



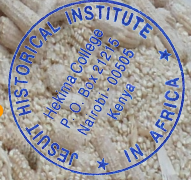
RAFIKI

September 2012

A Publication of the Gonzaga Gonzaga Jesuit Novitiate, Arusha Tanzania



Come With Me To...
..A Deserted Place



TANZANIA



UGANDA



N.SUDAN



KENYA



ETHIOPIA



S.SUDAN



Editorial

Those Who Sow In Tears Will Sing When They Reap

Famous in the Bible is the song of ascents, “Those who sow in tears will reap with cries of joy. Those who go forth weeping... will return with cries of joy, carrying bundled sheaves,” in Ps 126: 5-6. The aforementioned echoes the joy in Gonza Gonzaga Novitiate following a bumper harvest of maize and a boost for the animal husbandry project through the supply of more maize stalks (hay). Above all, it pleases us to mention the production of a music CD by the Novitiate choir, entitled “AOR Silver Jubilee.”

This is also a special moment of imploring God to keep safe our Companions, Primi, as they do the long retreat. Our exhortation to them is: “To be authentically ‘contemplatives in action,’ seeking and finding God in all things, you must know clearly and do well the Spiritual Exercises.”

Moreover, on behalf of the editorial team, I would like to thank in a special way, Reuben Okwach, SJ. His dedication and hard work led to the successful launch of the Special Jubilee Issue. Our gratitude also goes to Vincent Onyango, for his faithful and active commitment to Rafiki. We wish them well in their new assignments. Rafiki is also pleased to welcome the new members of the editorial team: Angaga Oscar, Karanja Henry, Dindi Tobias and Lubega Aloysius.

To our readers, we wish a pleasant reading of this issue hoping that you will join us through your reactions and comments.

Oscar Angaga, Editor.

Formators' Desk



Dear Companions,

Pax Christi!

Gonzaga Gonza Novitiate community is happy to place in your hands yet another issue of RAFIKI. It contains prayerful reflections by novices on the daily activities in the School of prayer. A month from now the holy mother church will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the greatest event of its life in the 20th century. I am referring to the Second Vatican Council which was inaugurated by Pope John XXIII on **11 October 1962**. It was concluded on 08 December 1965 by Pope Paul VI. And I had my two years novitiate between these two dates. The Council initiated many changes touching every aspect of the life of the Church, Religious Life not excluded. We have a chapter on Religious Life in *Lumen Gentium* and a decree *Perfectae Caritatis* on Adaptation and Renewal of religious Life.

PC articulates the wellspring of authentic renewal for religious to lie in ‘the pursuit of **perfect charity** through the evangelical counsels’. And the “ultimate norm of the religious life is *the following of Christ set forth in the Gospels*.” Ever since the Council religious all over the world are searching for new perspectives on religious life in modern times. While the Council of Trent (1545-1563) determined that the only authentic religious were those who professed the three vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, new perspectives see religious life as having three structural elements, viz, **a founding experience of God** (Identity), **community life** and **mission**, and not based on the vows to a great extent. The latter are understood in relation to these three elements.

Africa, the continent we live in, is not only home for human life, it is also home for religious life. The desert fathers (Egypt) *wanted to live their baptismal alliance with God in a very radical form*. The essence of this baptismal alliance speaks only of love. To love God above all things (Deut. 6, 4; Mk. 12, 31). It is the desire to love God in a very radical way of life. The second part of our baptismal alliance is that we try to love neighbor also in a radical form. And Jesus said: “*No other commandments are greater than these two*” (Mk. 12, 31).

Fraternally,

Lourduraj Arokiasamy, S. J.



Cover Photo: Novices at work



Rafiki Editorial team:

From Left: Aloysius Lubega, Oscar Angaga, Tobias Dindi, Fr. Lourduraj Arokiasamy, SJ, and Henry Karanja

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We would be grateful to hear from you our readers. Your feedback keeps Rafiki going and so write to us if you have anything to share with us. To get in touch contact us at:

Rafiki Magazine

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July 16, 2012- Our brothers the Secundi came back home safely with tales of being in the company of the General of the Society.

