



MISSIONS TODAY

Vol. 75, No. 3

Summer 2017

Cambodia: More baptisms and a new church to celebrate

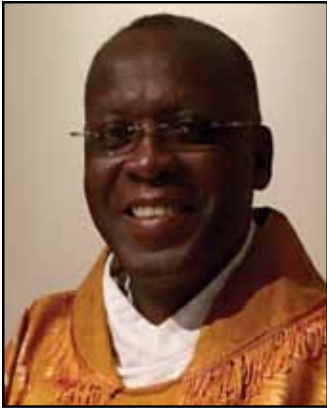
Kenya: Energy support for a seminary

South Sudan: Taking the faith to the country's youth

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

National Director's Message

Mission Today Message Summer 2017



Today, our world is breaking apart. People are witnessing wars, violence, and indifference; could we not say that our humanity is in need of true love and tenderness? With greater love and understanding, our human relationship would be deeply enriched and life would be more pleasant. According to Pope Francis, tenderness is the path of choice for the stronger, most courageous men and women. It is a path of solidarity, the path of humility (L'osservatore Romano 28/4/17).

Tenderness is a quality of the heart which pays attention to the other with openness and respect; it proposes without constraining. How good it is to see sons and daughters bringing comfort to their grandparents, to see the parents who work to provide for their children. These actions reveal a deep love expressed with tenderness. God has given us a heart with which to love. It is beautiful to talk about it, but more marvelous it is to put that talk into practice.

Could it be possible that one day there would be no more abandoned children, no more people living in solitude and distress, no more battered women ... How is it possible to help people if I do not love and have compassion, if I have no feelings for those who are victims of our lack of care?

The masterpiece which appears on the cover of this issue is amazing. A child in pain lost of joy, longing for love and having a passion to be loved. A child holds a cross, the only sign of her hope.



It expresses the idea that human hope, our hope is not vague; it is not to be confused with uncertain or vague sentiments. Our hope is rooted in the certainty of what God has promised and accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Rev. Fr. Alexander Osei, C.S.Sp.
National Director.

Missionary Prayer Intentions

JUNE – Religious Women in Mission: That religious women in mission countries may be witnesses of the joy of the Gospel and living signs of the love of Christ.

JULY – Lapsed Christians: That our brothers and sisters who have strayed from the faith, through our prayer and witness to the

Gospel, may rediscover the merciful closeness of the Lord and the beauty of the Christian Life.

AUGUST – The Church's Missionary Identity: That the Church strives to follow Christ faithfully in its mission to proclaim the Gospel to all peoples.

In This Issue...

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Every flower is a soul
blossoming in nature
- Gerard de Nerval

Photo by: morguefile.com

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PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES

Missions Today is published four times a year by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 2219 Kennedy Road Toronto, Ontario M1T 3G5

International Standard Serial Number
ISSN 0843-1515

Propagation of the Faith & St. Peter the Apostle: Income Tax Number:
BN 12888 2883 RR0001

Holy Childhood Association: Income Tax Number: BN 11909 5818 RR0001

Canadian Publications Mail Sales
Product Agreement No. 0040008362

Design: Marcucci Studios
Printed: Timeline Printing Inc.
Toronto, ON

Cover Photo: Diocese of Rumbak, South Sudan
Back Cover Photo: Snap, Wikimedia.org.
[cc-sa-by-2.0]

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Across the Globe



■ INDIA: New Home for the Missionaries of Charity is opened in Orissa

Bhubaneswar— The Missionaries of Charity have opened a new home in the state of Orissa, East India. The new Mother Teresa religious community is located in the famous district of Kandhamal, which was the scene of anti-Christian violence in 2008. The opening ceremony, is scheduled for May 13, 2017, on the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima. “I would like to thank Sr. Prema, Superior General of the Missionaries of Charity, and Sr. Olivet, Regional Superior in Orissa, for having welcomed our invitation to collaborate in the pastoral ministry in Kandhamal”, stated Archbishop John Barwa, head of the Archdiocese of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar. This will be the third community of Missionaries of charity in that district. Interviewed by Fides, Sister Olivet explained the order’s decision to open a third community: “We are happy to open our new home in this district. People need our service. We are committed to working for the poor and bringing the seed of the Kingdom of God in this part of the world. With the grace and mercy of God, we will do our best to stay close to the local people... working for the common good, strengthening their faith in God, (and) promoting peace and harmony in the region”. The home of the missionaries will be “a light of the Gospel” in a context still marked by suffering and discomfort, injustice, poverty, and marginalization. Anti-Christian violence in 2007 and above all in 2008 caused over one hundred victims and left 56,000 without roofs. Several churches and Christian institutions in Kandhamal were damaged. *An edited version, taken from Agenzia Fides 5/6/2017*

■ SOUTH KOREA - Seoul Catholics celebrate anniversary of Fatima apparition

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Marian apparition in Fatima, the Seoul Archdiocese will hold circular prayer services for peace and evangelization.

Titled, “Prayer Pilgrimage in Commemoration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Fatima Apparition”, the archdiocese will begin services on May 13 and continue until Oct. 13, covering five areas in Seoul. It will begin and conclude at Myeongdong Cathedral.

