



Marist Brothers – Irmãos Maristas

Province of Southern Africa - Província da África Austral

NEWSLETTER

2023 November – January 2024 Vol. 1 # 6

Christmas Edition



WHAT DO WE REMEMBER EACH WEEK OF ADVENT?

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT:
HOPE



It is sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT:
PEACE



The second candle, also purple, represents peace. It is called the "Bethlehem Candle" as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT:
JOY



It is called the "Shepherd's Candle," and is pink because rose is a liturgical color for joy. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday and is meant to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT:
LOVE



On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Savior. This final candle, the "Angel's Candle," symbolizes love. It reminds us that God is love.

MESSAGE OF THE PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR BRO. E.G. MWANALIRENJI

TO US A SON IS GIVEN

It is often said that the birth of a child brings unparalleled joy and transforms our lives in extraordinary ways. When a mother gazes upon her newborn, all the discomfort and pain she endured fade away, replaced by the overwhelming happiness of this new life.

This sentiment resonates deeply with an African setting, where the entire village is filled with excitement and embraces this momentous occasion together. In many ways, this essence beautifully encapsulates the spirit of Christmas. The birth of Jesus represents a "newness" that allows us to be reborn every year, finding strength and inspiration in Him to face any challenges that come on our way.

As we gather with our loved ones during this festive season, we collectively share in the joy of the incarnation. Christmas magnifies God's profound love for humanity, evident in the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Child of Bethlehem. This extraordinary act demonstrates His desire to be present among us, to guide us through life's journey, and to offer us the ultimate gift of salvation.

The love of Jesus, as exemplified by the Crib, was introduced to us by our founder, St. Marcellin Champagnat. The Crib serves as more than just a focal point for personal reflection; it also serves as a reminder of our responsibility to demonstrate love in practical ways.

On the first Christmas, it appeared that nothing of great significance was about to happen. As referenced in the First Reading of that day, *"all was in darkness."* However, the prophet Isaiah foretold that something extraordinary would happen in this darkness: *"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in the land of deep shadow, a light has shone."*

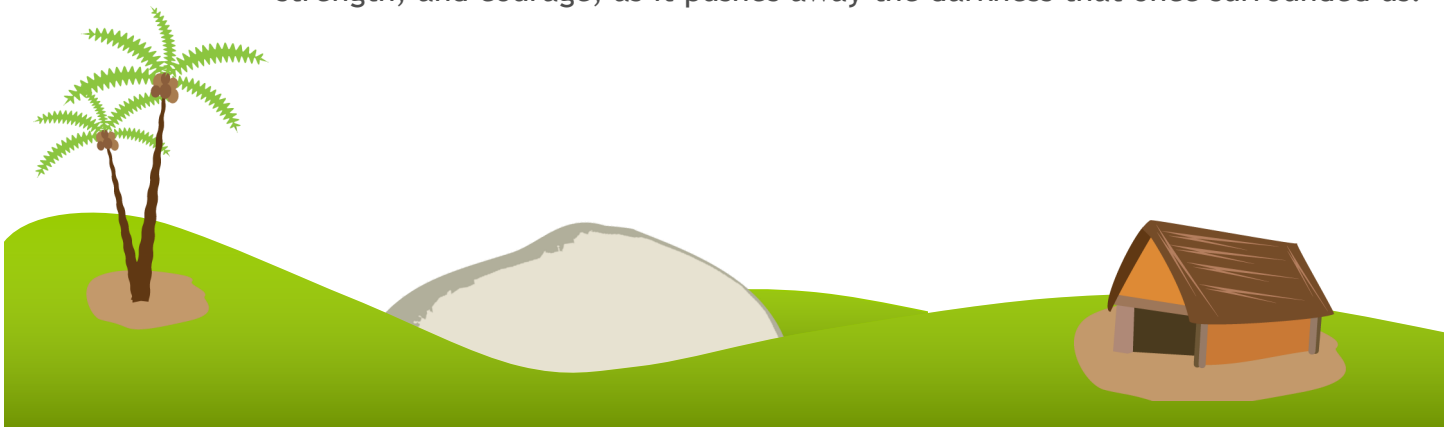
The Son of God is truly present in the humble manger of a darkened stable. This leads to the question: *Why was He born at night, without decent accommodation? Shouldn't He have been born as the greatest king in the finest palace?* The reason for Jesus' birth under such circumstances is to help us understand the depth of His love for our human condition.