July 31, 2012- Preparations for Ignatius Day, whose climax on July 31, lived up to its expectations. The Novices who presented a skit about the life of Ignatius were almost real reincarnations of Ignatius and companions. La Storta was filled to the brim with guests from near and far for mass. What better sign to show that we have many friends around? By 7pm all guests were reclining in Arrupe, waiting for nothing more important than performances from the Novices and the cocktail. The Rafiki Team used this opportunity to present the **Rafiki July 2012 Jubilee Issue**, launched by Fr. Master. The Novitiate community dressed outgoing minister George Macharia SJ, in a regalia of gifts as a sign of appreciation for his zealous service. By almost 8pm, guests and hosts alike had done justice to the cocktail. It was the hour hand that reminded us it was time to retire, when it chimed 9pm. Under the starry sky, it was such a pleasant experience.

August 18-21, 2012 Fr Jayapathy SJ from India was here for the *anti-alcoholism crusade*. This twelve-hour session, scattered over four days was such an enlightening experience. The effects of alcohol reminded me of a one *Michael Henchard* in Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. The fruits of the crusade are beginning to be realized.

We also have to thank the Giver of all bounty for this season's maize bumper harvest. In the last few days, the novitiate community has been occupied with harvesting maize. With all the *esprit de corps*, the novices descended upon the maize garden, finishing the harvesting work in a few days. With this buffer stock, we do not have to worry about the source of *ugaali* for the next couple of months.

August 2012: Conflict Management Workshop. We thank Fr. Kifle Wansamo SJ for his five-day seminar on conflict management. This seminar, held at Canossa Spirituality Centre also attracted Novices from other religious congregations and orders in and around Arusha.

September 1-30, 2012-In the company of Fr. Amedeus Shirima (Novice Director) and Fr. Simon Drasiga, the primi travel to Karatu for the long retreat.



AOR FIRST YEAR NOVICES



Odhiambo Edwin (Eddie), Kenyan; born in Ugunja, Siaya County near the Lake Victoria region. Fifth born in a family of eight. Went to Siaya Township Primary school, St Mary's Yala High School and Strathmore University. Likes listening to music, watching movies, traveling, driving, reading, lawn tennis, basketball, and is goalkeeper to the besieged Primi football club.



Gabriel Abonyo, Kenyan, 28. Went to Kanga High School and to Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology where he studied Biotechnology. Has a great love for the church which has earned him the sobriquet 'theologian'. Plays football in the Primi football club.



Burka Usura Gelato, Ethiopian, 23. Born in South East Ethiopia, Oromia region, Arsi Nagelle. Studied journalism, communication and web & design at Addis Ababa University. Worked as the university coordinator from August 2010 up to the beginning of 2012.



Paul Kilonzo, Kenyan, 26. Went to Mburutani Primary School and Makima Secondary school. Taught at the same secondary school for a year. Worked at Don Bosco Street Children Rehabilitation Centre in preparation to enter Jesuit Novitiate. Loves farming, riding, teaching, playing guitar and volleyball.



David Ng'etich Kiprono, Kenyan, 31. From Olenguruone Parish, Nakuru Diocese. Fifth born in a family of seven. A teacher by profession, a cool and humble fellow.



Lubega Aloysius, Ugandan, 25. From Masaka Diocese, Central Uganda. Studied B.Ed Arts at Makerere University. Looks forward to God using him for serving humanity as a Jesuit. Enjoys comic movies, reading fiction and adventure, writing, music and playing soccer. If you take him to an orchestra, you are his good friend.



Boniface Mutuku, Kenyan. Born in Makueni County, Kenya, Machakos diocese. Third in family of nine. Likes playing football, table tennis, currently learning lawn tennis and basketball. Enjoys singing and dancing, and listening to music, watching movies. Has fun in cooking, making jokes with friends and also sharing Spiritual conversations.



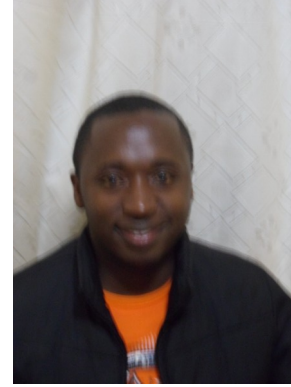
Arinaitwe Francis, Ugandan. Born in Western Uganda, in a family of 9. Went to St Maria Goretti Preparatory School, St Paul's Seminary Kabale and Kyambogo University. Loves detective films, making friends and outings. Has a special liking for Padre Pio of Pietrelcina.