The archdiocese urged parishioners to join the prayer service and reflect on the message of Our Lady of Fatima given the current military tensions on the Korean peninsula. The Blessed Mother appeared to three shepherd children and said to pray for peace and the conversion of lost souls.

The prayer service will feature a Marian statue enshrined on the 90th anniversary of Pyongyang Diocese in March 2016. Donated by a businessperson from Fatima, the statue represents the wishes of the Korean Catholics for the peaceful reunification of North and South Korea.

Father Augustine Jo Sung-poong, pastoral director of Seoul Archdiocese, said, “The prayer tour will lead the whole archdiocese to pray for peace in the Korean peninsula and the world. I hope parishioners will remember the intention and times of prayer services. The services (will) be encouraging to Catholics and arouse interest in the Church of Silence,” he added. *Source: ucanews.com 04/28/2017*

■ IRAQ - Christians erect large cross in area liberated from ISIS

Mosul, Iraq - After years of darkness, hope has returned to Telekuf-Tesqopa. Located just 17 miles from Mosul, the village is rebuilding after being liberated from ISIS.

As a visible sign of the rebuilding, a giant cross was erected on a hill, marking the victory of the Christian faith against the darkness of the jihadists.

On Feb. 18, the Chaldean Catholic Patriarch of Baghdad, Louis Sako, visited the village, where he blessed the large cross and participated in the celebration of the first Mass after two and a half years in Saint George Church.

“This is our land and this is our home,” Patriarch Sako said in his homily. He also said that now is the time to regain hope and for the people to return to their towns to begin a new stage of life.

The patriarch said that Christians will thus demonstrate to the world that the forces of darkness, which wreaked havoc and ravaged their land, are ephemeral and that the Church of Christ, although it suffers, is built upon rock.

When the Mass was over, everyone went out to a hill located on the outskirts of the city. There Patriarch Sako blessed the huge cross which was raised amid fireworks and with cries of “Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! For those who chose the faith and those who return!”

“It is a sincere and great call to return and rebuild. We are joined to our land, to our future on the land of our ancestors. Here we can be proud of our history and here we can obtain the granting of all our rights,” Patriarch Sako said.

The placement of crosses has become a recurring gesture since the Iraqi Army began the offensive to recover the city of Mosul, the ISIS stronghold in Iraq.

In every village liberated on the Plain of Nineveh, Christians have made wooden crosses and have placed them on the roofs of churches and homes.

Muslims have also participated in these events. Last week, a group of Muslims youths joined those cleaning a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary located in east Mosul, liberated by the Iraqi Army. This action is part of a campaign that seeks to remember the religious coexistence that was present in the city before the jihadists occupied it in 2014. *This is an edited version, taken from CNA/EWTN News, 02/23/2017*

■ BRAZIL - New window for the evangelizing activity of the Catholic Church in Brazil

Brasilia— On 26 April the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Brazil (CNBB) will launch its new portal www.cnbb.org.br.

The aim, says Auxiliary Bishop of Brasilia and CNBB secretary, is to give new impulse to digital communication and the evangelizing activity of the Church in Brazil and render more visible her identity and activity.

Fr. Rafael Vieira, CNBB press officer, told Fides about the portal designed to combine in one platform the latest modern technology to improve access to information and especially to increase synergy between the production of contents and the distribution of the same through the different CNBB communications channels.

The new platform will present articles by Brazil’s bishops, as well as information regarding CNBB commissions and bodies. It will have a banner space for church events, campaigns and other important activities and also make available sound, images, animation, video and texts for smartphone, tablet and computer. *Agenzia Fides 04/24/2017*

■ ITALY - One Italian bishop is answering the pope’s call to evangelize abroad

An elderly bishop has taken up Pope Francis’ call to take the Catholic Church to the “peripheries” and evangelize among non-Christians.

Bishop Gianfranco Todisco, who leads the diocese of Melfi-Rapolla-Venosa in Basilicata, a region of southern Italy, said he wrote to the pope last year saying he wanted to return to his work as a missionary.

From 1978 to 1999, Todisco, who is 71, served as a missionary in Canada and Colombia. His was expected to remain a bishop until the mandatory retirement age of 75.

“Someone might think that behind my desire to return to being a missionary there is another hidden motivation linked to difficulties, dissatisfaction or a desire for a ‘change of air,’” Todisco said in a letter published on the diocese website. “It is none of that.”

He told his parishioners that his “only true motive” to resign from his diocesan duties was his drive to dedicate himself to missionary work. “The desire to return to a mission was becoming more compelling every day,” he said.

Todisco stressed his willingness to contribute as a missionary despite his age.

“I am ready to go anywhere you think I should be sent, even to the furthest and poorest parishes to the ‘peripheries’ of the church that you remind us not to neglect,” he told Francis.

Francis sent a letter to Todisco saying he was pleased to hear his news and then telephoned him personally in December to congratulate him and ask him if he was still willing to leave.

The bishop was unavailable for comment on Monday, April 24 but he told his congregation he would end his term in June. Italian media reports said he expected to be sent to Honduras.