He intimately engaged with our poverty through His tangible love. As an outcast, the Son of God was born to show that every outcast is a child of God. He came into the world like any other child, weak and vulnerable, teaching us to embrace our weaknesses with tender love. He entrusted our entire salvation to the humble manger in the stable. He has no fear of our poverty; we should let His mercy completely transform it!

During this Christmas season, our hearts are filled with joy as we celebrate the arrival of the light—the light that illuminates those willing to embrace it. This light brings great hope, renewed strength, and courage, as it pushes away the darkness that once surrounded us.



Bro. Emmanuel Mwanalirenji



On the night when Jesus was born, there was a different kind of darkness—a darkness of search for suitable shelter, all in vain. It is mournfully recounted in Scripture: *"There was no room for them at the inn."* In this darkness, both the profound cosmic darkness and the darkness of inhospitality, the humble Child of God, Jesus the Lord and Saviour was born.

Contrary to this darkness, we are people of profound hope. Christ, the light of Christmas, is our hope. As Marists of Champagnat, we embody the light of Christ. In his circular, our Superior General presents us with a challenge: to become homes of light. Amidst a world engulfed in darkness and self-centeredness, we confidently declare that *"we beg to differ"*—from the one that drags us down and leaves us feeling lost and without hope.

Each one of us can carry the light and peace of Christ to others. Through simple acts of kindness, charitable gestures, visits, or words of encouragement to those who are sick or lonely; we can transmit the illuminating presence of Christ. With unwavering confidence, courage, determination, and hope, we fearlessly step into our world and offer it the gift of light.

Let us wholeheartedly strive to put into practice the calls outlined in our 22nd General Chapter: to be the beacons of hope. We are called to be beacons of hope in a world plagued by turmoil, reflecting the face and compassionate hand of divine mercy. We are tasked with fostering unity and connection as *bridge builders*, to journey with children and young people living on the margins of life, and to respond boldly to emerging needs.

We reject selfishness in favour of selflessness, replacing despair with unwavering hope, and dispelling coldness with genuine warmth. Let us take the lead in demonstrating acts of love and hope, extending them even when reciprocity is not guaranteed. This echoes the response of Christ, the true essence of Christmas, and the very essence of our hope on this day.

I pray this Christmas that the light of Christ will enlighten our world with peace, love, joy, and hope. In recent weeks, the news has been replete with darkness and sadness—we've witnessed the horrific slaughter of innocent children and women in the Gaza Strip, Ukraine, and many places around the world.

Let this Christmas remind us that even in the darkest days, the light of hope and peace still shines. Allow me to seize this opportunity to express gratitude to you, my fellow Marists of Champagnat, for journeying together and dreaming with our founder. May our good mother who carried this light continue inspiring us in our quest to carry this light to others. Let's Pray for our fragmented world by reciting the Bethlehem peace light prayer.

The Bethlehem Peace Light Prayer

Light of Bethlehem: burn brightly in our hearts this Christmas;

Light of Peace: heal the bitter wounds in our community; show us the path of forgiveness and love;

Light of Joy: fill our homes with happiness - cast out the darkness of conflict or worry;

Light of Comfort: strengthen the sick, the needy, prisoners and all those who cannot be at home on Christmas Day;