Kimario Constantine, Tanzanian, 24. Born at Rombo District, Kilimanjaro Region. Fifth born in a family of six. Studied Commerce and Management at University of Dar es Salaam. Likes football, singing, listening to music and reading books.



Tobias Dindi Ong'aria , Kenyan, 24. Born in Tangakona, Western Kenya. Went to St Mary's Primary School Nambale, St Paul's Amukura High School. Studied journalism and Design at Nairobi Institute of Business Studies and Bell Institute of Technology. Worked with Education for life Kenya as a facilitator before joining the Novitiate. Loves singing, theatre and dancing.



James Muugwe, Kenyan. Has a diploma in journalism. Likes photography and dancing.



Gilbert Protas Lasway, Tanzanian, 22. Went to Kifufu Primary School, Uru Minor Seminary and Ilboru High School. Likes farming and athletics.



Francis Kyalo, Kenyan. Holds a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and last born in a family of seven. Likes playing volleyball, table tennis, long tennis, reading, listening to music and singing.

Simple But Means A Lot: Smile

James Mugwe

Sometimes the expression one wears on his face means a lot far more important than the clothes one wears. Yes, facial expression can communicate a lot. There may be many facial expressions one can have to communicate different messages but I think smile leads all.

24th May 2012 will forever remain an important date to 2012 primi (1st years) as it was the day they started a very important journey in their life when they joined Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate at Arusha-Tanzania.

Continued on page 8...

St. Ignatius Of Loyola: The Contemplative In Action

Gabriel Abonyo



As the Eastern Africa Society of Jesus (Jesuits) celebrate 25 years of tremendous apostolic work, it is amazing that these men are still moved by the desire to follow the example of the sixteenth century Spaniard St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) a man whose effort

would inevitably make him part of the history of mankind.

To Ignatius, life really began at 30 (in 1521) when he was recovering from an injury he had incurred in a battle field. Here he decided to turn to Christ after the search for worldly glory and fame had proved to be all vanity in his military and other past carrier. This conversion would turn out to be a momentous disclosure of history of mankind and not only to him and the Catholic Church. Exactly this time, Martin Luther and like-minded Christians were thinking of how to bring division in the then one Western Church and an integral part of that society, following the evident malpractices and false doctrinal interpretations in the church that could no longer be attractive to the West, then ushering in the advent of the Enlightenment Era.

Ignatius in his recovery room and a short while later at Manresa is guided by Providence to lay the foundations of the Society of Jesus by developing the Spirit that would drive it for many years to come, help Counter the Reformation and revolutionize the history of man in their theoretical and practical resolution to make the whole world become their home. After years of studies, journey across Europe and the Holy Land and recruiting some fresh university graduates from Paris into his way of thinking he founded the Society of Jesus in 1540. It is worth highlighting this Spirit-Ignatian or Jesuit Spirituality.

Ignatius proposed a way of living the Christian faith by constantly trying to imitate Christ, discerning for and doing the will of God in all situations one is in and whatever work one is involved in for the greater glory of God. In other words being a companion of Christ and continuing his work here on earth as He once did 2000 years ago. This is what the Jesuits in Eastern Africa and other parts of the world strive to do moved by the same Spirit.



Novices entertaining guests during the feast of St. Ignatius

The Jesuits since the time of their founder have come to be known worldwide for their contribution to studies of sciences and arts, the quality of education in their numerous Institutions of learning and research, their working for social and justice structures for people in all corners of the globe. The twenty first century world that is like fast ushering in the waves of secularism is in great need of the Ignatian Spirituality to counter this because we do not wish to imagine or see the effects of a society that has eliminated God (and Jesus) from its people's minds and hearts. Eastern Africa Jesuits working in a place St Ignatius had

The twenty first century world that is like fast ushering in the waves of secularism is in great need of the Ignatian Spirituality to counter this because we do not wish to imagine or see the effects of a society that has eliminated God (and Jesus) from its people's minds and hearts.

wished to work in himself before his death in 1556, have a big task ahead to make his Spirituality practically known to the people of this region and indeed the whole world

as they strive, according to the words of the Holy Father "...to reach those physical and spiritual places which others do not reach or have difficulty in reaching." and continue to place St. Ignatius of Loyola their founder firmly in the history of man.*

Simple But Means A Lot:: Smile

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We arrived at Gonzaga Gonzavitiata some minutes past 3.00pm and we were heartily and happily received by our elder brothers and novice master in a very hospitable way that made us feel at home with our new family miles away from our blood family.

