

OCTOBER— DECEMBER 2008



RAFIKI

A PUBLICATION OF THE JESUIT NOVITIATE OF THE EASTERN AFRICA PROVINCE



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ETHIOPIA ♦ KENYA ♦ SUDAN ♦ TANZANIA ♦ UGANDA



EDITOR'S DESK



Change

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt regards to all *Rafiki* readers, and wish you all in our Lord a prosperous New Year: a year of change, a change for the better. Among these changes include: a new Father General for the Society of Jesus, Fr Adolfo Nicholas, SJ; and a new president for the U.S.A., Mr Barack Obama.

It is a fact that whoever, with a genuine motive, withdraws to the desert always comes back a changed person, especially from within. Jesus withdrew to the desert and came back ready to meet head on what was before him for the next three years. St Ignatius had his share of this experience, and when he emerged in the company of ten others gave a body to the Society of Jesus. For the Primi when it was made clear to them that they were going to make the Spiritual Exercises, soon they embraced this idea with enthusiasm and vigour. After this period, the transformation that they had gone through could be seen by almost everyone.

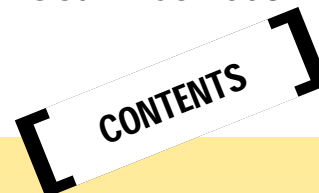
For the secundi they are trying to come to terms with the reality of becoming scholastics. They are trying to live each day at a time as they try to guess the speed at which their days are dawning.

The late Fr Pedro Arrupe, S.J said: "if we can see far ahead it is because we stand in the shoulders of the giants." The incoming team of *Rafiki* realises well the meaning of this proposition. I am greatly indebted to the outgoing team, which has worked tirelessly to ensure that the lamp of *Rafiki* continues to shine even brighter.

I wish you all the best in your endeavours.

Editor
Ernest Manoti

Oct—Dec 2008



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NOVICE MASTER'S COMMENT



I have a riddle... Let it come!

I traveled on a journey naked and returned wearing as suit... Who am I?

Answer... Groundnut

The Long Retreat remains a fundamental experience in the life of a Jesuit. Going through the Exercises is like the experience of falling in love. The first approach is always shaky, sputtered with self doubt and anxiety. However once you have gained confidence and have won the acceptance and the trust of the beloved, nothing can stop you. The friendship will continue to grow and become bigger and bigger. You get transformed.

Transformation is a life long process often triggered by specific experiences. Like the little seed of a groundnut that a farmer must first drop into the soil where it goes through several changes before it is harvested.

The novices who recount their experiences in the following pages all seem to imply that one thing fundamental has happened to them during the Long Retreat. That is falling in friendship with Jesus Christ. Friendship with Jesus has some unique characteristics. It is like the Mustered seed that a farmer has cast into the ground. Thought it may not grow as tall as the mahogany but a shrub of about five to ten meters tall, it has the tendency to spread and take over the surrounding and transforming it into a bush. No wonder it attracts many birds.

After having gained friendship with Jesus, the novices currently on experiments are necessarily embarked on a journey that will involve changes in themselves and how they interpret what is happening around them. In the process they develop a personality and identity of a Jesuit, companionship with Jesus that will attract others to Jesus. Thus, becoming like candles that are lit and that light up other lights.

Lastly I would like to thank the novices who contributed articles for this issue, Michael and Robert... who worked in a team and did a marvelous job in publishing the *Rafiki* and I wish to encourage them to do even better in the next issue. Isaac Kiyaka, S.J

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Front cover

A portrait of Our Lady extracted from sacred space, a website run by the Irish Jesuits.



By Michael Ochien'g

9th November: Secundi return from their second experiment.

Fr Simon Drasiga, SJ (formerly vocation promoter of Uganda) arrives in the novitiate to take his new assignment as minister.

14th November: Primi leave for their Long Retreat at Sanya Juu in Moshi.

10th December: Fr Kifle Wansamo, SJ (Socius designate) arrives in the novitiate.

13th December: Fr Isaac Kiyaka, SJ leaves for Benin City, Nigeria to attend the meeting of Novice Masters in African Assistancy.

15th December: Primi return from their Long Retreat in Sanya Juu, Moshi.

24th December: Novices join Christians at St

Josephine Bakhita outstation in celebrating Christmas vigil Mass.



Primi and Sisters at Emmaus Centre, Moshi

25th December: Novices celebrate the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

26th December: Novices go for a picnic at Lake Duluti in Arusha.

27th December: Fr Isaac, Fr Drasiga and Fr Amedeus leave for Nairobi to attend Province Assembly.

28th December: Novices visit Medical Daughters of Mary Orphanage in Kis-erian, Arusha.

30th December: Novices do voluntary work at St Elizabeth Hospital in Arusha.

31st December: Recollection marking New Year 2009.