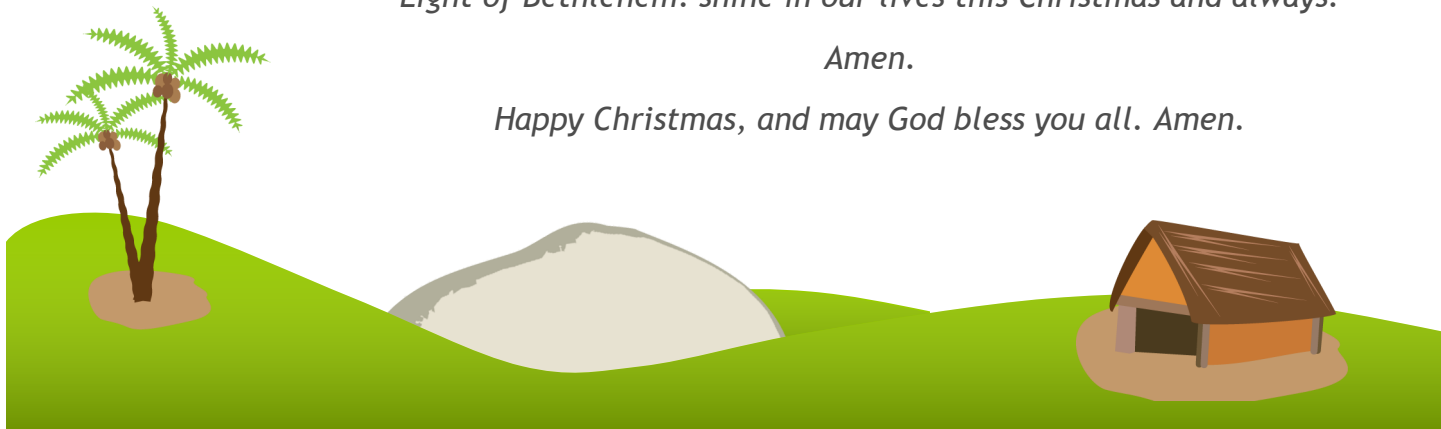
Light of Hope: guide our way forward as we begin a New Year;

Light of the World: teach us to love you more and more each day;

Light of Bethlehem: shine in our lives this Christmas and always.

Amen.

Happy Christmas, and may God bless you all. Amen.





Merry
Christmas
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

PARA NÓS UM FILHO É DADO

Costuma-se dizer que o nascimento de uma criança traz uma alegria incomparável e transforma nossas vidas de maneiras extraordinárias. Quando uma mãe olha para o seu recém-nascido, todo o desconforto e dor que ela suportou desaparecem, sendo substituídos pela felicidade avassaladora desta nova vida. Este sentimento ressoa profundamente num cenário africano, onde toda a aldeia está cheia de entusiasmo e abraça juntos esta importante ocasião. De muitas maneiras, esta essência encapsula lindamente o espírito do Natal. O nascimento de Jesus representa uma “novidade” que nos permite renascer a cada ano, encontrando Nele força e inspiração para enfrentar quaisquer desafios que surjam em nosso caminho. Ao nos reunirmos com os nossos entes queridos durante esta época festiva, partilhamos coletivamente a alegria da encarnação. O Natal magnifica o profundo amor de Deus pela humanidade, evidente no envio de Seu Filho, Jesus Cristo, como o Menino de Belém. Este ato extraordinário demonstra o Seu desejo de estar presente entre nós, de nos guiar no caminho da vida e de nos oferecer o dom supremo da salvação.