The facial expression of my brothers made me have a sense of belonging and the strange feeling of being a stranger in a new community faded away. **A SMILE!!!** Yes, I am talking of a smiling welcome, the real and heartwarming one that comes from within. The kind of a smile that was shouting “*karibuni sana*”.

The smiles of my companions reminded me about an experience I had some years back the first day I reported to my new job, when I met a gentleman at the corridor whom I came to know later was the C.E.O. He said something or rather maybe he greeted me but I was not sure. What did I do? I gave a genuine smile and that was over. He commented about it almost one year after during a seminar on customers care services. I felt humbled when he said my smile made his day and from it he knew I would be a great asset to the company.

Indeed as the saying goes that actions speak louder than words, for real, our brothers’ expressions spoke louder: We have been waiting for you guys, we are glad to see you, you are most welcome brothers, feel at home guys, we like you.....name it.

Your smile is a messenger of good will and it brightens the lives of those who see it. Keep in mind that you have a golden expression simple but may mean a lot to someone else. Your smile can be a source of happiness to someone who is sad, who is down, sick, or someone feeling unwanted. It can make one realize that there is joy in the world and someone cares to give a genuine smile.



Smile costs nothing but it creates much

When one realizes the value of a smile it does not only make him or her happy but brightens the dull world of others. Sometimes it is good to smile to self and tell God ‘thank you’ for this wonderful ‘me’ you created.

Smile costs nothing but it creates much. It enriches those who receive it without impoverishing those who give. Smile happens in a flash and the memories of it sometimes last forever for it creates happiness and makes strangers to become best friends.

They say that laughter is the medicine of keeping young for it sweeps away all the cobwebs of the heart. Then a genuine smile is the food that nourishes the heart. Keep smiling and be the reason for someone else to smile. No one is so rich that he can get along without a smile and no one will get poor for giving a genuine smile.*

Hidden Faces



TOBIAS DINDI ONG'ARIA

In James Martin's Book, *My Life with the Saints*, he explores the little information we have about one man, Joseph the Father of Jesus. We all agree that he played a very significant role in bringing up Jesus even though he was a mere carpenter of Nazareth. Not much is known about him. We hear of him just a few times in the story of Jesus' nativity, not at all in his public ministry and he is completely lost in the last moments of Jesus' human life that culminated with the passion.

Such people are not talked of often, but they are very significant. The same happens here in the novitiate. There are faces we do not see or hear about often but life can be very difficult without them. These include the grounds men, the cooks, and security guards, name them.

I had an opportunity of spending a few minutes with one of the first employees of the novitiate since its inception and he shares his life experiences as an employee of the Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate. All the AOR Jesuits who did their novitiate in Arusha Tanzania know **Petro**

Fanuel Shila. We had a chat with him that went like this.

Rafiki: Petro, tell us about yourself;

Petro: My name is Petro Fanuel Shila, I am normally called *Dosi*, am married for the last 19 years, from the year 1993. I am a father of three and my first born is 18, currently training as a teacher.

Rafiki: You look younger than you really are; what is your secret?

Petro: My secret is living life with happiness. Not that it is easy but I live it the way it comes and I have no reasons to be sad. Being alive in itself is something to be happy about.

Tell us about when you started working here and the circumstances under which you found yourself here.

Petro: I started working here right when the novitiate began. During construction, a machine got lost, I knew someone who was working here in the construction and he used to pass by my stall where I was selling. So one day he passed by and told me a machine was lost, they suspected where it was hid and so he wanted me to help him find out who was responsible. We went down to the gorge near the novitiate where they had discovered the machine hidden; we therefore hid there waiting for whoever would come to pick it. A group of people came in a while, we saw them though they took off, and we recovered the machine. Having known Brother Maurice Mlelwa, SJ, he gave me some jobs to do like mowing, and I was employed in 1992 as a gardener, I later on started cooking tea and that is how I started working in the kitchen. I also do other jobs that come up around here.

Rafiki: In what ways has working with the Jesuit novitiate helped you?

