **What motivated you to join the project SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTH SUDAN?**

The need for presence in a country long in crisis motivated me to accept the mission when the Superior General, Emili Turú, suggested that option to my Provincial. Most people were unwilling to go to South Sudan because of general insecurity.

### **What did it mean to you sharing your life and mission with community members from different cultures and congregations?**

I thank God, that I had considerable experience in this field before joining these communities. So I was already prepared for any initial shock. However, the living now presented its own challenges. While my previous experiences were in formation, here we were called to develop and shape a new mission. In my seven years of life in Riimenze community, I have had to welcome a number of new members or say good bye to others. Each time we had to make adjustments to accommodate everyone and give each one the best living and working conditions. We had to be open enough to talk and listen to one another. We had to be

faithful to our monthly community meetings and weekly sharing of faith.

### **What was the most significant scenario in your time in South Sudan?**

The most touching scenario came when the parish organised a farewell for me. Youth had organised themselves in performing groups. They had even included fundraising as part of the function. A big surprise was the arrival of a ninety-year old lady, bent over double, living far away in the forests. She had been home-bound for over five years. I could not believe what I saw. I was almost overwhelmed by emotion. That was the extent of the gratitude of the people for what we represented for them in the village of Riimenze and surroundings

### **How did the experience help you grow in your Marist vocation?**

**SOLIDARITY** communities do not have Superiors, but Coordinators. They serve the purpose of bringing unity and harmony in the group and in ministry, but do not have the governing authority of a Superior. This is a new element to consider for all religious.

# FINAL PROFESSION OF BR DIAS GEMUSSE



**O**n 5 December, Brother Dias Gemusse, of the Southern Africa Province, made his profession as Marist Brother in Matola, Mozambique. In the text which follows Brother Dias tells of his vocational journey.

I first encountered the Marist Brothers on a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Namaacha, (on the border with Eswatini) in 2007, thanks to a friend who introduced me to Brother António Armando Sanasana.

I tried to interact with the Brothers and it was during this period that I met Brother António Pisco who played a vital part in my vocational discernment. During this initial phase I met other Brothers, among them Brother Felizardo Maceia who was my formator in the postulancy at Quelimane in 2008. Brother Evaristus Kasambwe who was my teacher in Malawi was also important. I remember very well, when I returned to Mozambique at the end of the Postulancy, when he told me: "it is worth dying as a Brother". This phrase has encouraged me until today.

I did my novitiate in Matola from 2010 to 2011. I had the opportunity to have Brother Norbert Mwila, the present Provincial, as my Novice Master. He was a great encouragement to my vocation through his wise words.

Finally, I received my religious and academic formation at MIC in Nairobi, Kenya from 2012 to 2016. In Kenya I met Brother Geraldo Medida, the present Provincial Councillor in Mozambique. His presence at MIC was encouraging.

After MIC I was sent to Angola, to the community of Ndalatando, and at present I am in the community of Nivava, Alto Molócuè, in Mozambique.

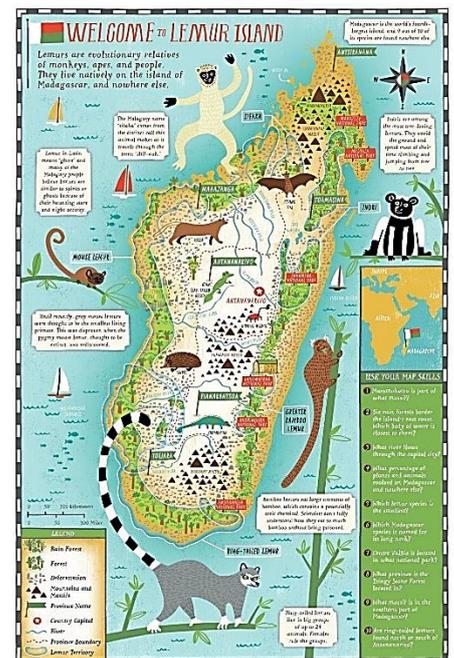
I made my perpetual profession as a Marist Brother because I have the desire to live only for Christ, confirming my baptismal promises.