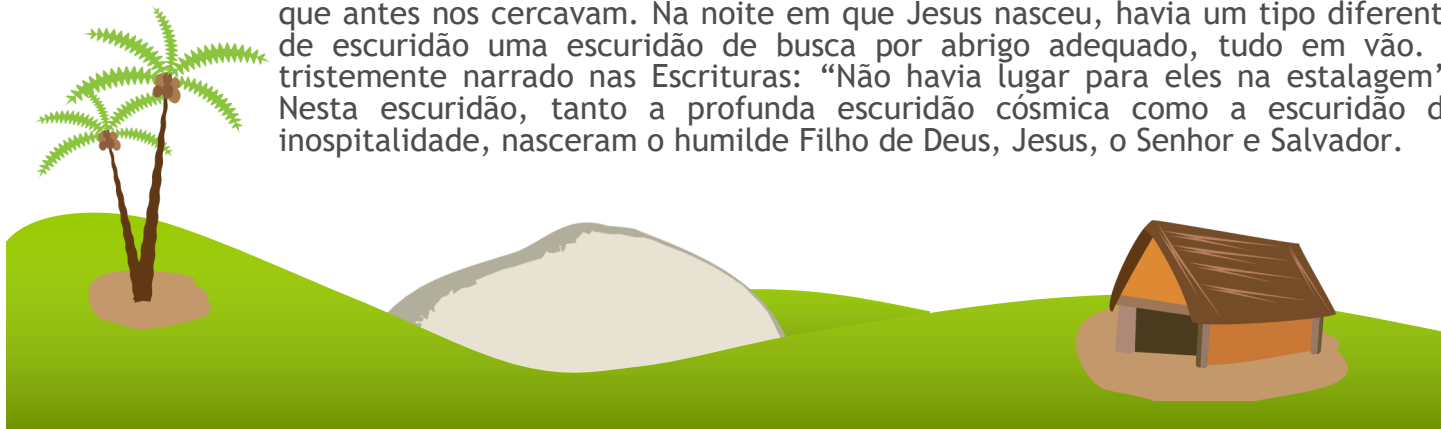
Bro. Emmanuel Mwanalirenji

O amor de Jesus, exemplificado pelo Presépio, nos foi apresentado pelo nosso fundador, São Marcelino Champagnat. O Presépio serve mais do que apenas um ponto focal para reflexão pessoal; também serve como um lembrete da nossa responsabilidade de demonstrar amor de forma prática. No primeiro Natal, parecia que nada de grande significado estava para acontecer. Como referido na Primeira Leitura daquele dia, “tudo estava em trevas”. No entanto, o profeta Isaías predisse que algo extraordinário aconteceria nestas trevas: “O povo que andava nas trevas viu uma grande luz; sobre aqueles que viviam na terra das sombras profundas, uma luz brilhou”.

O Filho de Deus está verdadeiramente presente na humilde manjedoura de um estábulo escuro. Isto leva à pergunta: Por que Ele nasceu à noite, sem acomodações decentes? Ele não deveria ter nascido como o maior rei no melhor palácio? A razão do nascimento de Jesus sob tais circunstâncias é ajudar-nos a compreender a profundidade do Seu amor pela nossa condição humana. Ele se envolveu intimamente com a nossa pobreza através do Seu amor tangível. Como excluído, o Filho de Deus nasceu para mostrar que todo excluído é filho de Deus. Ele veio ao mundo como qualquer outra criança, fraco e vulnerável, ensinando-nos a abraçar as nossas fraquezas com terno amor. Ele confiou toda a nossa salvação à humilde manjedoura do estábulo. Ele não teme a nossa pobreza; devemos deixar que sua misericórdia o transforme completamente!

Durante esta época de Natal, os nossos corações enchem-se de alegria ao celebrarmos a chegada da luz a luz que ilumina aqueles que estão dispostos a abraçá-la.

Esta luz traz grande esperança, força renovada e coragem, pois afasta as trevas que antes nos cercavam. Na noite em que Jesus nasceu, havia um tipo diferente de escuridão uma escuridão de busca por abrigo adequado, tudo em vão. É tristemente narrado nas Escrituras: “Não havia lugar para eles na estalagem”. Nesta escuridão, tanto a profunda escuridão cósmica como a escuridão da inospitalidade, nasceram o humilde Filho de Deus, Jesus, o Senhor e Salvador.



Contrariamente a esta escuridão, somos pessoas de profunda esperança. Cristo, a luz do Natal, é a nossa esperança. Como Maristas de Champagnat, personificamos a luz de Cristo. Na sua circular, o nosso Superior Geral apresenta-nos um desafio: tornarmo-nos casas de luz. Em meio a um mundo mergulhado na escuridão e no egocentrismo, declaramos com confiança que “imploramos para diferir” daquele que nos arrasta para baixo e nos deixa com uma sensação de perda e sem esperança. Cada um de nós pode levar a luz e a paz de Cristo aos outros. Através de simples atos de bondade, gestos de caridade, visitas ou palavras de encorajamento a quem está doente ou solitário; podemos transmitir a presença iluminadora de Cristo. Com confiança, coragem, determinação e esperança inabaláveis, entramos destemidamente no nosso mundo e oferecemos-lhe o dom da luz.

Esforcemo-nos de todo o coração para pôr em prática os apelos delineados no nosso 22º Capítulo Geral; ser os faróis da esperança. Somos chamados a ser faróis de esperança num mundo atormentado pela turbulência, refletindo o rosto e a mão compassiva da misericórdia divina. Temos a tarefa de promover a unidade e a ligação como construtores de pontes, de caminhar com crianças e jovens que vivem à margem da vida e de responder com ousadia às necessidades emergentes. Rejeitamos o egoísmo em favor do altruísmo, substituindo o desespero pela esperança inabalável e dissipando a frieza com calor genuíno. Assumamos a liderança na demonstração de atos de amor e de esperança, estendendo-os mesmo quando a reciprocidade não está garantida. Isto ecoa a resposta de Cristo, a verdadeira essência do Natal e a própria essência da nossa esperança neste dia.

