



### EDITOR'S NOTE

Transiting into newer frontiers are perhaps the most exciting moments that we all look forward to. In this July edition, Rafiki first presents to you the ordination of Fr. Didmus Shirima, S.J., and the subsequent events that followed it up. From a simple altar-boy to a priest of God, the story of Shirima is one that inspired all novices more so in their Jesuit vocations.

Secondly, the novitiate bid farewell to Fr. Christopher Mapunda, S.J., who was the novitiate minister up until his new mission came knocking. We share with you our joy of saying goodbye to him as we warmly welcome the new minister, Fr. Michael Mungai, S.J., into our community.

We also highlight AOR's veteran Fr. Valerian Shirima, S.J., who in a meet-a-Jesuit session, shared his insights and thoughts for the province, and inspired new hope for the promising future. The end of July saw our *Secundi* brothers leave for their second experiment in different parts of the province. We wish them well in their different apostolates.

Also find an array of pictorials which will spice-up your view of Rafiki and attract you into reading how we experience God's love in different activities here in the novitiate.

Lastly, kindly pray for our *Primi* who are set to go for the month-long Spiritual Exercises retreat in the coming month of September. God bless all our esteemed readers.

**Gregory O. Okumu, nS.J.**



Issue 04 July 2019

St. Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate, Arusha—Tanzania.



Jesuit priests pose for a group photo with newly ordained priest Fr Didmus Shirima, S.J. , at Epiphany Parish, Burka on July 11, 2019.

### Ordination – climax of Canonical formation to Priesthood

Teachers, doctors, name them, are made but priests are formed. Note the difference.

On Thursday, July 11, 2019, His Grace, the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Arusha, Rt Rev Bishop Isaac Amani Massawe, ordained to priesthood deacon Didmus Didas Francis Shirima, SJ at the Epiphany Parish, Burka.

Shirima, who received his diaconate orders on March 2, 2019 at Hekima University College by Rt Rev. Bishop Virgilio Pante from the Diocese of Maralal, was among nine presbyters ordained at Burka in a colourful ceremony attended by Christians from far and wide.

The community was actively involved in the activities before, during and after the ceremony by hosting the new priest's family and friends in the novitiate for dinner. They also attended his home coming Mass in Moshi on Saturday, July 13, 2019.

Some of the novices recount the meaning of the eventful occasion to them.

“The ordination of our humble and simple companion, Fr. Didmus Shirima, SJ, is one of the significant and tremendous events in my life. It was a wonderful experience for me it being my first time to attend and witness an ordination to the priesthood. To sweeten it, it

was of a Jesuit priest, the Order I am seeking to enter.

The joy did not end at the parish. There was the night celebration at the Novitiate, his thanksgiving Mass in Moshi and finally his celebration at their home. All these were inspiring, leaving me with an inner joy and happiness.



Fr Shirima, S.J.,(centre) celebrates his maiden Mass at Kirokomu outstation, Rombo on July 13, 2019.



## Novices experience on Fr. Shirima's ordination



I learnt that the religious life and the priesthood are highly valued and appreciated for they are not for the praise of one's self but rather for the praise and honour of God and for the service of His people wherever the need is greatest. As a Jesuit novice, I really felt motivated and encouraged to strive in my formation so as to reach the same goal that Fr. Shirima has reached in God's mission."

**Wisdom Ukelo, nSJ**



It was the first time to witness an ordination in my life so it resuscitated my zeal to embrace the Jesuit life as a priest. His vocation story has also inspired me to imitate his footsteps. His statement; "If people say that I



made a mistake joining the Society of Jesus then I will not make the mistake of leaving the same Society," will freshly be etched in my mind, in my probation years and thereafter."

**Elias Justin, nSJ.**



These Church occasions always have special activities that remind us of Christ's ministry right from the liturgy of the Ordination Rite to the Eucharist. Various songs moved my heart not forgetting that 'wave of peace' by the newly vested priests. The mammoth crowd which attended the home Mass just exhibited how a priest is indeed a humble servant of a multitude of people from different divides."



**Vincent Opiyo, nSJ.**

## Secundi dispatched for second experiment

Our eleven brothers, the *Secundi*, departed for their two-month Second Experiment on Monday, July 22, 2019.

The communities in Dodoma, Mwanza, Dar es Salaam and Gulu in Uganda warmly welcomed the pious pair of novices with vigour. They are expected back in the community on September 21, 2019.