Friday apostolate

By Francis Wambua

The question: "how can I find God in everything?" has always lingered in my mind without getting any immediate answer. Two months after entering the novitiate, I was assigned to Moshono Sec-



Francis Wambua at Jesuit community in Moshi

ondary School to teach religion and some life skills for my Friday apostolate. I was quite happy because like teaching, but the question was whether I would find God in teaching. I was anxious and had many expectations. For instance, I expected to find a very welcoming staff, where everyone would seem to understand me, and the reason of my presence. I also expected the students to be very charming, attentive and even having the enthusiasm and interest to know the basic Christian values, prayer, morality that I was to impart.

All these expectations were not met on my arrival. The welcome of the staff was very cold. Upon entering the staffroom, no one seemed concerned. I began wondering whether that was to be the tone of the music and whether I would manage. I began questioning the presence of God in

such a situation full of discouragement. I trusted in God who, through the Novice Master, assigned me to the school. Realizing that this would be the tone of the music, I started preparing for more challenging experiences. In the class the atmosphere was no better. There were more challenges to tackle. The students understand mostly Kiswahili. I was reduced to teach in Swahili. My Kiswahili is poor and so I was forced to use "sheng" a mixture of Kiswahili and English. Other challenges include: students having late lunch, which causes a lot of dozing and lack of concentration in the class; and some teachers were accusing us of relating only to catholic teachers.

Through this experience I learnt to be patient and to find God in all these challenges by giving everything a positive interpretation. I also learnt that God does not leave his beloved to suffer; he gives one a luggage that corresponds to his strength. I began to notice changes in myself. I started feeling at peace and joyful with everything I was doing, and even the staff becoming more supportive. I clearly understood fully the Ignatian maxim according to Herbert Alfonso, S.J., in his book, *Placing me with his Son*, that "...trust God as though the outcome of things depended wholly on you, not at all on God; so put, however, all your energies to work as though you were going to do nothing, God alone would do it all." It was at the heart of this apostolate that I encountered the living God. When I reflected on the goodness in the people towards me, and helping them to integrate and articulate the Christian values, I recognised God labouring in me and in them.

So far I have learnt that God is found in all things and with this in the mind and heart, the apostolate became more joyful and interesting. Now Moshono is not only a place for my apostolate, but rather a home, a meeting point with God in my brothers and sisters whom I teach. Therefore, I firmly affirm that "finding God in all things" is indeed a possible reality.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editors, Thanks a lot for the efforts you guys share in making Rafiki magazine what it is. It is very informative, interesting and inspiring. Keep up that Jesuit spirit for the Greater Glory of God. (From Douglas Onjala, S.J., a second year student at Hekima College - Ed)

Dear editorial board of Rafiki, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations for producing such a masterpiece. Thank you very much and keep it up. (From Fr Gabriel Mmassi, S.J., a professor of Systematic Theology at Hekima College - Ed)

Dear Editor, I have just finished reading every single page of your newsletter. I am very impressed with the quality both in content and format! Well done!!! There is no doubt whatsoever that the Province has a future with such a great talent waiting to blossom even further. (From Br Elias Mokua, S.J., pursuing a Ph. D in Media and Communications at University of Melbourne in Australia - Ed)

Dear Editors, You have done it again! Hearty congratulations for your last Rafiki. It is just beautiful. Please, do keep it up and keep improving it. (From Fr Leo Amani, S.J., Rector of Jesuit Theologate at Abidjan - Ed)

Dear Editors, This is impressive, thanks for the good work you are all doing, and keep up the spirit. (From Fr Elias Omondi, S.J., pursuing a Ph. D in Peace Studies at Bradford University in U.K - Ed)

On my way to Emmaus

By Maurice Mkhotya

The long retreat—done in thirty days—was a wonderful birth for me. I went to Emmaus Centre very dry but came back wet with God's graces. It was the second birth, which Jesus explained to Nicodemus. God opened my heart's interior eyes. It was a total transformation which renewed my deep relationship with Jesus. During this period, "God dealt and taught me just like school master teaches a school boy" (Autobiography of St Ignatius).

In the first week, God enabled me to be a close companion of Jesus in spite of my sinfulness. He taught me how to pray, how to praise and serve him, even through other creatures. All these were possible through the meditations and contemplations I made on principle and foundation of the Spiritual Exercises.

In the second week, I developed a close friendship with Jesus (who was an African). I imagined myself a servant in Jesus' family. We shared quite a great deal of things in the family. All these brought me deep spiritual joy during and after my contemplations.

Even though I still feel that I need to do more to nurture this infant friendship that I've developed with Jesus, it will be the distant goal that I will always strive for. This is a journey that comes with its own checks and

balances; I'm prepared to take this head on, now and the time to come. From my experience I felt that Jesus drew me even closer to himself, and it is my strong belief that he will grant me the graces that are necessary to keep



Maurice at Emmaus Centre

it afloat in times of joys and sufferings.