Rezo neste Natal para que a luz de Cristo ilumine o nosso mundo com paz, amor, alegria e esperança. Nas últimas semanas, as notícias têm estado repletas de escuridão e tristeza testemunhámos o terrível massacre de crianças e mulheres inocentes na Faixa de Gaza, na Ucrânia e em muitos locais do mundo.

Que este Natal nos lembre que mesmo nos dias mais sombrios, a luz da esperança e da paz ainda brilha. Permitam-me aproveitar esta oportunidade para expressar minha gratidão a vocês, meus companheiros Maristas de Champagnat, por caminharem juntos e sonharem com nosso fundador. Que nossa boa mãe que carregou esta luz continue nos inspirando em nossa busca por levar esta luz para os outros. Vamos orar pelo nosso mundo fragmentado recitando a oração da luz da paz em Belém.

A Oração da Luz da Paz de Belém

Luz de Belém: arda intensamente em nossos corações neste Natal; Luz da Paz: curar as feridas amargas da nossa comunidade; mostre-nos o caminho do perdão e do amor;

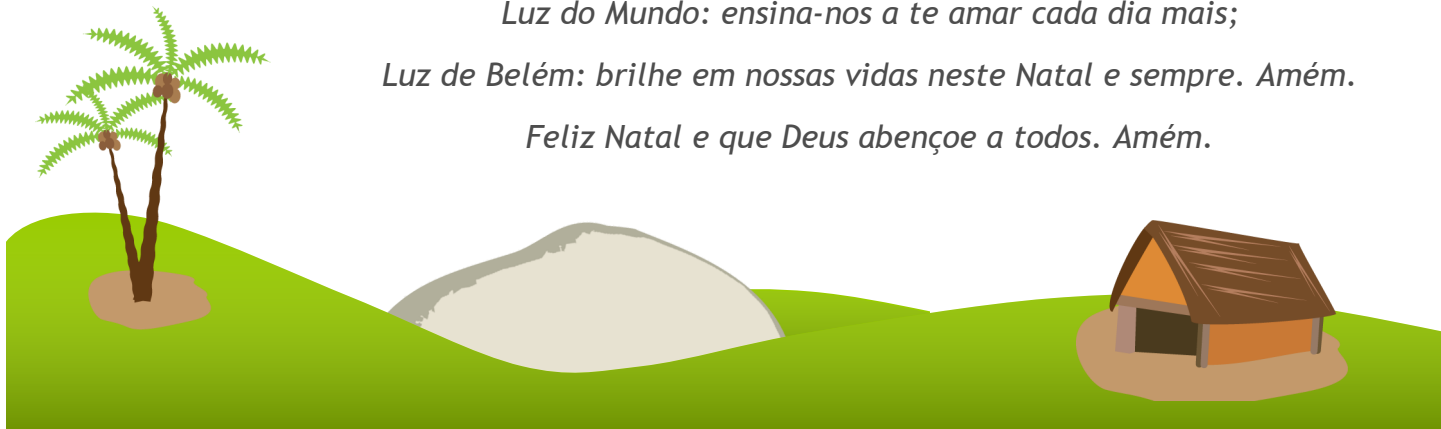
Luz da Alegria: encha nossos lares de felicidade - expulse a escuridão do conflito ou da preocupação; Luz de Conforto: fortalecer os enfermos, os necessitados, os presos e todos aqueles que não podem estar em casa no dia de Natal;

Luz da Esperança: guie nosso caminho à medida que iniciamos um Novo Ano;

Luz do Mundo: ensina-nos a te amar cada dia mais;

Luz de Belém: brilhe em nossas vidas neste Natal e sempre. Amém.

Feliz Natal e que Deus abençoe a todos. Amém.



ADVENT

December 3: First Sunday of Advent

Readings: Isaiah 63:16b-17,19b;64: 2-7; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mark 13: 33-37

Scripture: “Be watchful! You do not know when the Lord of the house is coming.”

Holy Gospel

Gospel Reading: Mk 13:33-37

+ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Be watchful! Be alert!

You do not know when the time will come.

It is like a man traveling abroad.

He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his own work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch.

Watch, therefore; you do not know when the Lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning.

May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.

What I say to you, I say to all: ‘Watch!’”