Francis has spoken many times of the need for a more “missionary church” that takes the message of Catholic teaching to young and old in countries around the world. *An edited version, taken from a Religion News Service report written by Josephine McKenna 04/25/2017.*

The Society of Saint Peter

Seminary Formation at St. Peter's Regional Seminary Pedu, Cape-Coast Ghana/West Africa

This article was written in 2012 by then Deacon Hillary Agbenosi, who was ordained later that year. It first appeared in Ignitum Magazine, the Catholic voice in Cape Coast, Ghana.



Photo courtesy ignitumtoday.com

The Lord has promised always to provide for His people, shepherds after His own heart. In fulfillment of this promise, He constantly calls young men to His vineyard primarily to be with Him and to be sent out to preach (cf. Mk 3:14). I will say that aspect of “being with Him” is what the seminary offers to those of us who feel called to serve in His vineyard.

I would like to give a short overview of Seminary Formation in Ghana and today's challenges based on my own experience in my Major Seminary life. This will also support the Pillars of Formation in Blessed John Paul II's document “Pastores Dabo Vobis”: Human Formation, Spiritual Formation, Intellectual Formation, and Pastoral Formation. All through seminary instruction, these pillars of formation are utilized in order that the priest will become a balanced person, who has an intimate relationship with God, and is able to minister to others to grow in the faith and to have a similar relationship of their own.

The seminaries I will be referring to are the two major seminaries

I have attended; St Paul's Major Seminary, Sowutuom (Spiritual Year and Philosophical Studies) and St Peter's Regional Seminary, Pedu (Theological Studies). These seminaries have trained candidates from Liberia, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Benin, Burkina Faso, and especially Ghana. They serve the dioceses in the three ecclesiastical Provinces of Cape Coast, Kumasi, and Accra.

The first Pillar is Human Formation, which the document defines as the basis of seminary formation. This aspect of formation helps us to develop human qualities such as integrity, honesty, and humility among others. Knowledge of self along with the formation of moral conscience is strongly pursued so that the seminarian can emerge effectively mature so that

he may serve others. The life of a priest becomes a bridge that allows people to find their way to God rather than a deterrence that prevents them from seeking God. In the seminary, we are given many opportunities to form ourselves in the best possible

way whether it's when we are together in the halls of residence, during play, or at work. We study and work together as a team. Spiritual direction and seminars on various topics fervently support this agenda. Various departments such as carpentry, masonry, painting, electrical, plumbing, interior decoration, and

farming have been created not only to assist the Seminarian to develop and exhibit his talents but it also allows others to learn new things including the most menial of tasks, such as weeding the compound when the need arises. Extracurricular activities such as football, volleyball, basketball, lawn tennis, jogging, are also part of the seminarian's experience.

One of the challenges seminarians face, however, is the inadequate rooms and halls of residence in both major seminaries. The

fact that these areas are unfinished presents a challenge to the seminarian's formation; however, once they are completed, it will relieve the pressure and allow not only good, but also quality, reflection times and personal growth.

The second Pillar is Spiritual Formation, which seeks to bring the future priest very close to Jesus Christ so that he may radiate Him. It also seeks to bring the seminarians to that personal encounter with Jesus Christ that comes from prayer, reading of Sacred Scripture, reception of the sacraments (especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation), other approved devotions of the Church, and spiritual direction and meditation. The Seminarian is challenged to pray every morning, afternoon, evening, and night in an effort to sanctify every hour of the day. At 5:30 am, the Blessed Sacrament is exposed in the Chapel; every Seminarian is encouraged to visit and commune with the Lord for 30 minutes after which we all gather as a community to pray at 6:00 am. After our morning prayer, 30 minutes of meditation is observed by all to enable each Seminarian to digest the Psalms that were prayed that morning.

The Church believes in silent prayer because it avails much and because it exposes our wretchedness to us. In addition, an appreciation of the evangelical counsels of obedience, celibate chastity, and poverty is stressed. We are privileged to enjoy daily attendance at the Holy Mass, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, as well as other private prayers and devotions including the monthly recollections. The seminaries in this area are in great need of more spiritual books and spiritual directors to aid our spiritual growth.

The third Pillar is Intellectual Formation, which is responsible for making the future Priest a critical, balanced and objective person. It prepares him to have the ability and the capacity to appreciate and understand the faith, be able to teach and explain it to others, and be able to judge situations and make decisions. Intellectual formation also broadens the future priest's knowledge base so that he may not be limited to the ecclesiastical sciences but may seek general knowledge while discerning the truth from falsehood. For this reason, we study various aspects of Philosophy, Scriptures, Theology, Sociology, Canon Law, and

Intellectual Formation is responsible for making the future priest a critical, balanced, and objective person

Education. A well-stocked modern library is also a challenge in this area; specifically, St. Peter's Regional Seminary has a refurbished library with too many old books and St. Paul's Catholic Seminary has a newly built library although they lack an inventory of new books to fill the shelves.

The final pillar is Pastoral Formation. Its purpose is to make the future Priest a good shepherd by following the example of Jesus himself so that he may learn to show initiative and be ready to sacrifice in

the ongoing evangelizing mission of the Church. We come to appreciate that pastoral work is a mystery because it is animated by God himself. It is communion because it cannot be done alone and that it is a mission which should be embraced with all humility and in obedience notwithstanding where it takes us or what demands it makes of us. In this area, too, we are given the opportunity to put all that we have studied into practice on the pastoral field (for five weeks in the earlier stages and later for an entire year) before we are ordained Deacons. The challenge here is that the Pastoral Year is still new and is still undergoing some form of restructuring; however, all efforts are being made to make it the most effective part of the seminarian's training. I can attest to how fruitful this year has been and how it has added to my pastoral orientation.