Similarly, 16 *Primi* are due to begin their Spiritual Exercises on August 31, 2019 in Maua, Moshi. After about three months in the novitiate preparing for the crucial moment in their religious life as potential Jesuits, all is now left for the Creator to deal with His creatures during the 30 days. In French we say, *Sil vous plait, priere pour nous.*

## THE STRUGGLE FOR TIME



Novitiate is a place that is specifically designed to slow down life. It allows novices to escape the fast paced lifestyle in the modern world in order to create a deeper and profound intimate relationship with his Creator. They ultimately grow deeper in their spiritual life, while remaining firmly rooted in love and service for others.

The rush in the slowed time it seems is not without a sense of irony. It turns to be the scarcest of time. Like species at the blink of extinction, novices cannot seem to locate time anymore. There is a myriad of events; writing papers on spirituality, reading books on prayer and the Constitution of the Society, doing Lectio Divina, the Spiritual Exercises and spiritual direction. This depicts the rhythm of life at the centre of a novice and all that comes with it. Hence the rise of the struggle to locate and cease time from left, right, front, rear and centre.

Just as through a magnetic force field, a compass attains balance between polarities and retains a sense of direction towards true north, may God through His Holy Spirit, grant us the grace to balance all our works and retain our sense of direction towards Him, the Most High.

Part of the adoption to the change in the pace of life is to grow and develop new sets of skills to counter challenges. For our future missions, we learn to place God almighty in the front and at the centre, carrying forward the spirit of love and service.

**By John Francis Mukulu, nSJ**

## RAFIKI TEAM:

**CHIEF EDITOR:** FR. BERNARD MALLIA, S.J.

**EDITORS:** GREGORY O. OKUMU, nS.J./ DEOGRATIAS OLOWO, nS.J.

**PHOTOGRAPHY/CORRESPONDENT:** VINCENT OPIYO, nS.J./ NICHODEMUS MUTUNGA, nS.J.

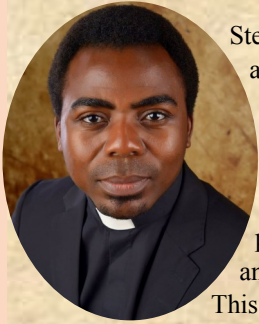
**DESIGNERS:** YULLY MASSAE, nS.J./ BRIAN ODONG', nS.J.

**SENIOR REPORTERS:** MASUZYO JUMBE, nS.J./ CHRIS NORBERT, nS.J.

**WRITE TO US**

**Email:** gonzagafiki@gmail.com

## FR. CHRISTOPHER MAPUNDA, SJ- *A Man for Others.*



Stepping into St. Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit novitiate, it would be a tall order for a visitor to figure out whether he is a formator, let alone a priest. Since my first encounter with him on my admission day into the novitiate, Fr. Christopher Mapunda, SJ has been nothing but a true brother. He transcended beyond being a formator. Most novices found a friend and a confidant in him. Notable, were his charming and rib-cracking jokes during meals and social events. His homilies during Mass would leave a strong sense of reflective thoughts on his listeners, since he had learnt the art of captivating the attention of the congregation, using his humor and practical life experiences. In him we found a charitable companion who understood our novitiate experiences and who corrected us in love. His down-to-earth character made him loved and emulated by most if not all.

This depicted his simplicity and profound generosity in sharing his vocation and life with all. Fr. Mapunda, SJ remains an epitome of true humility embodied in a servant of God. We wish him well. His presence and warmth here in the novitiate will be truly missed. I am certain in the Lord that his new mission will be a great value addition to the whole Society, and an opportunity for him to offer himself more for others, in the spirit of *magis*, the more, the greater, the better for God.

By Gregory O. Okumu, nSJ

### Exclusive interview with the new Minister, Fr. Michael Mungai, SJ

*(Q1) Who is Michael Mungai?*

**(A1)** Michael Mungai is a Jesuit Priest, a sinner yet called and loved by God and a minister of sacraments.

*(Q2) Share with us some brief details about your early and family life?*

**(A2)** Michael was born 47 years ago in a family of nine, four boys and five girls. I consider my family to have been my first novitiate. I went to Moi University where I studied for a Bachelor of Education in Technology. After graduating I was sent to the western part of Kenya where I taught for two years before gaining admission into the Society of Jesus.