During the contemplation to attain God's love, I fully understood everything concerning the love of God, the systematic way in which it is broken down for easy assimilation on my

part. It was during this time that I felt the presence of the loving heart of Jesus. All these were very consoling moments for me. I also started seeing God present in everything, such as, trees, grasses, animals, fish, birds and other creatures, giving them life and sensation.

It is a fact that life is not a bed of roses. The Spiritual Exercises are no exception. I experienced this in form of desolations. I realized that the more progress I made towards Christ, the devil was working even the better to draw me to himself: tempting me not to do well my prayers, disdaining me from doing some repetitions of my prayers, and shying away from finishing all hours required. Finally, I immersed myself in prayer and begged the Lord to help me overcome these temptations. And certainly help did come at last, and I emerged the victor over Satan.

I am very grateful to have had an opportunity to do the exercises. Through the graces that I received I'm hopeful that that was the beginning for asking for more graces in order to serve our Lord better. As I toil to become a good Jesuit, I well know that it cannot be achieved unless I start now. With God's help I believe that this will be realized.

On silence

By Benedict Omondi

One of the important thing I learnt on my Long Retreat was solitude and silence. Michael Kelly, S.J defines silence as "being at home with oneself; having peace in oneself and being aware of self." In African culture, silence is a golden pot in which the seeds of wisdom and knowledge germinate and grow. No wonder Baganda people have a proverb: "the one who talks, thinks, but the one who doesn't talk thinks twice." In this scenario silence helps in thinking and reflection.

Our service to God and to the church does not consist only in talking and doing. It can also consist of periods of silence, solitude and listening. Perhaps it is very important in this era of violence and unrest, to rediscover silence, inner unitive prayer and our creative silence. When we are silent we do not escape people but learn how to love and find them; we do not leave people in order escape from doing the daily activities, but to find out the way to perform these activities better. Paradoxically, taking some time to

withdraw from community enables me to appreciate the importance of silence. It did put me in touch with God. I especially realized this in the contemplation to attain love.



The chapel at Emmaus Centre in Moshi

Throughout the Spiritual Exercises, God did bestow on me the seeds of peace. Ignatian contemplation enabled me to experience oneness with God and in God with one another, which inevitably leads to a lifestyle of unconditional love; and finding God in all and all in God.

On forgiveness

By Cyrus Mwangi Gichuhi

One of the most fruitful weeks of the Spiritual Exercises was the first week. I was able to grasp the interior knowledge of how God created me with a purpose: "to praise, to revere and to serve him alone and to save my soul" (Sp. Ex 23).

I was able to see that God created me out of love. I felt challenged for most of the time that I had not responded to this love. Instead, I had separated myself from Him because of my sins. My soul sobbed for its own sins. At some point I fell under the spell of scruples, wondering whether God ever forgave me the sins I had already confessed. When I shared this with my director he helped me realize how loving, merciful and forgiving God is. Like the Blessed Mother during the incarnation I learnt to totally trust in God and in his forgiveness.

Upon entering into the confession room to make the general confession, tears started rolling down my cheeks as I was confessing my sins. This experience was very consoling for my soul. After confession my heart was indeed glad and I jumped in thanksgiving to God for his healing mercy. I thanked him for taking the initiative to let me see the dark side of my life and allowing his light to illuminate it.

It was painful to confront the self but I was happy at the end of it all. This was the best healing that I've ever experienced in my life.

Growing in gratitude

By Patrick Ng'ang'a

When I was a child, whenever my parents or any adult gave me a gift and I took it without saying 'thank you', my Dad or Mum would take it away from me only to give it back after saying thank you to the giver of the gift. When I look back on these incidences I



Patrick with the children in Dar-es-Salaam

realize that they were meant to inculcate in me a habit of showing gratitude.

My experience in Mother Teresa Children Home—run by the Missionary of Charity Sister in Dar-es-Salaam, brought me to a reality of

the many gifts I have received from the Lord, which I have always taken for granted. Seeing children orphaned or abandoned by their parents reminded me of a privilege of being brought up in a family setup. Holding and feeding those little ones reminded me of God's love and protection. My encounter with handicapped children who entirely depend on someone to do most of the things helped me to appreciate more the gifts I have received from God.

We never know the value of what we possess until it is taken away from us. Serving the aged who have been incapacitated making them to depend on others lifted my spirit to be grateful for my health; it brought me to a reality of how life can be changed overnight due to accident or illness.

In conclusion, this experience exposed my own brokenness and limitations, and my dependence on God on things I have no control over. It has helped me to deepen and nurture a spirit of gratitude.

A new frontier

By Joseph Thomas Mboya*

"We must give them a very clear picture of vocation, that is of the Society as an ideal. But we must also give a clear idea of the Society today, of the real Society, so that they cannot ever say they have been deceived...Explain the ideal Society, but also the limitations with which they will have to live." Such were the visionary words of Pedro Arrupe. These words I had found meaningful before joining the novitiate and after completing novitiate as a vowed scholastic. I am indebted to my companions ahead of me in formation who have always tried to give me a clear picture of what lay ahead. But even with such pieces of advice, the real experience always and certainly outweighed any preconceived ideas.