# NEW PROVINCIAL COUNCIL IN MADAGASCAR

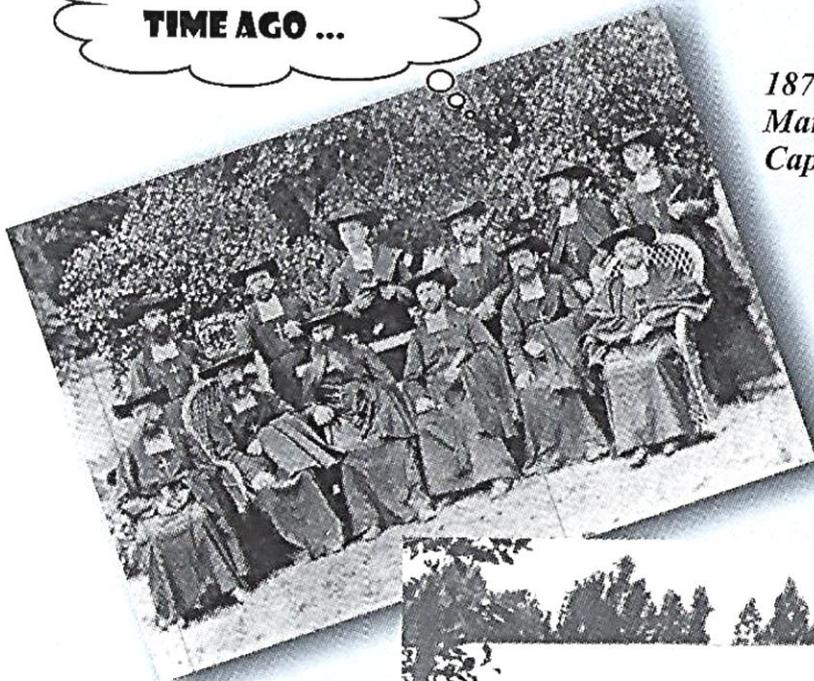


**Maminaiina Michel (Prov. Sup.), Ramarosandratana Camille Marie; Randriamanantena Toussaint; Heriniaina Maurice Juvence; Randrianantenaina Jean Albert Thomas**



# PHOTOS RECALLING THE PAST OF MARIST IN RSA

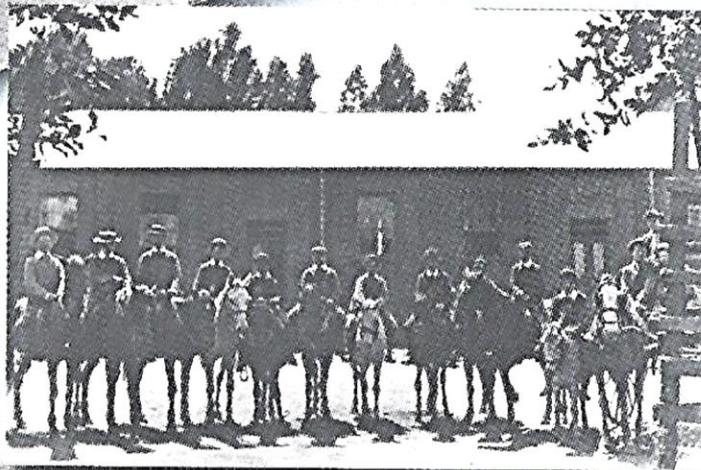
**A VERY LONG  
TIME AGO ...**



*1878 The Community of  
Marist Brothers in  
Cape Town*

*1904 Marist Brothers  
Koch Stret,  
Johannesburg*

*Boys commuting  
on horseback*



*1930 Marist Brothers  
Observatory*

*Boys commuting  
by bicycles*

# OBITUARY OF OUR LATE DOYEN – BR PAUL NKHOMA

1 January 1925 – 12 February 2021

**A**loysio  
Bebulo  
Nkhoma



was born in Chikanda Village in Lilongwe Malawi on 1 January 1925. He was already approaching 31 years of age when he officially became a postulant on 1 December 1955. His novitiate began a year later where he was given the religious names of Paul Edmund. He made his first profession on 8 December 1957. Five years later, on 12 September 1962, he made his final profession at Zomba Catholic Secondary School.

In his active life from 1957 to 2010, Br Paul served in different communities as teacher, vocations recruiter, community superior, bursar, formator and district councillor. Five of those years (1983 – 1987) were spent at St Paul’s Kabwe, Zambia in both teaching and formation work. He was a constant student usually on a part-time basis: General Certificate of Education (University of London); Diploma in Theology (he read the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation a few times and

translated some sections into Chichewa); a student of music with the Royal Schools of Music and All-Africa Church Music Association.

From 2010 when he suffered a stroke, Br Paul joyfully embraced a new apostolate. Living with the community at Zomba, he spent the rest of his life in active prayer. Each day of the week was dedicated to praying for different intentions of our congregation and the entire Church. Also, he continually read the scriptures, and other religious literature.