REFLECT

Staying Vigilant and Prepared in Advent

As we begin the Advent season, we are reminded of the importance of staying vigilant and prepared for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Mark 13:33-37, Jesus speaks to his disciples about the need to be watchful and ready for his return. Today, let us reflect on this passage and discover how it guides us in our journey of faith during the first week of Advent.

1. The call to stay awake:

In this passage, Jesus tells his disciples to **“Be on guard, keep awake!”** He emphasizes the need for constant vigilance and readiness, comparing it to a homeowner who does not know when a thief will come. Similarly, in this season of Advent, we are called to be spiritually awake and alert. It is a time of anticipation and preparation for the coming of Christ, both in the celebration of His birth and in anticipation of His second coming. Let us not become complacent or distracted by the busyness of the season but instead remain focused on the true meaning of Advent.

2. The uncertainty of the hour:

Jesus reminds his disciples that no one knows the exact hour when He will return. He emphasizes the need for readiness at all times, as we do not know when the Lord will come. This uncertainty serves as a reminder that our lives are in God's hands, and we must be prepared for His coming at any moment. Advent invites us to reflect on our own lives and examine how we are living out our faith. **Are we prepared to meet the Lord? Are we living in a way that aligns with His teachings and values?**



3. The importance of faithful stewardship:

Jesus uses the analogy of a master who has entrusted his servants with various tasks. He expects the servants to be faithful and diligent in carrying out their responsibilities, even in his absence. In the same way, as followers of Christ, we are called to be faithful stewards of the gifts and resources that God has entrusted to us. Advent is an opportune time to reflect on how we are using our time, talents, and treasures to further God's kingdom and bring glory to His name. Let us examine our lives and ask ourselves if we are faithfully using our gifts for the service of others and for the greater glory of God.

4. The promise of reward:

Jesus concludes by promising a reward to those who remain watchful and faithful. He says, "Blessed is the servant whom he finds awake." Our vigilance and preparedness during Advent are not in vain. When Christ comes, whether in the celebration of His birth or in His second coming, we will be blessed and rewarded for our faithfulness. Advent is a time of hope and anticipation, reminding us that our ultimate reward is found in the loving embrace of our Saviour.

As we embark on this first week of Advent, let us heed the words of Jesus in Mark 13:33-37. Let us stay vigilant and prepared, knowing that the Lord's coming is imminent. May we not be consumed by the distractions of the season but instead focus on the true meaning of Advent. Let us examine our lives, be faithful stewards of God's gifts, and live in a way that aligns with His teachings and values. May our vigilance and readiness be rewarded with the joy and blessings of His presence. Let us remember as we will celebrate Christmas that it is not the end of the world party but the end of year celebration when we welcome Jesus Christ in our hearts, in our neighbours, in our entire life.

As we journey through Advent, may we be filled with hope, peace, joy, and love, eagerly awaiting the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. May our hearts be prepared to receive Him, and may our lives reflect the light of His love to the world around us. + Amen.

Bro. L. Brito



BIRTHDAYS

NOVEMBER

10-11-1994	Gerónimo Raimundo
13-11-1932	João Torcato
17-11-1968	Boniface Chirambo
21-11-1977	Fortune Chakasara
24-11-1968	António Viana
24-11-1994	João Gabriel
26-11-1995	E Vance Masangano
27-11-1948	Vincent George

DECEMBER

15-12-1990	José Ngongue
23-12-1941	João Reis
23-12-1949	Denis Ntacyica
30-12-1934	Emmanuel Lapointe

INTENTIONS OF POPE FRANCIS



December

For persons with disabilities: We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation." **Amen.**

January 2024

For The Gift Of Diversity In The Church: Let us pray that the Holy Spirit helps us recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church. Amen.



SERVANT AND PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP-EXPERIENCE AND INSPIRATION



Brother Chibengwa Mugove

After undergoing through a program on Servant and Prophetic leadership which was organized by the General Administration of the Marist Brothers, I would like to take this opportunity to share some insights on how we should develop our mission as Marist leaders. The reflection is based on my experience of being a participant in this leadership program. The program was hosted by Notre Dame De Marbel University in the Philippines.