*(Q3) Tell us about your vocation journey.*

**(A3)** Well, I first considered a life as a priest, or a call to religious life in 1996 when I was in the third year of University, though at the time I never gave it serious attention. I was an active member of CLC and from time to time we would have seminars on vocation organized by CLC. However it was after I left university that the call came back, this time stronger than before, this was after attending a debate on the priesthood and parenthood organized by the CLC. Moved by this call I borrowed a book entitled, 'Men of Courage' from the then ecclesiastical assistant of the CLC Fr Terry Charlton, S.J. This book was about

male religious congregations in Kenya and their charisms. Thus, in the year 2000, I, along with eight other companions, entered St Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate in Arusha, Tanzania. From there I went to Arrupe College now Arrupe Jesuit University in Harare, Zimbabwe, for my studies in philosophy. From Harare I came back to Tanzania for my regency which I did at Maria Goretti Secondary School in Moshi



from 2006 to 2008. After my regency I proceeded to Hekima University College for my studies in Theology from 2008 to 2011, and I was ordained in 2011. I served at St Joseph Kanguemi Parish from 2011 to 2013. Then I

went for my MA in Spirituality which I did from 2014 to 2015. Currently I am just returning from my tertianship.

*(Q4) How does it feel to be back in the Novitiate as a minister this time around?*

**(A4)** It feels good to be back on holy ground. This accords me the rare privilege of profound prayer that can only be found in a structured place like the novitiate. The role of minister of the novitiate accords me an opportunity to serve my brothers and to learn new things. So it is good to be back to the nursery of our vocation.

*(5) Where would you like to see the Soci-*

*ety of Jesus in Eastern Africa*

*Province?*

**(A5)** I would like to see an increase in the number of vocations as well as retention of these vocations, which will bring about commensurate growth and diversification of our apostolic works.

*(Q6) What can you say have been the joys and sorrows of your vocation journey?*

**(A6)** Well, the joys are many and these include the rare opportunity of working in various apostolates and places not just as a priest but at all levels of formation, and being available for mission. This is an honour that I don't merit but God anyway has given it to us. Sorrows! It is always saddening to go back 19 years when nine good young men entered St Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate and only two of those nine are still in the Society, myself and Brother James Edema, S.J, who is currently missioned to St Peter Clever Jesuit School, Dodoma. So it is always sad to see your brothers leave something that they initially cherished so much.

*(Q7) Lastly any encouragements for us the young men who are just beginning our formation?*

**(A7)** Vocation is a gift from God, and so we need to relish it as a very special gift from God. Secondly, you need to be strong in the Lord, you can't make it as a Jesuit if you are not strong. Lastly, serve in the Lord's vineyard with love, joy and enthusiasm to the greater glory of God. Start doing this by serving your brothers in the novitiate.

By Masuzyo Jumbe, nSJ

# PICTORIALS



In need of priests? Contact us!



What's on your mind Fr Minister?



How novices celebrated Fr Shirima's home Mass in Rombo.



When Primi became choir members on Vow Day at Canossa novitiate on August 15, 2019.



Caring for our common home! Pius Kapeta, nS.J, waters the garden.



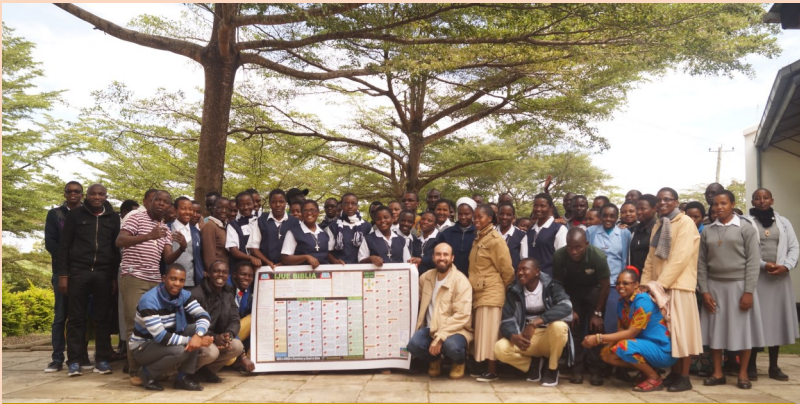
As it happened in Rombo during Fr Shirima's home Mass on July 13, 2019.



The Secundi entertain the community before leaving for second experiment on July 21, 2019.