Petro: I have educated my children, as I said my firstborn is in a teachers' training college in the first year. I wanted to build a house for my family, although I had acquired some material, the burden of school fees weighed down on me and I had to suspend it for a while but am still hopeful. Working in this community has also enhanced my living with other people even out there. I can say it has been fruitful for me.

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Hidden Faces

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Rafiki: What Challenges do you face in the course of your duties?



Petro: First of all, I would like to stress that there are challenges everywhere, not only in my job. Sometimes I make mistakes I never anticipated and I have to come down and accept correction. But there are two instances that were really challenging for me that I remember; one day we went to the market with the novitiate car. There was a spare tire on top of the car, locked with a padlock. I went on buying

food and when I came back to the car, the driver informed me the tire was mysteriously gone. The padlock had not been broken; it had been unlocked well to my surprise. We were both suspended from work for two weeks but later on as it got known, the driver knew about the theft and he had to pay for it. It was very difficult for me but I explained myself to the formators who were here then and they understood I came back to work.

Another day I prepared fish, funny enough when food was served, fish was not enough by far, and I was personally sure what I had taken was enough. I do not know what really happened and what went wrong where, but such challenges are not only in work like mine, they are in every other place.

Despite all these, I love my job because it is my livelihood.

Rafiki : Looking ahead, what do you anticipate of the coming years?

Petro: Am praying to God to help me be able to continue providing for my family because it is my obligation as a husband and as a father. I also hope that one day I will be able to build a roof for my family, and am hopeful all is going to be well.

Rafiki :Any final word you have for the novices?

Petro: Work hard in your life, whichever way you choose and always thank God.*

(Picture, Petro at his work in the kitchen)

“The Cry Of Our Own”

Mathenge Joseph

“Do we really deserve this treatment? We are your brothers but we feel that you hate us simply because we are less privileged than you are in life.” They always yell and lament though their cry lands on stony hearts. We should realize that life is unpredictable and we are just a step away from where they are. Within a twinkle of an eye, those whom we love and treasure; our nieces, nephews and even friends may also land on the same plane. Why didn't we pass the same route with them? This should always be a question to linger in our minds whenever we come across them.

In our daily life we come across people who are vulnerable, abused or wounded. At times they even fear to open their wounds to us, for they need a sense of assurance that they are not judged. Our call as Christians and to a larger extent as religious, is to nurse these wounded hearts and to be the voice of those who are voiceless. John did not wage this war yet he emerged to be the victim of the circumstances. He spends his cold nights hungry in the corridors of the supermarkets. Yet when we come across him wearing dirty tattered clothes, his innocent eyes full of love as he bows to beg 'chai' from us. At times the glances that we give him send him off even more wounded than he was.

Friends, let's change our perception regarding these unfortunate brothers of ours. We may not have tangible goods to assist them with but being kind to offer our love and smiles to them will initiate their healing. Their life remains being a challenge to each one of us. Their faces are reflected in the gospel of Mathew. What will you tell Jesus? “I was hungry... I was naked...I had no shelter... etc.”*

Is It True?

wafula sammy



How come that people who were very good friends become very bad enemies? How does this happen? Take an example. Two friends who have been working together in the same institution, chatting often in the same staff room, sharing together meals and stories, and name them all. Let it be that one is promoted, to be the head teacher. What is observed is a gap which starts to widen slowly and at the end of the day the gap becomes too huge.

Where can we say the problem lies? Not to be biased. Can we say that the person who has gotten the new position is led by the vices mentioned in the Spiritual Exercises

(riches, honor, pride)? As mathematicians say that a coin has two sides then I can try to objectify the issue by not ignoring the other (third) side. Maybe, it is fear of those people with whom they were together in the staffroom. This fear may be because of one's behaviors, such as laziness. Or, still it maybe all the parties have a problem.

There are many different institutions that have failed because of such problems. There are some who leave institutions, others who leave churches, and even religious institutions are no exception, because of just a very small matter, a four letter word, *vice*. This is the thing that we need to fight in our institutions.

Now if you are a leader and you are led by the vices. How will you feel if you were the one looked down upon? It will really hurt. Because you are there on top you feel you can do anything. A Swahili saying goes *Mpanda ngazi hushuka* (he who goes up the ladder will eventually come down). A leader should know that he will not be there on top forever. I am not saying that it will always happen that way but caution should be taken. *Malipo ni hapa duniani* another one goes, meaning, reward is just here earth. But also those who are yet to get those positions, this can also be a mirror on how it will be.