One of the major crises in our world today is the lack of good leaders. We see people fighting for leadership positions. When people fight for power, what is really the motive behind? Are they driven by the desire to serve others or is it because they want to satisfy their personal desire? As Marists, our vocation is a call of love. We are called to be servant leaders. Every time we take a leadership role, we should be driven by the desire to serve others. We should always be able to put the needs of others first before our own. We bear the name of Mary therefore we are called to exercise a Marian leadership style. Like Mary who was attentive to the needs of others during the wedding feast at Cana, we too are called to be attentive to the needs of those we encounter in our apostolate.

Fellow Marists, the world needs good leaders. Let us strive to develop a deeper understanding of what leadership is all about. It will be difficult for us to be good leaders if we do not understand the essence of good leadership. Leadership from my experience entails three major elements which include guidance, inspiration and motivation. As a leader, which direction do I want my members to take and do I inspire or motivate them? Am I a unifier? Am I an instrument of peace among those I work with? When problems arise, how do I handle them? Do I consult others in decision making and problem solving? It is in asking oneself these questions that I become aware of the kind of a leader I am.



SERVANT AND PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP-EXPERIENCE AND INSPIRATION CONTINUED...

My experience as a participant in the Servant and Prophetic leadership program has brought me to the realization that the call and purpose of leadership is service with Jesus Christ as the true model of a servant leader who humbled himself by washing the feet of his disciples. Like Jesus Christ, do I execute my duties with humility and empathy? Do those I work with find it easy to approach me, if not then what do I think could be the reason behind? As servant leaders it is when we humble ourselves with simplicity then we are able to draw close to us those whom we work with.

Let me conclude by the words of John Quincy Adams that say, *“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more and become more, you are a leader.”* With Christ as the model of a true servant leader, may our actions help others to grow and develop into better citizens who can transform the society to become a better place. Like Mary at Cana, may we always be attentive to the people around us and put their needs first before our own.

By Bro. Mugove



MEET KOMBORERO V. KANGAI, NYANGA HIGH SCHOOL MARIST BROTHERS FOUNDER OF PRODIGYMINDS-AN E-LEARNING STARTUP IN ZIMBABWE



MISSION:

Promoting and developing STEM education that empowers and enables the next generation of innovators aiming to solve Africa's socio-economic problems through practical and digital e-learning technology solutions.

Komborero Victor Kangai is the founder of Prodigyminds™ an e-learning startup in Zimbabwe. He is promoting quality education by making readily available e-learning platforms for the less privileged students, who find it a difficult to afford data for online learning. He is currently an A' level student at Marist Brothers Nyanga High School. Komborero's goal is to improve education by promoting the adoption of TVWS (TV White Spaces) technology solutions in Africa.

ProdigyMinds™



INSPIRING A BRAND OF ACADEMIC ESSENCE





Komborero Victor Kangai, of Marist Brothers Nyanga High School, was one of five learners who recently represented Africa at the 7th Belt and Road Teenager Maker Camp in Guangxi, China.

The Advanced level student was in the Asian country between November 5 and 11 and his team walked away with “The Best Maker” award at the camp, which seeks to boost science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. He also won an individual award in the Electrostatic Transport Competition, the Sterling engine.

Kangai, travelled to China after being awarded a gold medal, the Belt & Road Teenager Maker Camp Delegate and People’s Choice Award for his innovation- CALMS (Computer Aided Learning Management Suite). At the Africa Science Buskers Festival.

The Computer Aided Learning Management Suite (CALMS) is aimed at achieving the United Nations Sustainable Goal, Quality Education in the form of a web application. Its interface comprising of an e-learning hub, school website, result management and analysis system. The e-learning hub is under guided supervision by the headmaster, teachers and parents to ensure effective study to students through monitoring of received assignments and review of coursework results from school. A chatroom within the e-learning hub enables communication between teachers and students through interchange of messages and sharing academic study materials using local area network due to poor internet bandwidth and strict data saving measures meaning the hub can be accessed offline.

The school website management system enables the headmaster to insert information into the website for communication to the global community without knowledge of high-level programming languages comprising PHP and JavaScript required in web development. It can be enabled through plugins such as the school’s virtual magazine and newsletters. The result management and analysis system enable teachers to record marks into the virtual report book and post it directly to the parent’s and student’s portal. A data presentation interpretation of the academic performance is produced to assist the students on subjects needing improvement. Through the web application the aim is to create a vibrant community of students in education where learning and sharing thrive so as to achieve quality education inline to the United Nations, Sustainable Development Goal Number 4.