Another great challenge that St. Peter's Regional Seminary faces is that we do not have a good vehicle to transport us to programs outside the seminary; especially, pastoral and teaching practice. It has become so serious that, as a student body, we decided to dedicate this whole year to raising funds for it. God has been so good and our target of getting a Benz MCV 400 is on course to

replace the current one which has deteriorated after serving the seminary for approximately 30 years. This same bus goes to the market to buy yams and rice, among other things, with unbolted seats;

however, when we have to transport seminarians, we request assistance from all goodhearted people with bolting down the seats.

Despite all these challenges, God is still providing Priests after His own heart to shepherd His people. In this regard, all of us have a part to play in cooperating with God.

Pastoral Formation: ensuring the future priest is a good shepherd who follows the example of Jesus himself

CAMBODIA

A new church dedicated to St. Therese of Lisieux and new baptisms at Easter

Phnom Penh - There is great vitality in the Catholic community in Cambodia: on 18 February after the consecration of the new church of St Peter in Pot hon (North of Phnom Penh), the Apostolic Vicariate of Phnom Penh announced the blessing of the chapel dedicated to St. Therese of the Child Jesus and of the pastoral Center in Preykbas (in the area of Takeo, 60 km south of Phnom Penh). The chapel was consecrated and inaugurated by the Bishop, the Apostolic Vicar Olivier Schmitthaesler, on February 25.



Apostolic Vicar Olivier Schmitthaesler –
Photo courtesy of the Diocèse of Phnom Penh

priest. In fifteen years, the community of the baptized has grown and developed: 8 new communities were started in Takeo province, including that of Preykbas. The Church in the area of Takeo continues to expand with 70 new members being baptized at Easter. Overall, in the entire Vicariate of Phnom Penh there are 155 catechumens who will be baptized at Easter, representing the nine pastoral sectors of the Vicariate.

Mgr. Olivier Schmitthaesler, stated that “the local community was born after the conversion of Paul Cheang in the village of Preykbas. Beginning in 2009, Paul Cheang taught catechism every Sunday to the young people of the village. In

2010, Bishop Olivier decided to buy a plot of three hectares (an orchard with mango trees) to build a diocesan pastoral center. Thanks to aid received from the Catholic Church in Thailand, 9 bungalows, a kindergarten and a small chapel dedicated to St. Therese of Lisieux were constructed on this land. The first chapel was built by young people with mud and straw. “It is a living sign of God’s presence near the mountain of Chisor, which overlooks the Cambodian plain and is called to be a light to all those who are hungry for peace and justice”, says the Bishop.

The chapel was further enriched by the presence of a relic of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta (gift of the Postulator of the cause of beatification to Mgr. Olivier) “placed at the altar to help us to be merciful as our heavenly Father”, he adds. The pastoral Center can accommodate up to 50 people and is used as a house for retreats, formation and reflection.

“By praying and living the faith among the mango trees, each baptized person can remember that it is called to bear good fruit”, says the Apostolic Vicar. *This is an edited version, taken from Agenzia Fides 03/02/2017. This edited version is taken from ucanews.com. It is part of their continuing series on Apostolic Vicariates in Asia.*

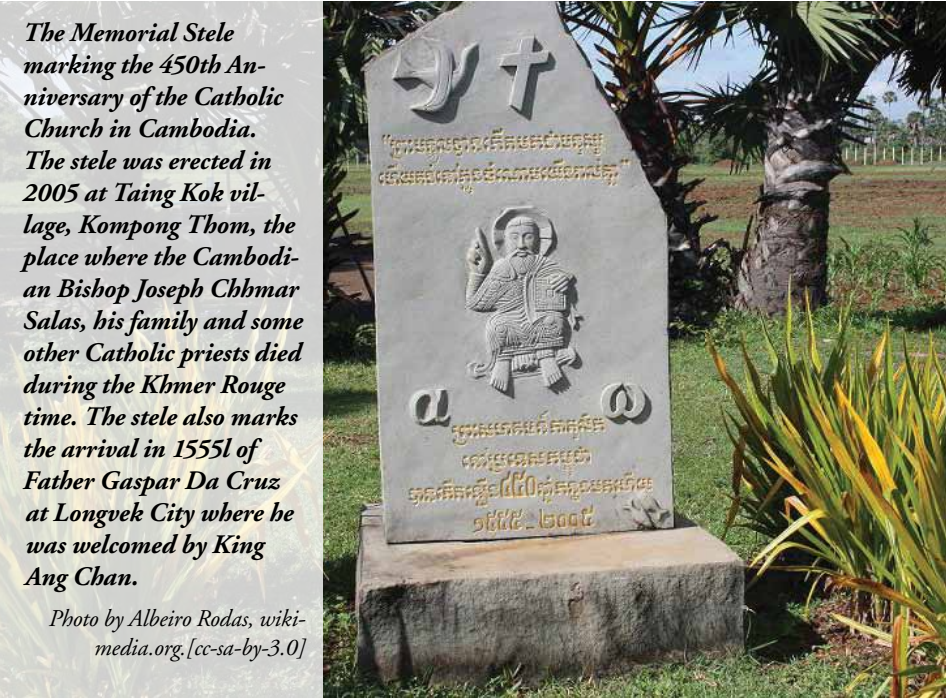


Listening to the Word of God at St. Joseph Church in Phnom Penh –
Photo by Io Herodotus, Wikimedia.org. [cc-sa-by-4.0]

A Brief History of the Roman Catholic Church in Cambodia

This edited version is taken from ucanews.com. It is part of their continuing series on Apostolic Vicariates in Asia.