When looking at the mirror you will be able to see something on your face and rectify. Now the issue of *mine* is also a problem in our communities. Friendship also can break as such. A friend cannot see the other with anything. He feels that that could be his. This is brought by pride. Relax friend! You work hard and you will get the same! There is always room for getting such a thing. You will die because of thoughts on how you will get your friend's property. Beware of the ninth commandment! Work for it friend!*

Peace is only found in yes-Anthony De Mello, SJ

One Year Down The Line.

Mutuku Dominic

It's usually claimed that a journey of one thousand miles begins with a mere step. Well, it was on May 24, 2011 when we landed in this 'holy' land. It was the beginning of a new life; and more so spiritual and apostolic life, and chiefly community life. I detached from my biological family and am now attached to my religious family. Now it's a matter of not being in a community but belonging in a community.

Over the one year, it has been a moment of learning and gaining knowledge from fellow companions. I had a prejudice that: Men are not friends, they only walk together. It has so far dawned on me that it was just another assumed concept if not an idea. I have met men who are working and living towards the attainment of one goal: finding God in all things and all things in God. My feeling of belonging in this community has been contributed by our presence and openness to reach our end. I agree that we have differences aligning from national to cultural differences but it's the way we integrate these differences that matters. I was challenged and at the same time motivated when we attended the 70th Congregation of Procurators on July this year. One of the concerns raised and that touched me was on community life. I quote Fr. General from his speech on the state of the Society "community life is not for mission but a mission"

I could not presume that men could live together but now I am a living witness. It's not easy but it's possible. The novitiate has been a confirmation of this doubt and its key that every Jesuit has to belong to a community.

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Community Life And Solitude

Kang'ethe Robert

Definitely, living in a community where *life is busy*, one needs to have moments alone to review the day and especially to pray and meet God in *silence and quietness*.

Bring these two aspects together, that is, busy life and solitude, and you will find one of the most dangerous elements of community life.

I have been in a community for a very short time and therefore cannot say I am an expert in it, but I do believe my short experience is a cue for each one of you to reach deeper and look at your own experiences. I would be right to say that:



Some people build a strong barrier for themselves claiming to be in union with God or keeping their private life and;

Others get involved in everything happening in the community thus spilling out all their hearts out, emotions and feelings in the name of dialogue and sharing.

Those who are ever busy without solitude end up becoming dependent on others and lose their own identity.

When I joined the novitiate, I was introduced to long moments of silence that I never used to have frequently before. I used the moments to look into myself and what I discovered was a 'horror of my life.' I was very much taken up by solitude that every moment I wanted it to be silent. Slowly, I started drifting to being quiet and eventually closed up.

Now, this is where the problem begins, in search for solitude we end up being lonely, an even greater challenge to an individual. This does not only affect the individual, but also affects the entire community in a way. Moreover there is the risk of engaging into other addictive aspects as a way of trying to engage oneself to avoid the loneliness. My experience has shown that one can:

Engage into books and become bookworms

Become workaholics

Engage into the mind game that can even make them doubt their vocation.

In a community where he is free to do what he wants, become an alcoholic.

My million dollar dilemma is; how does one bring harmony between these two great aspects without getting to the extreme of either, and still maintain our **identity**?

"A Jesuit is a Fire that kindles other fires" (GC 35)

How does one keep this identity?

I don't have a definite answer to this question. In John 6:56, Jesus says "whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood, and dwells in me, I dwell in that person." This is the way to live in a community in that, when we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we ourselves are transformed also to be like Christ. We therefore have to nourish each other through our words, a smile, our being and even our prayers which help others to rediscover their faith in Christ. This is one way to integrate community life with solitude and at the same time maintaining our identity.

Well, I do believe that each one has his own way of living this identity.*

Why Talk about Time, Timing and Timeliness in the novitiate?

Burka Usura

What is time? Where does it come from? Why do we try to manage it? What if, time is managing us? How do we define time, timing and timeliness? These are some important questions for me. Time might be defined in different ways.