In a wide ranging and comprehensive interview with Brother L. Brito, the 18-year old, who was the team captain, said his knowledge of STEM had been enhanced. Brother Brito congratulated Komborero for not only represent Marist Nyanga but representing Zimbabwe and the continent at large.

“In China, the delegates to the teenager maker camp went through a rigorous programme of being tutored and attending science courses with top Chinese professors, learning how to build things that solve problems in areas that include artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, ecological restoration, smart construction and technology innovation. At the end, we were evaluated and I am proud to say we won ‘The Best Maker’ award”, he said.

The young innovator said seeing how China has advanced in terms of innovative technologies was an eye opener.



It was humbling, Kangai said, that the audience in China still recognized her Computer Aided Learning Management Suite (CALMS) project.

“I was delighted and so motivated to find that my teammates who were at the festival still remembered my project entry and were fascinated by my work. In addition, I had conversations with people from all over the world, one of which was with a teacher from Malaysia. She spoke of how, in her community, stories of St Marcellin and the Marist Core Values were cherished. At the camp, Kangai and her team collaborated to make an AI robot that performs three functions.



“It can vacuum-clean, and work as a lawn mower and a combine harvester, which was able to move on voice commands. We also experienced 3D laser cutting,” he said. I also had a new experience; I travelled on a bullet train from our host Guangxi University to Luizhou city, to visit a high-tech car manufacturing plant belonging to Wuling Motors Company Ltd, and watched the electric car making process from start to finish.

“We got to see how that part of the world is moving in terms of green energy because they were assembling electric cars that need charging to move. We realized, too, that most of the cars on China’s roads are now green-energy vehicles. They seem to just glide on the road with no sound, let alone noise, and it was amazing.” Kangai was also inspired by the prominent life of St Marcellin and Marist core values towards shaping the world.

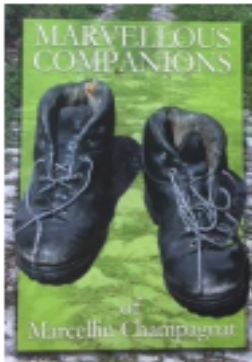
“It was also interesting and totally empowering that a lot of people around the world, acknowledge St Marcellin’s work dearly and aware of the Marist Core Values.” “I am saying so because as exhibited the five pillars of the Marist ethos: namely Presence, Simplicity, Family Spirit, Love of Work and being inspired by Mary, the mother of Jesus. I was easily identified as part of the international Marist family.”

“I will continue to give it my all. I am also grateful to the community within my school, especially Brother Superior, L. Brito for watering my dream for innovation and cultivating it to greatness, Zimbabwe Science Fair organizers, who continue to give the youth the opportunity to innovate and participate on global platforms. My greatest appreciation to the Almighty who made it possible.” He said.





Preservation of Vocations



Browsing through the books in the community library, I landed my eyes on one of our Marist documents **Marvellous Companions**. Going through the pages of the book which contains the history of our early Brothers, I found myself reading the history of **Brother Stratonique**, our 5th superior General 1843-1926.

Apart from so many other things written about Br Stratonique; I was so much taken by his love for Marist vocations. He was called the Apostle of New vocation. He would seize every possible occasion to talk about vocations. He stressed not only the number of new vocations but also the quality they were to have. He not only encouraged new vocations, but he also cared deeply about the ones that God had already sent.

A story is told that When he was first appointed assistant for the province of the Hermitage, one of the first things he did was to take one of the better teachers of the boarding school at Valbenote and re-assign him to the Novitiate. Regretting the decision, the director of the boarding complained: *"What were you thinking? He was one of our best teachers and he was highly regarded by parents."*



Brother Stratonique responded: *"What was I thinking? I was thinking about our children because novices are exactly that, they are children in our religious family and should be given priority over children belonging to others."*

Reading about the life of this great follower of Champagnat I was left with lots of questions such as:

- How do we look after the vocations we have now?
- How can I take care of my vocation?
- How can we use the resources we have to care for the vocation?

"Pessimists see the world as spinning out of control; optimists create new ways for the universe to unfold as it should" Brother Stratonique.



Br Peter

MARGARET B. MPALULA -LEBANON EXPERIENCE 2023



Please see the separately attached PowerPoint Presentation by Margaret Mpalula.

Happy reading!



“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year 2024 Ahead.



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