On Sept. 23, 1968, the Holy See divided the Apostolic Vicariate of Phnom Penh into three ecclesiastical Circumscriptions, namely: the Apostolic Vicariate of Phnom Penh, the Apostolic Prefectures of Battambang and Kompong Cham.



The Memorial Stele marking the 450th Anniversary of the Catholic Church in Cambodia. The stele was erected in 2005 at Taing Kok village, Kompong Thom, the place where the Cambodian Bishop Joseph Chhmar Salas, his family and some other Catholic priests died during the Khmer Rouge time. The stele also marks the arrival in 1551 of Father Gaspar Da Cruz at Longvek City where he was welcomed by King Ang Chan.

Photo by Albeiro Rodas, Wikimedia.org. [cc-sa-by-3.0]

The entire church was destroyed during the civil war, Khmer priests, brothers, along with the bishop of the Apostolic Vicar of Phnom Penh were killed during the Pol Pot regime (1975-1979).

The Church began anew in 1990. On Jan. 18, 1990, following a request presented by a Hungarian diplomat, the government of the State of Cambodia orally agreed to the construction of a place of worship for all Christians. It would be situated about six kilometers from Phnom Penh. Its leadership would be assured by a tripartite committee made up of Catholics, various other Christian religions and the Patriotic Front.

On Aug. 30, 1850, the Holy See established the Apostolic Vicariate of Phnom Penh, which covered the Kingdom of Cambodia. From 1870 up to 1955, three provinces of lower Cambodia, this included the former South Vietnam. On Sept. 20, 1955, the Holy See announced that the Apostolic Vicariate of Phnom Penh would be solely responsible for the care of the Catholics of Cambodia.

In March 1990, the Catholics wrote to the President of the State of Cambodia to celebrate the Khmer New Year “according to Catholic tradition”. On April 3, the Central Political Bureau of the Party gave its approval and on April 9, Mr. Chea Sim, President of the Front for National Safety, signed a letter, widely broadcasted on Cambodian radio and television, officially recognizing the existence of the Christians.



The Floating Church of Chong Knies, resting on the shore of Lake
Photo by Io A. Omer Karamollaoglu, Wikimedia.org. [cc-sa-by-2.0]



Liturgy preparation at St. Joseph Church in Phnom Penh –
Photo by Io Herodotus, Wikimedia.org. [cc-sa-by-4.0]

Pope Francis says Catholic shrines are a key place for evangelization

By Hannah Brockhaus

This is an edited version of a story first reported in CNA/EWTN News on April 2, 2017.



The Grotto of Lourdes, inside the Massabiell Cave
Photo by Fabio Alessandro Locati, Wikimedia.org. [cc-sa-by-3.0]

Vatican City - On Saturday, (April 1), Pope Francis moved the responsibility for Catholic shrines to be under the Congregation for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, stating that shrines, as sacred places, are especially suitable to conversion and the strengthening of faith.

In a papal edict, known as a *motu proprio*, Pope Francis expressed his belief in the power that is inherent in Catholic shrines to, "...express an irreplaceable opportunity for evangelization in our time".

According to the document, titled "Ecclesia in Sanctuarium," the tasks of the congregation will include: the establishment of new national and international shrines, studying and implementing measures for promoting their role in evangelization, and promoting systematic pastoral care of the shrines and specific training for those who operate them.



The Chapel of Apparitions at Fatima, Portugal
Photo by Andreas Trepte, Wikimedia.org. [cc-sa-by-2.5]

They will also be in charge of the promotion of national and international meetings to promote communal pastoral renewal and pilgrimages to various shrines, spiritual guidance for pilgrims, and "cultural and artistic enhancement of the Shrines according to the "via pulchritudinis" (way of beauty) as a particular mode of evangelization of the Church," Pope Francis said.

Shrines and other places of pilgrimage "despite the crisis of faith that invests the contemporary world, is still perceived as sacred spaces to which pilgrims go to find a moment of rest, silence and contemplation in the often hectic life of today," the letter continues.

"A hidden desire creates for many a nostalgia for God; and shrines can be a real refuge to rediscover themselves and regain the necessary strength for their conversion."



Sanctuary Garden of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico City
Photo: wikimedia.org. [cc-sa-by-2.5]

People have made pilgrimages to holy sites since the first century, the Pope said, and even today, in every part of the world, they remain "a distinctive sign of the simple and humble faith of believers."

The shrine is a "sacred place," where the celebration of the sacraments, especially Reconciliation and the Eucharist, as well as the witness of charity, "express the great commitment of the Church for evangelization; and therefore it stands as a genuine place of evangelization..." he stated.