R.I.P our eldest Pet (right) who died as a Soldier on August 17, 2019.



Primi mingle with other religious after a Scripture Seminar at Spiritans Seminary on July 19, 2019.



How Mass went down on Ignatius Day at La Storta Chapel.



Supper time on Ignatius Day in the community. Bon appetit!



Pepe himself among friends who joined us on Ignatius Day alongside Fr Mboya, S.J.



These are the Secundi who beat the Primi 3-0 in an annual friendly match in June 2019.



When Arrupe balcony was turned into offices! See!



Dejected faces? No, the Primi pose for a photo before losing 3-0 to Secundi in a friendly in June 2019.



Fr Mapunda, S.J., receives a gift from John Kapugi, n.S.J on his farewell in July, 2019.

## BLAST FROM THE PAST

The queens of the language do say that ‘what goes around comes around’. This adage compliments our segment on Rafiki edition and hopefully on the upcoming editions, that is, going back to the library to retrieve the good old-day-events related to our present experiences.

The inaugural archive is taken from the July – September 2006 edition of a story entitled ‘Banana Wine and Excitable Sisters’, written by a one Roving Companion.

Here it goes.

*Before joining the novitiate, I had my suspicions that it was going to be very similar to boarding school. The suspicions were borne out when I began itching to get out after the first month. An opportunity presented itself when we went to an Agricultural Show in town on the 8th August. These events are famous for having everything but agricultural on show.*

*After a visit to the token agricultural stalls, we moved on to where the action was: the beverage stands. One of these sold a liqueur made from banana under the brand ‘Kibo’, at a very reasonable price. We got a few bottles and repaired to the ‘refreshment’ area of the Show grounds. Here, we selected an outdoor restaurant with Nyama Choma and a Ras-tafarian DJ playing reggae tunes; a different sort of paradise from the novitiate but a paradise just the same.*

*Soon we had to make our way back home but many show-goers had the same idea and it proved impossible to get public transport. It is here that Kibo kicked in as we set off on a brisk 6km walk to the novitiate, feeling rather lively and saying the Rosary as we approached home.*

*The other outing was a more civil affair: a seminar on Ecumenism. The zillion or so religious orders for women were fairly represented. Some of the Jesuit novices did well to hide their excitement behind a façade of nonchalance. Some loudly proclaimed their aversion to Sisters. The Sisters, however, did not suffer from such inhibitions. Whilst the Jesuits preferred to greet them with a sneaky raised brow, the Sisters would follow up the recognition with a hearty hug.*

*I discovered that they had been fed on some odd myths about Jesuits. One is that our Order only accepts Post-graduates. This made the Sisters rather subdued in group discussions. It was a relief whenever a Jesuit novice stood up to speak and proceeded to spew drivel. Amazingly, I am glad to be back in our ‘silent’ house, enjoying its peace and serenity.*

## THIRTEEN YEARS LATER

Thirteen years down the line, we, the *Primi*, were granted permission in the afternoon of 8th August for an outing at the same venue, Nane Nane Showgrounds. Unlike our senior brothers of the 2006 class, we did not manage to find any aberrant liquor, but all the same, our plans of having a group photo at the showground were disrupted. This is what happened, upon our arrival, as the place was so congested, we kept walking in groups looking for a suitable place to take the photo only to find ourselves scattered and that is how the exercise became futile. Everyone had to find his own way back home before the arrival time, 4.30pm, elapsed. I am meant to understand that, Frs Thomas Mboya, Evarist Shigi, George Macharia and Paul Kalenzi, Christopher Mapunda, Victor Awiti, SJ and Scholastic Boniface Okumu, SJ, were in that 2006 class.

In mid-July, we attended a seminar on Scripture, from Monday, July 15 to Friday, July 19, at the Spiritans Seminary. The five-day event was attended by a number of male and female religious from around Arusha and we interacted with other congregations for the first time since reporting to the novitiate on May 20, 2019. The joke on our way back was always ‘that Nigerian Sister’ who everyone had an opportunity to freely converse with but it’s her accent that left majority amused. The short-time bond formed was evident when the Carmelite Sisters surprised us with a cake on St Ignatius Day.

## NOVITIATE TERMINOLOGY

**Kwaito** – it’s the alleged official dance of the novitiate. It cannot be missed in any in-house celebration, unless the event has been cancelled, which seldom occurs.