The most fulfilling moment of my life so far was when I knelt before Christ in the blessed sacrament and vowed poverty, chastity, and obedience. Just like James and John, I would have readily told my Lord, "Yes! I am willing to drink from the same cup as you." Was it not the same James and John who took to their heels when Jesus was arrested? I emerged from the novitiate a vowed man, and just like the two sons of thunder, a baptism of fire awaited me. Life after novitiate was like a rollercoaster ride. Events kept passing by so quickly as days began and ended like in a breathtaking movie.

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Joseph Mboya S.J is a first year student at Arrupe College

Drawing joy from a situation of hopelessness

By John Baptist Musiitwa

I would like to share a story about a friend whom I met at Mother Teresa Hospice in Addis-Ababa. It was during my experiment that I came to know her. She had become incapacitated due to HIV/AIDS. She was unable to walk, eat, and speak.

All I saw around her was excruciating pain. Moved with pity, I wanted to help her in whatever way possible in her last hour of need. One big challenge to my effort to assist her was my inability to speak Amharic—the lingua-franca of the area. I sought for the assistance of a nurse around so that together we could do something for the patient.

Sadly, the nurse responded negatively to my request assuming the patient to be a drug addict. This meant that there was no need to help her according to the nurse. I felt offended gravely and my resolve to assist the patient became stronger than before.

I went on to assist the patient by turning her around on bed. I also raised her head on a pillow as she wanted to have a clear view of other people in the room. All this time I imagined myself being sick and needed assistance. This was the spirit behind my desire of remaining in the room to assist her.

After helping her, I moved to another

room for cancer patients. While here I realized how much I was affected by the pain of my friend infected with HIV. I tried to cheer up the cancer patients as I used to do whenever I visited them. This time I could hardly speak the little Amharic I had grasped. My mind was full of the painful images of my friend. I became restless and went on to share my pain with my colleagues with whom I



Novices Musiitwa (second right), Emmanuel (left), Shem (second left) and volunteers in Mother Teresa

was working, but no remedy came my way.

It was during adoration that I put this question before God: "what were you trying to tell me in the painful experience I had today with my friend?" From the prayer I learnt that the last moment of an individual exhibited either in pain or death show how powerless we people are; and the goodness that God manifests in our lives as we progress in life.

I came to understand that from the day we are conceived, it is God who looks after us. In his mercy, he gives us sight, talents, ability to walk, eat, sleep, and wake-up. We sometimes misuse the gifts from God thus forgetting about their source. The painful experiences are opportunities for us to recognize the great favours that God does in our lives when we are still strong and healthy. For it is not so much out of our effort that we are what we are.

After the adoration, I went back to check on my friend with a view of thanking God for all that she has been in this world. I felt happy and was consoled as I became aware that God had not abandoned her.

The situation that looked hopeless ended up cheering me in ways that have left an indelible mark in my life up to date.

A new frontier

Continued from page 5

I remembered the words of one wise Jesuit who had told me, "Be sure to enjoy your novitiate experience. Most importantly rest all you can while in the novitiate, for you will never have sufficient time to rest." I am glad that I did both, but true to those wise words I undoubtedly miss the serenity and peaceful environs of the novitiate. I found myself in Arrupe College, Jesuit school of Philosophy and Humanities, in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Pronouncing vows may have seemed the easier part. Little did I know that I would have to be taken to my words on the vow of poverty. It took me back to all the heated debates we had on

'preferential option for the poor' and 'solidarity with the poor'. Well! There was no option and solidarity was inescapable. In a country where 80% are unemployed and 60% relying on food aid, solidarity with the poor is part and parcel of Jesuit life.

St. Ignatius in his wisdom spelt out a scholastic's apostolate - to study. I have found the studies at Arrupe College to be intense and serious. The studies also provided me with a palliative, as an answer to what was going on around me. I learnt that Philosophy is an intellectual enterprise that raises fundamental questions based on human experience - that human experience however, must be reflected upon. The situation in Zimbabwe provided a good enough theme for reflection, it made my studying of philosophy real. I simply had to walk around Harare to find the real experience of poverty and human suffering.

The other important part in studying philosophy was the African experience. Each course I took had some touch of the African experience, to reflect not only on our continent's richness, but also its problems, and then to strive to suggest viable solutions to them. The interaction between members of staff and students was outstanding. Jesuit brotherly love also proved important. Most of the scholastics I came across were willing

to listen to me, explain in more detail what I did not understand and help me in areas where I was weak. This represents Jesuit academic life which is holistic and has an African touch. Perhaps again, 'a baptism of fire'.