Brother Paul became a victim of the global pandemic. He had spent a week in the Zomba Central Hospital where he improved sufficiently to be discharged. However, Covid-19 eventually took his life on the night of 12 February 2021 at the age of 96, having spent 64 years in religious life as a Marist Brother.

A former Superior had this to say when hearing of Br Paul’s death: “Sad news, and the loss of a great Brother. He was a fine example of growing old gracefully. I always enjoyed my visits to Zomba for the chat I had during my stay.”

The burial ceremony took place at Marist Secondary School, Mtendere, on Saturday 13 February 2021.

## HOW SHALL WE REMEMBER BROTHER PAUL

- Br Paul lived a very simple life – materially, socially and spiritually.
- He believed in the Providence of God.
- He was a jovial person and spread that joy to others.
- He was a lover of knowledge. He enjoyed reading and he knew the most recent publications. He did not keep this new knowledge to himself, rather he shared it with others.
- Br Paul had an interest in people and had a very good memory.
- He was very generous. He shared whatever he had with the needy even in circumstances when he needed the greatest assistance.
- He lived a life of constant gratitude.
- He was very prayerful. Until his last days, he attended community Eucharistic celebrations on his wheelchair. His small radio was always tuned to Radio Maria and he devoutly followed all programs including Eucharistic celebrations.
- Br Paul has taught us to persevere in suffering. Even when the pains of old age and effects of stroke weighed heavily on him, he never complained.

**We will miss Br Paul because he was our “Pillar” but we remain grateful and confident that he will continue praying for us in heaven as he always did while physically among us on earth.**

**Rt. Rev. GEORGE EDWARD TAMBALA, Bishop of Zomba**



## SOMETHING FOR YOUR EYES



Br Fortune is welcomed to the Observatory Community by Br Mario

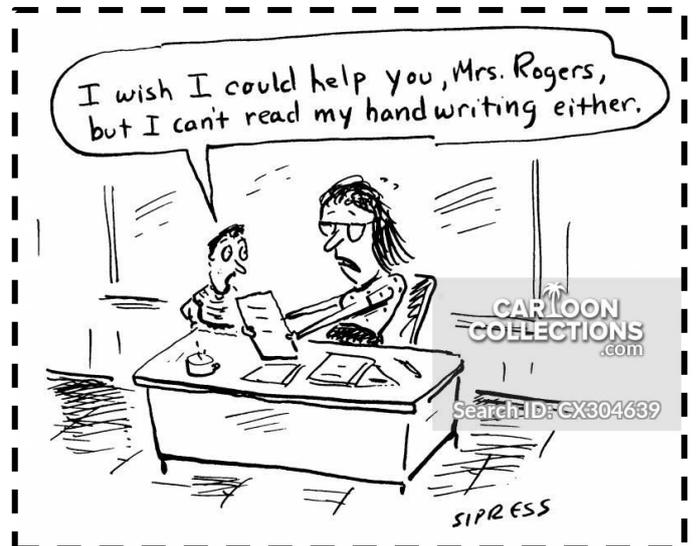


Observatory: Trees in Flower

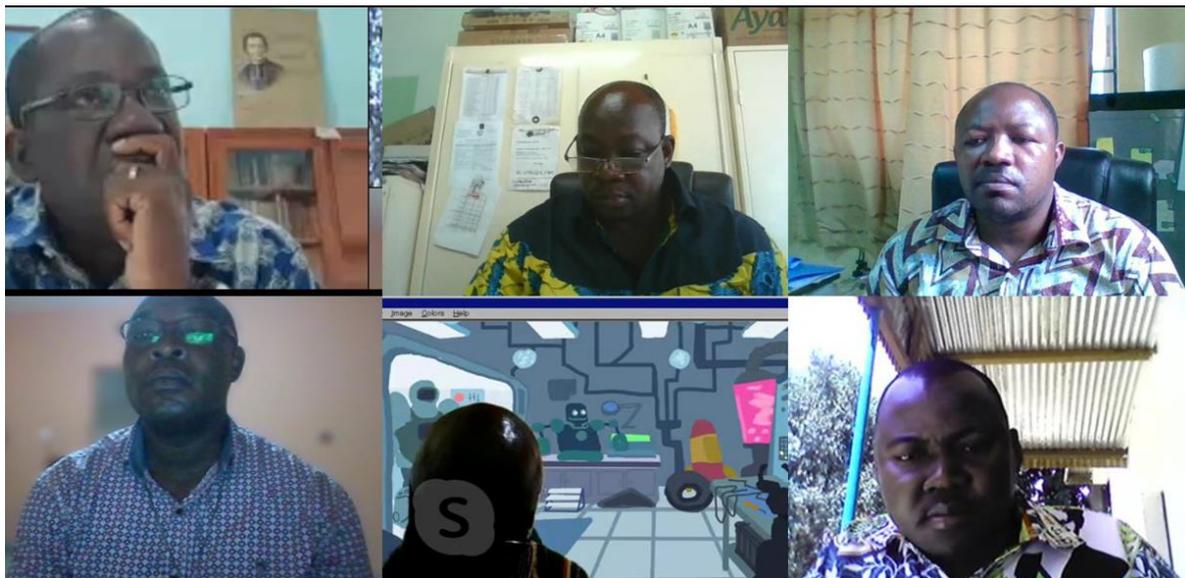
**"TO BECOME A GOOD TEACHER -- :  
Prepare your lessons,  
and mark their books."  
(Br Vincent)**