**Wacha hiyo** – this is commonly used at the Volleyball court whenever a ball is headed off the field of play from the serving team, the receiving

team will shout amongst themselves ‘wacha hiyo’ in order to earn a score.

**Bull** – Whenever Fr Master releases a Bull, the novitiate quivers. This is simply an announcement seriously touching on our way of proceeding in the community.

**Be aware** – a common phrase among the *Primi*, famously used by Fr Master to remind them to notice which Spirit is leading them.

**Chew** – a common phrase among the *Secundi*. For instance, after spending the morning reading some nice spiritual material, you let the moment savor your entire afternoon like animals do after spending the entire day grazing.

**Offside** – it means going off the record or rather, doing the right thing at the wrong time like leading Breviary on a day you are to read the Scripture.

**Parish Priest** – the Sacristan

**Basilica** – refers to a protruding belly of a novice with admirable appetite.

**Look behind** – commonly used amongst the *Primi* during serving meals to ensure that everyone gets to serve all meals.

**Magis** – the helping-hand spirit during Manualia once you are done with your mission.

**Compiled by Rafiki Team**

## Shirima: AOR can further be set ablaze

The late Fr Pedro Arrupe, SJ, the 28<sup>th</sup> successor of the Society of Jesus' founding Father, St Ignatius of Loyola, bears much credit for contributing to the formation of the Eastern Africa Province (AOR) in 1976.

Arrupe, who was elected Superior General on May 22, 1965, had a great passion for setting this part of the continent ablaze through the growth of the Jesuit Order.

In 1986, the region was officially enshrined into a Province with Fr Polycarp Toppo, SJ its first Major Superior. Five years later, the seedbed was laid in Morogoro, Tanzania after the province opened its own novitiate albeit in temporary premises. Fr Leo Amani, S.J., was later appointed as the first Novice Master before it moved to its current permanent place in Njiro-Korona, Arusha.

The new novitiate marked the 'growing commitment of the Jesuit Order to the people of East Africa since 1542 when St Francis Xavier visited Kenya.' Refer to 'Mission for Everyone' by Fr Festo Mkenda, S.J.

Most Jesuits encompassing AOR are products of this mustard seed that is currently home to 27 novices (11 Secundi and 16 Primi), 28 years down the line. This tremendous growth is what Fr Valerian Shirima, S.J., envisages in the next ten or so years.

"We have countries with a potential that can enable the Society grow to more provinces within this region, the growth is for the service of the people of God," said Shirima, who alongside Fr Leo Amani, S.J and Ethiopian Fr Groum Tesfaye, S.J, were the AOR pioneers.

Today, the trio is fondly called the *three musketeers* in the Province.

Shirima, who joined the novitiate in 1970, further specified on the benefit of this growth underlining; "this will increase the desire to spread the Spiritual Exercises which is a time of letting the Creator deal with the creature. They will help people find God's meaning in their lives and for the Jesuits to be ready to be sent anywhere in the world."

Shirima, ordained a presbyter in 1985, expressed: "I wish to one day see the novitiate become a home to 100 Jesuits-to-be. There is a great potential of vocations in this region, if only we cast our nets further in the coming years."



While in his second probation in Lusaka, Zambia, he repeated the Sp. Ex after his spell in the novitiate was mugged by what he termed 'misunderstanding' and 'ignorance of the Sp.Ex' on the first attempt.

Meanwhile, a special mention goes to Frs Degratias Mutayoba, S.J and Gilbert Mardai, S.J, who also had a Meet-a-Jesuit session in the month of July. The duo happen to be novice-mates between the years 1994 to 1995.

**By Vincent Opiyo, nSJ**

## OUR MONTHLY BABIES

*Do we celebrate the mum or the son? Every month in the novitiate there is at least a time to celebrate our brothers and of course their humble and loving mums who carried them in their respective wombs for a whooping nine months; most importantly, God who knew and formed them before they were even born.*

*The current edition celebrates six of our brothers born in the months of July and August namely ; Joseph Ali , Nichodemus Mutunga, Masuzyo Jumbé , Vincent Oluoch, Elias Fadul and Chrisantus Norbert.*

*Joseph Ali has a special message on their behalf.*

*My name is **Joseph James Udo Ali**, I was born on 26/7/1994 and indeed God's amazing grace has been upon me. This year am celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my birthday here in Tanzania. First I would like to ex-*