How did I keep my sanity in the face of suffering and demanding academic life? The answer to this is threefold: prayer, community life and brotherly love. The prayer life in a scholasticate is much different from that in a novitiate. The novitiate provides for plenty of time for prayer when compared with the scholasticate. From the moment the scholastic wakes up to his bed time, he is one very busy Jesuit. If he is to keep his sanity then he needs to get some time to relax in God's presence, to review the day and recognize the situations and events where there was God's active presence and what God might have been inviting him to do through such events and simple encounters. That is why for me two periods of examen and the Holy Eucharist are a quiet time with God providing oil for my lamp to keep burning. The Jesuit Scholastic community is a bigger community compared to the novitiate community. It is punctuated with brotherly love and has been a source of liveliness and joy.

Conclusively therefore, having experienced a 'baptism of fire' from the novitiate, I have been set ablaze thus ready to be a 'fire that kindles other fires' with the desire to know and follow Jesus Christ.



From left: David, Paul, George, Everist, Natnael and Mboya

A fire that kindles other fires: Saint Albert Hutardo, S.J

By Cedric Galia

When a candle is lit, it brings about three things: fire, warmth and light. These three components of a lighted candle permeate a room generously with a lovely ambience. From the same candle many other fires can be lit. This is who a Jesuit is: a lighted candle, a fire to kindle others.

GC 35 uses this analogy of 'a fire that kindles other fires' to express the identity of every Jesuit. We have the origin of this narrative of a fire from Ignatius. Ignatius' experience at La Storta was the beginning of this fire. He was placed with the son and asked to serve them. This time a match was lit and in the darkness of La Storta chapel a fire begun to spread. The sparks of this fire continued to spread and arrest many for the standard of Christ. Having begun with Ignatius it moved to the first fathers and it has subsequently been handed down through generations.

This narrative of a fire has been written on many pages though some have gathered dust and dirt through the many hard times in the life of the Society. In all these, this fire has fiercely spread because it is a fire of passion for God and his creation. The warmth from this fire has led many to ask who we are, why we do the things we do, and why we do them the way we do. The

answer to this is simple. The passion for God is what leads every Jesuit to carry the burning



Saint Albert Hutardo, S.J

torch in a fragmented and thirsty world.

Albert Hurtado is one of the many sparks that form this blazing fire. Though born into a poor family, he remained unstoppable to set

the world on fire. He joined the Society of Jesus and worked towards bringing together the fragments and quenching the thirst of the world. He was a great trade unionist, a reliable spiritual director, a faithful missionary and a priest of God. He founded the Hogar de Christo—a home for the poor. His zeal was so deep that not even criticism from his companions deterred his efforts.

The General Congregation 35 recognizes the hardships involved in this kind of mission—a mission on the frontiers. Every Jesuit has to recognize that only God sustains the fire he has lit in us. To that effect Hurtado had this to say of a priest: "a priest is a flame to set the world ablaze, a dispenser of a new hunger and thirst. A priest is always dissatisfied and disturbs the social order to work for an even greater fulfillment. In his intimate reality, a priest is to some extent a solitary, a man of Sinai. Though he struggles on the plains, part of him always remains on the heights." This is true of every Christian and of every Jesuit. This is how the narrative continues to be written by the Society of Jesus as the fire blazes with an ever strong vigour.

The history of the Society of Jesus in Ethiopia

By Robert Kizito Ssekyanzi

Introduction

In order for one to understand the operations and fate of the Society of Jesus in Ethiopia, one has to first understand the historical context of events that happened in the Christian World of Africa. After a long period of persecution and tribulation, Christianity tested peace during the Era of Emperor Constantine the Great. The Constantinian Era spans the years between the conversion of Constantine the Great and his Edict of Toleration in 311AD, to the Arab conquest of Egypt and the Byzantine Empire in 640AD¹. Under Constantine, Rome became officially Christian, insisting on Christianity to stabilize and strengthen existing convictions. Christianity was also used for political ends and expediency. The emperors valued religion as a means of fostering unity, to legitimize their rule and when necessary, to cloak their tyranny. This could also explain why emperors arbitrated at Councils of the Christian Church.

Christianity during the Constantinian Era

The Christian religion spread and grew rapidly during the Constantinian Era. It was during this time that the Christian Church faced doctrinal conflicts which were to affect its unity. In order to solve such conflicts, councils were summoned and among such councils was the Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD². It should be noted that Egypt, because of its philosophical background and influence was more prone to heresies. Moreover, it is Egypt on whose integrity the churches of Ethiopia and Syria depended.