Rondebosch: Br Peter Zulu preparing his lessons at 9.30 p.m.



## MARIST IN WEST AFRICA ADOPTS A NEW MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL LEADERS



**A** workshop on a new Management Software for the Marist activities, was on 6th January 2021 organized for Principals, Community Superiors and Bursars in the Marist District of the West Africa. This workshop is one of several strategies adopted by the Marist District towards becoming a Province. The program which brought together twelve brothers from Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Chad and Cameroon was held via Skype.

In his opening remarks Br Cyprian Gandebo, the District Superior, asked the participants to show interest and own the software for effective leadership and accountability in the communities and works. He was optimistic that the software will encourage more communication among leaders of Marist works and communities which had hitherto been a challenge in the District.

The program, which is in its implementation stage, has two components: The U-school and V-track. The U-school is an integrated application software that handles student's information including academics, Students report cards, fees payment, receipting, pay roll management, and other school management protocols. The V-Track, on the other hand, is an Assets management software for our schools and communities. It takes the inventory of all assets and property of the District of West Africa. It further contains a balance sheet management system. The new management system is meant to replace the current management and reporting system with its attendant challenges.

***(LIBERIA, IVORY COAST, GHANA, CAMEROON & CHAD are the countries included in this Marist AU)***



### THREE BEERS !!!

Every day Paddy came to the pub and ordered three beers at once. After a while, the barman asked Paddy why he always ordered three beers at once.

“Well, you see, I have two brothers who have moved overseas. We promised each other that we would always order an extra two beers whenever we’re having a drink in the pub as way of keeping up our tight family bond.

But one day, Paddy ordered only two beers. “Please accept my condolences on the death of one of your brothers,” the barman said.

“Oh, don’t worry,” Paddy replied. “Both brothers are alive and well. It’s just that I’ve given up drinking beer for Lent.”

## MAY THEY REST IN PEACE



**M**arist Father **Bob Barber** passed away at Lismore, NSW Australia on 13 February 2021. He was an old boy of the Marist Brothers in Hamilton (suburb of Newcastle in NSW) and had a great affection for the Brothers. Some of his SM confreres thought he was more a MM Brother than a SM Father.

Brothers throughout Africa who were at MIC in Nairobi in the pioneering years up to the early 90's will remember him for his kindness and for his role as Dean of Studies. After returning to Australia for a time, he came back to Africa and worked in the English-speaking part of Cameroon for some years. Within his own Institute, he had a spell of six years as Provincial Superior in Australia.

His links to the Brothers in Australia continued thereafter in various ways such as acting as chaplain to the groups of Marists of Champagnat on pilgrimage to Rome and places in France associated with our origins. In recent times he was stationed in Lismore as chaplain to the two Catholic schools in the town. Characteristically, he chose to reside in the community of Marist Brothers there.

His passing was unexpected. He had been admitted to a Catholic Hospital for an ulcerated leg, and collapsed there suffering from an embolism. Attempts to revive him proved fruitless, and he died some hours after life support had been removed. May he rest in the peace of the Lord.



**C**anadian Brother **Yvon Bédard** died at the Provincial House (Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu) on Saturday, 9 January 2021 at the age 74.

In 1967, after his studies at a Teacher Training Institution, he taught for five years, including 4 years at the Juniorate. He made his final vows in 1970.

Comfortable with numbers and accounting, the community offered him the opportunity to improve his skills in order to orient him in the service of the community stewardship. First assistant to the Provincial Bursar for ten years, he assumed that responsibility in 1985; he formed a team and surrounded himself with sound advice to consolidate the community heritage.