*tend my gratitude to God Almighty for having given me this chance to be in the novitiate, which is a privilege in my life. My gratitude also goes to my parents because they were so humble and generous to me , happy birthday to them. I also thank all who over the years have generously contributed to my life, happy birthday to you. My 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a milestone that I have reached, but there is still much work to be done. My special gratitude also go to those who have shared this time with me since I was born until now. I appreciate their contributions and love towards me . I continue to ask God to bless their work and to allow them to bear more fruit which will make a positive contribution in filling our world with love, justice, responsibility and forgiveness.*

**May God bless us!**



Masuzyo



Joseph



Elias



Chrisantus



Oluoch



Mutunga

HAPPY FEAST OF ST. IGNATIUS  
OF LOYOLA

“St. Ignatius our Founder”.

St. Ignatius, St. Ignatius, St. Ignatius  
Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

How great is your influence in our lives  
today  
Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

Your works, your deeds and your  
thoughts have changed the life of thou-  
sands in this world.

Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

Hadn't you founded the Society of Jesus,  
where will we be today?  
Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

In Simplicity and humility you fulfilled  
your vows to the Lord.

Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

Pray for us that we may imitate your  
faithfulness to God in serving his people.  
Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

You brought consolations to those who  
were in desolations.  
Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

Pray for us that we may leave all sorts of  
disordered affections and to surrender  
ourselves to the will of God under the  
banner of the Holy Cross of our Lord  
Jesus Christ.

Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

Teach us to avoid selfishness for you  
know what it means to deny oneself and  
submit oneself to the Lord.  
Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

How helpful, wonderful and beautiful is  
your spirituality to the whole world to-  
day.

Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

Intercede for us that the fire you kindled  
500 years ago, may continue to kindle  
other fires.  
Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

Oh St. Ignatius, you are our father, our  
founder and our role model.  
Oh St. Ignatius our Founder

By Wisdom Ukelo, nSJ

ONE BREATH, THOUSAND PAINS!

ONE BREATH, THOUSAND PAINS! (2X)

What brings poverty and suffering in our society today?  
It's not a lack of education  
It's not a lack of talents  
But it's discrimination and individualism among us.

ONE BREATH, THOUSAND PAINS! (2X)

Why are others different?  
Based on my human understanding,  
I could call this Universe, the Universe of the forgettable,  
The Universe of no concerns for the poor,  
The Universe of hyper-competition against the vulnerable,  
Perhaps, if I am no more here, I could give it another name,  
But this is what I see,  
And that is the reality,  
Which most of us are living in?  
Day and night.

ONE BREATH, THOUSAND PAINS! (2X)

Let's work hard! And die for our growth,  
Have high concern for others,  
And true love for them,  
With no disguise,  
Regardless of their humanly images;  
But capture them as God's image,  
For you will have a great reward in heaven.  
ONE BREATH, THOUSAND PAINS! (2X)

By Justin Dominic, nSJ

FORMATOR'S DESK



Saint Ignatius of Loyola, in his fifth annotation to the *Spiritual Exercises*, invites the person who is to make the *Exercises* to enter them with great spirit [magnanimity] and generosity toward their Creator and Lord, so that by offering all their desires and freedom, the Divine Majesty can make use of their persons and all they possess in whatsoever way is in accord with his most holy will. The first-year novices will soon enter the 30-day retreat. Jesuits are made in the thirty-day retreat, as the saying goes. Their Secundi counterparts are meanwhile in their second apostolic and community experiments, getting a taste of what it feels like to live and work in an apostolic community. The long retreat and the experiment require the great disposition of generosity of one's whole being. This disposition is the same that keeps Jesuits moving from one stage of formation to another, from one mission to another, allowing the Lord to use their giftedness for His greater glory and for greater service. A priestly ordination, which implies the exercise of one's complete freedom, is the culmination of many years of formation, usually anywhere between 9-15 years for a Jesuit. It is the fulfillment of holy desires that are the engine of a vocation's motor. Many novices testify how a priestly ordination lights a spark of their desires and stokes the flames of their vocations. To be able to witness some going for the *Exercises*, some doing experiments and some being ordained is to witness God laboring in a beautiful Jesuit mosaic of vocations. Let us keep, especially our *Primi* in our prayers that the Lord may reward their holy desires and freedom, while we pray that the Secundi can test and verify theirs. Let us pray, too, for our companions ordained this year.

Fr. Joseph Mboya, S.J.