An important monastic personage named Eutyches was preaching in Constantinople that Jesus had two natures before the incarnation and one nature after the union of the divine with the human nature. Although Dioscorus, the Patriarch of Alexandria supported him, the teaching of Eutyches was condemned in almost all areas of Christendom including the Patriarchate of Rome. A Council was called for and in 451 AD it met at Chalcedon (a town in Asia Minor situated opposite Constantinople) under Empress Pulcheria who was intent on re-asserting imperial authority. Taking its stand on the Tome of Leo I, the Council of Chalcedon rejected outright the doctrines of Eutyches. The Council acknowledged and affirmed the teaching of Nicea. The Tome of Leo was received with joy and applause and cries of: "Peter has spoken through Leo."³

However, there was a group of people who were not contented with the ruling and results at Chalcedon. They argued with Eutyches that perfect unity resulted from the union of the two natures forming one united nature. This group of people were referred to as monophysites⁴. It has been argued by scholars that because of linguistic troubles during the council at Chalcedon, theologians of both sides used

same terms but did not understand the same things by them. Ethiopian theologians who are anti Chalcedon feel that it is unfair for their Church to be called monophysite because the expression used by the non-Chalcedonians was always *mia*-physis not *mono*-physis: *mia* meaning complete unity, unlike *mono* which stands for an elemental unity.

Therefore, after the Council of Chalcedon, the Church of Egypt and its ecclesiastical dependencies such as Ethiopia and parts of Syria and Armenia rejected the ruling and the results of the Council as they still do.



Statue of Menelick II located in the city of Addis Ababa

The Spread of Christianity in Ethiopia

The area outside the pale of the Roman Empire was referred to as Ethiopia, because its inhabitants were generally of a darker complexion. As far as the history of Christianity goes, it includes Ethiopia as known today and the Sudan. In Ethiopia, there was a famous Kingdom called Axum which flourished along the Red Sea from the first Century AD to the Seventh, unconquered by the Romans because of its military strength and organisation.

Evangelisation in Axum began with Frumentius. Returning from India to Tyre on board ship, probably as an apprentice, Frumentius and his brother survived shipwreck and fell into the hands of the Axumites. Being suspicious of the survivors, the Axumites put to death all the crew apart from Frumentius and his brother Aedisius who were spared because they were only boys. Their captors sent them to the royal court as slaves. After performing very well as slaves, the two boys were rewarded with freedom. Aedisius returned to Syria but Frumentius went to Alexandria, where he came across with Athanasius with whom he discussed evangelisation of Ethiopia. Frumentius was ordained priest and bishop for missionary work in Axum. Being familiar with

the language and environment in Axum, Frumentius was successful in his evangelisation and Ethiopia got its Constantine under the name of King Ezana.

However, because of doctrinal differences in Egypt and Constantinople, the Christian Church was divided. Anti-Chalcedonian missionaries therefore slipped into Axum and their influence grew stronger. They began to translate the Bible into Ge'ez, the language of Axum, making the word of God intelligible to people. It should be noted that Ethiopian Christians believed in the True God and upheld the teaching of the first three ecumenical councils. The parting of ways came with the fourth Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD.

It is the externals, the 'outward and visible signs' that leave the stranger to the Ethiopian Church speechless. The rich, exotic mixture of Judaic, Oriental, and local traditions make up the life and the liturgy of the Ethiopian Church⁵. Judaic influence is evident in the circumcision rite for male children, the observance of the Jewish Sabbath (Qadamit) and the Sunday-Ehud or Sanbata Krestiyen. The Ethiopian Church calendar has thirteen months, twelve with thirty days each and one with five days in an ordinary year and six in a leap year. The principal feasts from the beginning have been Easter (Fasika), Epiphany, Christmas (Lidet), the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan (Timkat), the Assumption of Mary into heaven (Filsata), and many others. Fast days are just as numerous as many as one hundred and eighty days in a year. Fifty five days in lent, fifteen before the feast of the Assumption in August, the Nineveh fast and the gahad (eve) at Christmas and Epiphany. The Ethiopian Church's dependence on the Church of Egypt in the past was to have far reaching repercussions on its growth and development.

To be continued in the next edition

¹P. Hughes (1974), A Short History of the Catholic Church, Biddles Ltd: Guildford Surrey, p.21

²N. Tanner (1999), The Councils of the Church: A Short History, Crossroad Publishing Company: New York, p.13

³P. Hughes (1974), A Short History of the Catholic Church, Biddles Ltd: Guildford Surrey, p.34

⁴K. S. Latourette (1953), A History of Christianity, Harper & Row Publishers: London, p. 1207

⁵R.G. Roberson (1990), The Eastern Christian Churches: A Brief Survey, Piazza S. Maria Maggiore, p 93



Emmanuel Orobator, S.J: Theology brewed in an African pot

Reviewer: Michael Ochien'g Otieno

Fr Emmanuel Orobator has produced a tremendous book touching various facets of theology from an African perspective. His target audience includes mostly ordinary Christians, who simply live their faith. Using a framework of excerpts from Chinua Achebe's well-known novel, *Things fall apart*, the author offers Christians an opportunity to reflect deeply on their faith as Christians.