The proclamation was signed by Pope Francis on Feb. 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.





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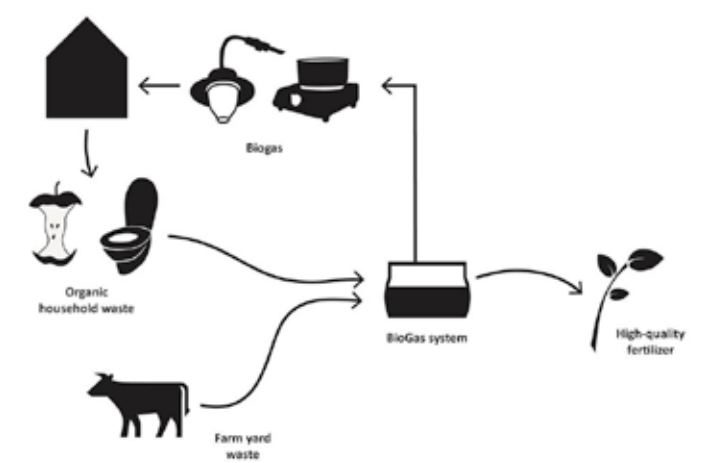
Project Report: KENYA

Bio-gas Development at St. Mary's Seminary in Molo, Kenya



One of the biggest problems faced by many church facilities in Africa is the lack of reliable, affordable energy. Already operating on tight budgets, these churches, schools, and seminaries struggle to keep open. Kitchens, lighting, heating, operating computers are some of the areas most affected. In recognition of this need, PMS Canada will provide support for these facilities when a sound business model is presented. One such project, visited by Father Alex last summer, is the biogas renewable energy installation at St. Mary's Seminary in Kenya. Father Alex is the source for this pictorial report on the progress of this project.

First, some background:



Source: simgas.com

Biogas is made in a biogas digester. It is named 'digester' because it is a large tank filled with bacteria that eats (or digests) organic waste and gives a flammable gas, called biogas. The bacteria in the digester need to be cared for as one would care for an animal. If the bacteria have too much or too little food, they get sick. The bacteria must be fed every day with a mixture of food waste and water. In addition to biogas, wastewater is produced that is rich in nutrients. This water may be poured over plants to help them grow.

The main part of a biogas system is a large tank, or digester. Inside this tank, bacteria convert organic waste into methane gas through the process of anaerobic digestion. The digester is fed daily with household by-products such as market waste, kitchen waste, and manure from livestock. The methane gas produced inside biogas system may be used for cooking, lighting, and other energy needs. Waste that has been fully digested exits the biogas system in the form of organic fertilizer.



Installing the gas generator that will provide backup power for the project.



Clearing the site and beginning the dig. All work is manually done.



The large hole is now ready for the cement and brick foundation.



Thick bricks, tightly sealed are built in an igloo shape inside the cavity. It is essential that the digester be properly sealed to prevent leakage and possible contamination of the local water table.



The caps are being cemented in place.



After a final layer of cement is placed over the caps, circular cement moulds are fitted.



With the moulds in place, the digester beds are recovered with dirt. Pipes to carry the biogas to the nearby buildings are now in place.



From Left to right: Rev. Fr. Paul Makundi Dean of students, Rev. Fr. Celestino Bundi National PMS Director, Kenya, Rev. Fr. Alex Osei CSSp National Director Toronto Canada and Rev. Fr. Michael Ndiege, the Rector inspecting the completed biogas plant during the visit.

These wonderful projects given to us by PMS Canada have made a notable, and a positive difference in our seminary community. We are now not worried about frequent interruptions of power supply that is commonly experienced in this area. The seminary community has longed for these projects since its inception. We no longer stay in dark during power interruption praise be to God.

We thank God and continuously pray for our benefactors who support the formation of young men called to priesthood. May God continue to bless you with good health.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Fr. Michael Ndiege AIDI
RECTOR- St. Mary's Major seminary



Fr. Alex CSSp, Fr. Bundi and the Formators outside the Seminary Chapel after the celebration of the Eucharist with seminarians

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For more information contact:

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- all or part of the **residue** of your estate
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World Heritage Site

Nomination for Japan's Oldest Church

Oura Catholic Church in Nagasaki and several other Christian sites in southwestern Japan were selected as candidates for the world heritage list by a government panel on July 25, 2016 reported *Japan Today*.



Oura Catholic Church, Nagasaki, Japan—

Photo by radiovaticana.va



Oura Catholic Church, circa 1864—

Picture Source Unknown, wikimedia.org



Father Bernard Petitjean MEP—

Photo courtesy Marist Messenger



Father Louis Furet MEP—

Photo courtesy Marist Messenger

Oura Catholic Church was first constructed in 1863 by two French priests, Fathers Louis Furet and Bernard Petitjean, after the opening up of a number of treaty ports in the last years of the Edo Period of Japanese history (1603-1867).

Oura Catholic Church honors the Twenty-Six Martyrs of Japan, who were rounded up in Kyoto and crucified in Nagasaki, near present-day Nagasaki Station, in 1597 on the orders of warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The original church attracted a number of kakure kirishitan (Hidden Christians), many of whom had returned to Nagasaki from self-imposed exile to escape persecu-

tion in such remote places as the Goto Islands and Hirado.

