

MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

NEWSLETTER No. 69

To all Aspirants of South Africa

29th November 2016

My dear Friends,

Greetings! I hope you are well and that you have fully entered into the beautiful time of Advent! Yes, this is an occasion for each Christian to prepare to receive the Lord in a missionary way. Which means to involve others in this great hope and expectation of Jesus who is coming at Christmas. On the first Sunday of Advent, Pope Francis reminded us that *"The Gospel is not trying to frighten us, but to **open our horizons** to further dimensions, giving meaning even to everyday events."* This is an invitation to **open our hearts and minds to others**, thus to live as missionaries wherever we are. The Pope adds: *"we are called to **enlarge the horizons of our hearts**, to be surprised by the life that is presented each day with its newness. In order to do this we need to learn to not depend on our own securities, our own established plans, because the Lord comes at the hour which we don't expect."* He concludes by saying that this time is *"an invitation to vigilance, because, not knowing when He will come, we must always be ready..."*



On 14th November I went to Malawi. The first night, I stayed at Mua Parish where I started as a young missionary in 1970; a long time ago! As part of the Parish life, Fr. Claude Boucher, M.Afr., from my home diocese in Canada has established an art school and a museum to help keep the Malawian culture. I suggest you visit their website at kungoni.org. You can see the museum and different aspects of his work with his team of artists.

Then, from 15th to 21st, I was in Salima, on the shore of Lake Malawi. There, I did my yearly retreat in the house of retired bishop Rémi Sainte-Marie, bishop emeritus of Dedza Diocese and archbishop emeritus of Lilongwe arch-diocese. He welcomed me warmly and respected my times of prayer and silence. It was a good spiritual experience.

From the 22nd to the 26th in Chipata Pre-Formation Centre (Zambia), we held our meeting of Vocation Directors of the Southern African Province. We were from the four Sectors of Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia and South Africa.



This new Centre in Chipata currently has its second intake of 18 aspirants from Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia (nobody from South Africa!). From October to May, they are spending time discerning their vocation, exploring their self-knowledge with psychological assessments, in order to understand better their deepest aspirations and

desires in the light of God's call. They also study the Bible, Church history, liturgy, the missionary dimension of our lives as Christians, and how to reach out to people, especially the poor, and how to share with them the Good News. They also have activities such as manual work, sports, etc. After this intense period, if they are still decided and if they are accepted, they will be called to go to the First Phase of their formal training: three years of philosophy in Balaka, Malawi.

This month, our aspirant Patrick Kadima wrote an article for our Provincial blog; here (on the left) is an extract of it. To read the whole article, go to our blog at mafrsaprovince.com

"I spent one month at the Tamale Institute of Cross Cultural Studies (TICCS) for a cultural introduction course which was based on introducing its participants to the diversity of ethnic groups and languages in Ghana. It included the "do's and don'ts", Chiefs and politics, ethno-linguistic groups, cross-cultural spirituality and cross-cultural differences, conflict resolution and Islam in Ghana today. Adding to it were: dynamics of African Traditional Religion (ATR), kinship systems and gender roles and social change in Ghana, Christianity in Northern Ghana, as well as witchcraft, mentality, friendship, cross-cultural communication and language learning."

Patrick Kadima

Wishing you all the best for a blessed Christmas!

Fr. Michel

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Be apostles,
nothing but apostles!

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