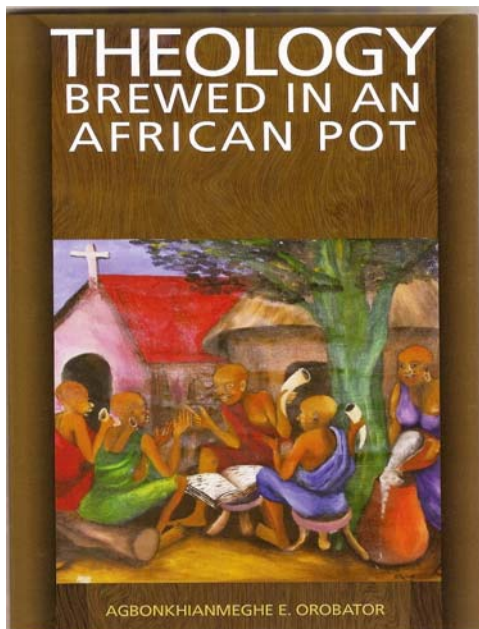
In the first chapter, using three stories from the Bible: Jesus and Nicodemus, the rich young man, and an encounter of Jesus and the mother of James and John, Orobator defines theology as "faith seeking understanding, love and hope."

The second chapter focuses on the question of God's existence. Africans manifest God's existence and nature by use of proverbs, songs and theophoric names.

In the third chapter, Orobator explains the concept of the Holy Trinity. He notes that the trinity as a symbol is something larger beyond our imagination to understand, and that God having many sides enables us to understand his divine presence in our lives.

The fourth chapter is about the creation. We all believe in the creation and that God is responsible for the universe and all in it. Stories to support this evidence about creation are found in the Bible as well as many African stories, songs and proverbs.

The fifth chapter focuses on grace and sin. The former freely offered to us by God helps us to get rid of the latter.



The book *Theology brewed in an African pot* authored by Fr Emmanuel Orobator, SJ

The consequence of sin is similar in both creation story in the Bible and African creation stories. In both there is a break of relationship between the creator and her creatures.

The author explores the identity of Jesus in chapter six. The gospels identify Jesus as Messiah, son of God...In African theological circle, there are a myriad of Christological titles: ancestor, healer, chief...Orobator is giving more emphasis to an ancestor as a model of African Christians of Jesus.

Chapter seven focuses on the meaning of the church. Vatican II document "Lumen Gentium", defines the church as "a family of God." This definition of the church is in consonant with African Synod (1994), which defines the Church as a family (model of local church in Africa). Quality of the church can only be realized if women are given their right share in the life of the church as a family.

Chapter eight is devoted to Mary, Mother of Sorrows. Many African catholic women attribute this title to their apprehension of the pains and many sufferings African women go through. Lumen Gentium postulates Mary's roles as: redeemer, intercessor and our Mother. Africans accord special honour to a mother of a King.

In chapter nine, Orobator notes that for one to become a saint in Catholic tradition or an ancestor in African belief one must meet certain standards worth imitating. Both the saints and ancestors perform intercessory role.

Chapter ten focuses on Inculturation which is founded on the relationship between faith and culture. The process of inculturation can only be achieved if both sides are free to embrace new ideas from the other, and to share values and weaknesses without interpreting the latter.

The concluding chapter explores some aspects of African spirituality. Africans believe in God and recognise his presence in their daily life experiences. They also understand the sacredness of life and interconnectedness of an individual with the universe.

Theology brewed in an African pot is a book, which dispel the popular belief that theology is a preserve of theological experts. Instead, it gives Christians a clearer understanding of their faith.

Important dates in Eastern Africa Province

- 1847: Fr Massimiliano Ryllo from Poland was the first Jesuit to be sent to Sudan.
- 1945: Jesuits from French Canada started working in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. They were invited by the Ethiopian Government to formulate Ethiopian Education System.
- 1961: Jesuits from Karnatakra Province of India established Nyakahoja Parish in Mwanza.
- 1969: Maltese Jesuits started a district unit in Uganda. They helped in some educational work in Kisubi.
- 1971: The Rachi Province (India) sent Jesuits to Juba and Wau to work in Major Seminary. Bombay and Goa-Pune Provinces sent some Jesuits in Kenya to start a retreat house in Nairobi.
- 31 July 1976: Fr Pedro Arrupe created the Independent Region of Eastern Africa.
- 31 July 1986: The Eastern African Region became a Province of Eastern Africa.
- 1993: Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate opened its doors to the novices.