The original, small, wooden church was built by the Japanese carpenter, Koyama Hide. This structure was replaced in 1879 by the much larger Gothic building in wood and brick which exists today.

For more information on Fathers Louis Furet and Bernard Petitjean, please visit the Marist Messenger website at <https://www.maristmessenger.co.nz/2015/06/30/hidden-christians/>

An edited version, taken from ucanews.com 07/26/2016 and japanvisitor.com“



Oura Catholic Church decorated for Christmas Season—

Photo by Michael Crossroad, [cc-sa-by-3.0], wikimedia.org

Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood:

Project Report: Diocese of Rumbek – South Sudan

Diocese of Rumbak

The Catholic Diocese of Rumbek is one of seven catholic Dioceses in the Republic of South Sudan.

It is located in the very heart of the country, covering the whole territory of Lakes State and the southern part of Warrap State – a territory or around 65.000 km2 (larger than Switzerland). Its population can be estimated to 1.5 million people, of which around 150.000 are Catholics, although reliable statistics are not available.

Established as Apostolic Vicariate in 1955, it was elevated to the status of a Diocese in 1974..

At this moment, the Diocese of Rumbek has 11 established missions or parishes, many of them with a number of sub-parishes and around 150 chapels and prayer stations.

Editor's Note: Project reports sometimes take months to complete. Needy Dioceses around the world make applications to the Pontifical Missionary Societies in Rome for financial aid. The PMS then matches the various projects to donor mission countries. Keep in mind that all dioceses throughout the world make a contribution to this fund, no matter how little. Each application is carefully scrutinized and when the monies are finally granted the receiving diocese must complete a detailed report that outlines where the money was spent. This careful scrutiny ensures that no money is wasted, and that all money goes to the needs of the individual dioceses and parishes.

One such project took place in the Diocese of Rumbek, located in the southern part of South Sudan. This newly created country has experienced much conflict and disorder over several years. In fact, the war-like conditions have forced the diocese to relocate in Nairobi, Kenya, the bordering country.

The work being done by the religious sisters, priests and brothers within South Sudan is remarkable, given the terrible conditions they encounter daily. Here is their report from one small project PMS Canada sponsored in 2015. This report has been edited for clarity.

Holy Family Cathedral

28th September 2015

We are the Evangelizing Sisters of Mary who work in Rumbek Diocese, South Sudan. The apostolate that we carry out is pastoral work and education ministry. At the Diocese level, we are responsible for the Pontifical Missionary Childhood which involves youth programs including liturgical dance, altar serving, and other youth activities relating to education and sports.

We are glad and thankful for the financial support given us to help these children acquire knowledge and understanding of their role in the Church. Annually, we organize seminars to instruct them in active participation in the liturgy thereby helping their home congregations to be lively and attentive.



Liturgical Dancers register for the Seminar

Our church is still growing; with many new children joining the group, it is our duty to teach and instruct them in the Catholic faith. This is because many of the children come from a protestant background and they are attracted by the meaningful enjoyment presented by being part of the liturgical dance group or the altar servers group. In this year's training seminar, we looked mostly at prayer and discipline. Prayer in the sense that they ought to pray before doing anything; either during their gatherings for practice



Practise. Practise. Practise!



Here is how it's done. Sisters lead the children in the dance steps.

or any of their other activities but also to pray for PEACE in our country of South Sudan. Also, since there is a lot of insecurity caused by "clanism" (conflicts and competition between clans), we encourage them to be peacemakers among their peers and hopefully bring future peace to the country at large.

Here is how it's done. Sisters lead the children in the dance steps.

With the funds we received, we were able to feed and provide awards for the two hundred children who attended the seminar from five different parishes. The numbers would have been higher, but some children could not attend due to the general insecurity in the area.



Let's play 'keep away'.

Finally, we once again register our gratitude to you and we implore abundant blessings upon you in your daily endeavours. The children, along with their animators, promise to pray for you that the Lord God may increase your generosity. Know that they appreciate your love for them.

Remain blessed,

Sister Anna Wamalwa and Sister Coleta Wanjala

For more information on the activities taking place in the Diocese of Rumbek, please visit their website overview at <http://dioces-eofrumbek.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/2013-07-presentation-DOR-homeprint-300-dpi.pdf>

Dear Fellow Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood Members:

Greetings from Thunder Bay. Each year, the St. Anthony Parish Youth Group organizes fund raising activities with a Valentine's Day theme. Our group is pictured below. By selling donated candies and chocolate we managed to raise \$2,500.00 for our "Children Helping Children" program. Here is an activity we did in our Parish of St. Anthony just before Valentine's Day last February.

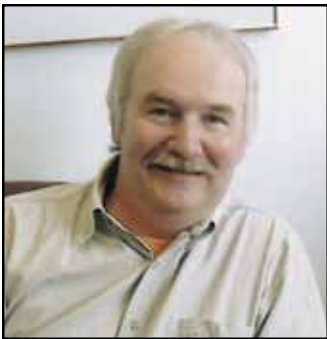
Many thanks to Gabriela, Eric, Sandra, Caleb, Matthew, Grace, Alexandra, Cassandra and Brianna for their hard work and winning smiles.