In the mid-1980s, the General Council founded the Marist International Centre in Nairobi. A few years later, the responsibility for administering the Centre was handed over to the Superiors of Africa. Brother Yvon then became a familiar visitor to the Centre seeing to the auditing of its finances and fostering the formation of Brothers (including the Superior themselves) in matters pecuniary. The current editor, then Secretary to the Conference of the Superiors of Africa recalls attending a short workshop dealing with Statement of Income & Expenditure and Balance Sheets.

His skills made him stand out internationally. In 1993 he was elected General Bursar of the Institute in Rome, a service he held until 2003, when he returned as Provincial Bursar. His knowledge in the field of financial management became well known, so that several communities of religious called on him to professionalize their own finance department.

One might think that these long years in the financial field made him less sensitive to the apostolic concerns of the community. Quite the contrary! For him, the service he rendered administratively and financially had only one goal: to facilitate the involvement of the community in its various fields of apostolate. He was aware of it and knew how to bear witness to it each time he presented the results. Yvon was "the good steward of the Gospel" to whom the Lord probably said: "Since you have been faithful ... enter into the joy of your Master". May he rest in peace.

**Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May they rest in peace. Amen**

## “A THING OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOREVER”

(from a poem by John Keats, 1795 – 1821)



The Water Feature in the Observatory Community Garden  
(Many thanks to Brother Vincent! See the Inset.)



## TEACHING AND LEARNING DURING THE PANDEMIC: AN INVITATION TO RETHINK EDUCATION

**W**hen schools shut down to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, many governments encouraged their countries to adopt online learning. This method has deprived students of the motivation and peer interaction which happen in school settings. It has also created a digital gap because not all the students have access to the necessary technology to connect to online classes. Worse still, academic productivity is bound to suffer as lecturers and students continue to work outside their comfort zone.

As a turning point in human history, the pandemic is empowering society to care more for human life. In addition, remote learning is enabling students to take control and responsibility for their learning as well as *pushing teachers to reflect on the curricula to ensure that they are relevant and learner-centred.*

In this direction, the pandemic is drawing the attention of stakeholders to the importance of incorporating the

mental health of students, teachers, and support staff in their education policies. Many schools are now willing to invest in the health and safety of the students and staff. Online learning should not only be an emergency relief measure but rather an opportunity to rethink education by answering questions about how lessons learnt during lockdowns will influence the post-Covid-19 schools. During lockdown, schools modified their curriculum, timetables, and teaching plans to cope with remote learning.

Will they carry on with this in “normal” classrooms? Will there be a return to rote learning? Will more time and effort be spent on caring for students? Will teachers consider themselves as facilitators and mentors rather than compendia of knowledge?

*(This article has been substantially edited.)*

*(Brother Francis Lukong, Assistant Director of the Secretariat of Solidarity)*

# **A DIFFERENT SORT OF LENT**

**(from THE SOUTHERN CROSS Feb. 2021)**

## **1. GET CREATIVE FOR GOD**

Paint a picture, write a story, sing a song, make music, make greeting cards – you get the picture. God gave you talents; start using them to bring God to people. Make the commitment during Lent to discover or rediscover your God-given talents; you never know what you'll discover about yourself.

## **2. FORGIVE SOMEONE**

Is there someone who has deeply hurt you? Thoughts about them may bring up feelings of hurt and betrayal that you have buried deep inside you. For each day of Lent pray a Hail Mary for the person. This challenge forces you for 40 days to pray for the person who has hurt you deeply – something Jesus told us to do. This is a difficult Lenten challenge but we may begin the healing process for ourselves and let go.

## **3. COMPLIMENT YOUR ONLINE FRIENDS**

Message a compliment or positive thought to a friend every day for Lent. The more we love others, the easier it becomes.

## **4. GIVE ALMS**

Almsgiving is one of the three pillars of Lent. It doesn't always have to be monetary either. Spare food or items go a long way in helping those who need it most.

## **5. BREAK A BAD HABIT**

Break bad habits and start new good ones! Whatever your bad habit is, confront it and start new holy habits to replace them. Morning prayer, evening Bible reading, the rosary – all powerful spiritual weapons to fight bad habits. Let Lent be that first step towards breaking a bad habit.

## **6. REACH OUT**

If you know someone who is lonely, reach out. This can also be tied to number three, but for those who are not online, a simple call or visit to show they are not alone in the world can sometimes save a life.

## **7. READ A PSALM EVERY DAY**

They say a psalm a day keeps the devil away! One psalm a day is also easy reading. The Book of Psalms is full of beautiful prayers and imagery. Psalms are also very personal: there's a psalm for every situation you are facing.

If you manage all seven of these or just one – live Lent well!