By Fredrick Meela

Poets' corner

Our Lady

Son, this is your Mother
Woman, this is your son
By those words she become our mother
Cause of our joy
That's her name

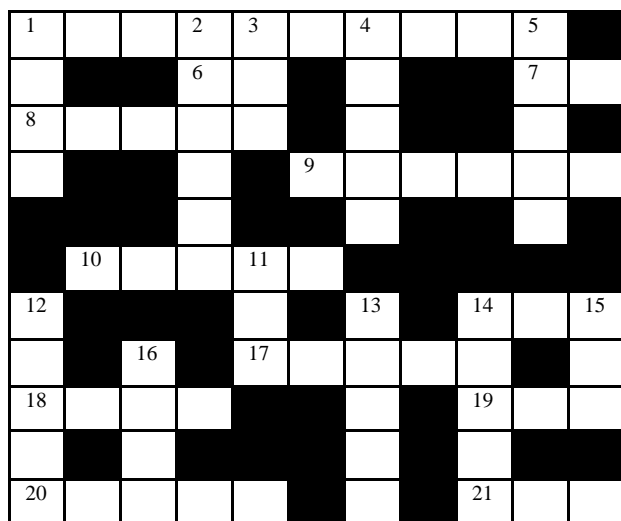
Her motherly gaze is our light
Guides her children in the dark
To carry us on her back is her delight
Morning star
That's her name

Her life full of tears
Son suffering on the cross
Was a scarlet hot spear
Through her heart
Comforter of the afflicted
That's her name.

By Patrick Ng'ang'a

CROSSWORD

By Cyrus Mwangi



Across

1. A city east of the red sea (10)
7. Each abbreviation (2)
6. Artificial insemination abbreviation. (5)
8. Jewish feast. (2)
9. City built by Nimrod (6)
10. Vigorous beginning especially of something unpleasant (2, 3)
14. Fifth note in the music octave (3)
17. Building in which monks live as a community (3)
18. Show the way (4)
19. Fruit consisting of a hard shell with kernel inside (3)
20. Priest with special duties at a cathedral (5)

Down

1. Hebrew alphabet with value of K (4)
2. President of the Capernaum synagogue (6)
3. Purpose (3)
4. Religion in Mesopotamia (5)
5. People of Iranian plateau (5)
11. Period of history marked by an important event (3)
12. Remind people of the past (5)
13. Head of a Monastery (5)
15. Toracula device used in choice making (3)
16. Where Jesus raised the son of a widow (4)

ANSWERS TO THE LAST ISSUE

ACROSS

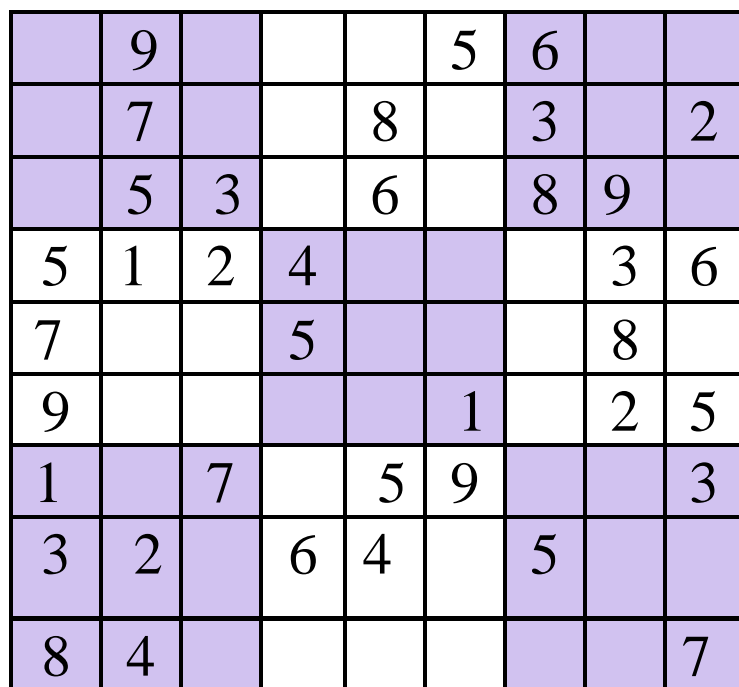
1. ASK ME 2. VANITAS 3. DIXON 4. SPIRITUS 5. ENGLAND 6. STOCK 7. ANGELICUM 8. DARTS 9. CONCERT 10. SUCCOTH 11. RADAR 12. MAJELLA 13. GIVEN

DOWN

14. MARTIN 15. FERAL 16. EPOC 17. LEBANON 18. ARRACK 19. YUPIK 20. HEATH 21. UKULELE 22. REDNAL 24. FIBRE 25. VEGA

A wordless crossword puzzle

By Lubanga Oketch



Fill in the remaining squares so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains each of the numbers from 1-9 exactly once. Solving a sudoku puzzle involves pure logic, no mathematics, no guess work is needed –or even desirable. –which numbers are missing and where could they go? The rest is up to you!

Solution puzzle No. 01

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 5 |
| 2 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 6 |
| 9 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 7 |
| 6 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 1 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 9 |
| 5 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 8 |
| 3 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 1 |
| 4 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| 7 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 4 |

Proverbs

1. Kindness knows no boundaries. (Massai)
2. The local brew meant for public is taken by those who have cups. (Meru)
3. When one dog barks others join in. (Kikuyu)
4. He who humiliates a poor man because of his lot cannot prevent the day from dawning. (Samburu)
5. Slowly by slowly a bird makes its nest. (Chagga)

By Vincent Mutwiri





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