Father Luigi Filippini



Mission Conversations with the Editor

No One is Saved by Themselves



Compassion: The deep feeling of sharing the suffering of another in the inclination to give aid or support, or to show mercy.*

A few years ago, the bronze statue of a homeless Christ caused much controversy when it appeared in close to forty different locations in Europe and North America. Its creator, sculptor Timothy Schmalz, stated that we needed a different vision of Christ, one that reached out and touched the imperfect in society. “I think that a homeless person, a marginalized person can feel very disconnected to the ideas of Jesus that have been represented as Mr. Perfect and ‘everything’s fine’. And so I think that this lets them in.”

While I think that Mr. Schmalz’s feelings on a societal Jesus as being ‘Mr. Perfect’ is a point somewhat stretched, I also can see why he might feel that way. Reactions to the statue varied, from refusals to have it placed outside cathedrals to Pope Francis’s embracing of its deeper message. The controversy has now faded, but the provocative nature of its image remains.

If we believe that Christ came to earth as a loving and caring God; that his ultimate purpose was our redemption, then we need to accept the second part of the story. That is the part where we enter into a modern covenant with Christ, in working together to promote his message of love, compassion, and peace. This covenant has no best before date. It remains timeless and, in the world of today, most timely. So where does all this get us?

St. Clare of Assisi didn’t think we should be running around trying to be saints. How does one mimic perfection? After all, the standard established by Christ isn’t one that is easy to live up to,

and trying to do so leads to failure, setbacks and frustration. Sisyphus knows exactly what I mean. Rather, St. Clare felt we needed to let Christ work through us, and thereby bring to others the love he feels for all. I believe that she would be perfectly happy with Timothy Schmalz’s sculpture. In it, she sees the Christ that is found in all people, especially those who have been marginalized and abandoned through our indifference or our poorly arranged priorities. Case in point: Why is our society debating the efficacy of a basic living income? It is commendable that the government in Ontario is “means testing” the concept in three communities, but why is there such resistance to the idea?

There is a great gulf, a disconnect in our society over ‘what to do about the poor’. At the same time, our stock markets are soaring along, making artificial money for a great many people. Our housing markets are ridiculously overhyped and overpriced, making it impossible for many to rent, let alone own a home or apartment. What to do about the poor?

This isn’t about whether or not you leave a quarter in the cup of that homeless person you see every day on the local street. It’s about overcoming a general malaise that at this point in time has affected our sense of compassion and mercy. “What to do about the poor?” is accompanied by a shrug. It’s an ‘I gave at the office’ mentality that has nothing to do with the covenant we are bound as followers of Christ to keep. We need to reflect on what happened to that deep feeling of sharing the suffering of others. Let’s start with the next person we meet, and go from there. Please get back to me on how

the renewed covenant is working in your community.

Paul Coady
Editor



*Jesus the Homeless statue created by Timothy Schmalz.
Photo by: pijposullivan, Wikimedia.org [cc-sa-by-3.0]*

**“Imitation is not a literal mimicking of Christ, rather it means becoming the image of the beloved.
This means we are to become vessels of God’s compassionate love for others”.**

–St. Clare of Assisi

**The Houghton Mifflin Canadian Dictionary of the English Language*

In Remembrance

Our Deceased Donors

Please remember in your prayers the recently deceased members of the Pontifical Mission Societies

- Antonio Berardinetti..... Toronto, ON
- Ellen Barrett..... Chilliwack, BC
- Fr. Donald Clement Kingston, ON
- Bruno Comazzetto Kamloops, BC
- Margaret Cunningham Dartmouth, NS
- Ralph Curran Halifax, NS
- Martin Doleweerd Whitby, ON
- Prudent De Milliano Edmonton, AB
- Erling Hansen Etobicoke, ON
- Salvador Hombrebueno Vancouver, BC
- Maurice Landry Lethbridge, AB
- Molly Lobo Thornhill, ON
- John O’Rourke..... Ottawa, ON
- Lambert Posthumus Kenora, ON



“I am reminded of a short phrase from a saint, Saint Alberto Hurtado of Chile. He worked all the time; facing difficulty and difficulty after difficulty... he had to face a great deal of suffering. But, when he was there, forsaken with the cross, he would say, “Contento Señor, content”, “Glad Lord, glad”.

– Pope Francis

Missions Today is always interested in hearing from you. If you have any comments on the articles we have used; the new structure of the magazine; or anything you would like to see us explore in future issues, please get in touch with us! Contact the Editor via email at: editor@missionsocieties.ca Or write us at: Editor - Missions Today Magazine 2219 Kennedy Road Toronto, Ontario M1T 3G5

Don’t forget to visit our web-site. www.missionsocieties.ca offers: access to feature stories from our magazine, Missions Today, child activities and news from Holy Childhood, and direct links to World Mission TV (RomanCatholicTelevision) where you can find stories of mission work from across the globe in documentary formats complete with teacher/student guides and activities. Our site also makes it easy to donate in a safe and secure way. Visit us today!



**We know only too well that
what we are doing is nothing
more than a drop in the ocean.
But if the drop were not there
the ocean would be missing
something.**

-Saint Mother Teresa



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90	8.67%	8.48%
94+	10.00%	10.00%

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