"Time is a precious commodity," North Americans view of time. But for most of the religious communities, it is value for formation. I remember, during my university studies, one of my instructors did not allow me not to enter his class, because I was late by **one minute only**. Yet, I was not aware of his view of time. "Time is money", "Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today", "The sooner the better", and "A stitch in time saves nine," the sooner we can get something done, the less time we waste and so on. The use of time and timing is often important in the community life. In fact, the reaction to our time depends far more on the type, content, and value of the program / activities we undertake.

The use of time and timing are also critical factors in communication, especially in the community life. The decisions people make intentionally as well as accidentally-about when to speak and when to be silent, when someone has said too much and when too little, when to "speak their piece" and when to "keep it to themselves" are among the most critical decisions people make relative to communication. The way time is used in the conversations can be read as disinterest, shyness, or boredom, while too much can be construed as aggressive, self-assuredness, presumptuousness, over confidence, or rudeness. *Brent De Ruben in his book -communication and human behavior.*

In the world of today, we find "time- is -money" philosophy which shows up in many activities. Some like to drive as fast as they legally can, so they will get where they are going quicker. When we have appointment with someone, we like to finish the activities we are performing as soon as possible, so we can get on to the next task. We want to leave work "on time", even "before" whenever possible to hurry home. We find ourselves rushing to meet deadlines, keep appointments, avoid waste, and increase productivity.

Given the significance of time in our daily lives, it is not surprising that our use of it can have an important impact on our behavior, attitudes and feelings. Being "early" or "late" is sometimes might be a matter of adaptation, view, choice, or accident. But it depends on the number of factors, including the amount of time one is being late or early. The purpose of the appointments, the weight of the program, person responsible for that meeting, the length of the relationship between the persons involved, and the orientation toward time of each of the individuals.

In community life the reality may differ according to the purposes, goals, and intentions of the activities. Especially, in our community, Gonzaga Gonzaga Jesuit novitiate-the sharing of the time among each program-prayer, manualia, sports, apostolate, class, etc, has its own purpose and final goal. Firstly, for us, even if, it is "not gold" literally, it is "value for formation" practically it is "Gold" since, the intention is growth in "spirituality" and "social" aspects. Secondly, it is God who gives us time and each program/activity. Therefore, all the times and programs are for the greater glory of God. So, we try to keep our time for the sake of God's glory, to please him.

One Year Down The Line

....continued from page 11

Now it's the time of learning how to integrate ourselves in a community and freely give as we have freely received. As usually is the fact, community life is a matter of openness and generosity. Openness to always learn and generosity to others; know-

I remain grateful to almighty God for seeing us through the past one year

ing that nothing belongs to you even oneself. It is a moment of sharing

joys and disappointments as well. I like everything from faith sharing to jokes told every now and then. They make the novitiate 'climate' friendly and for sure one feels he belongs. I am grateful that for Jesuits what is normally referred to as canonical year is two years instead. There is much to be learned and integrated in the remaining months of our second year (Secundi). This covers all areas including psychological, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and social. It is great finishing a year in the novitiate and still yearning for the next but final year. It will be a moment to learn more and even re-learn to some extent.

I remain grateful to almighty God for seeing us through the past one year. I pray that He continues to shower us with graces in this year. My gratitude is also to my companions whom we have being journeying together and our esteemed formators. I can't forget those companions who had had sharing with us from time to time in the form of Meet-a-Jesuit session; develop the richness that is in you.*

Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength, mastering yourself is true power. ~ Lao-Tzu

Meet-A-Jesuit Sessions

Eddie Onyango

One of the things that I have found very fascinating in my life so far here in the novitiate has been meeting various Jesuits who pass via the novitiate mostly as a visitor. I have found listening to people's experiences and journeys on a personal and spiritual front as well very different, interesting, at times inspiring and encouraging. Out of curiosity, I tried to find out whether this actually is a tradition within the society and realized that it is simply a practice that has been promoted within this novitiate community which makes me applaud the person behind such a brilliant idea.

This takes me back to the bible (Mtt 13:31-32) where Jesus talks of a mustard seed, how it is the smallest of all the seeds, and how it grows to become the biggest tree where all birds of the air come to make their nest there. Early in the year, Kenyans in the northern part of the country were dying of hunger as a result of an extensive drought experienced in the area. It only took one gentleman with a brilliant idea to courageously present it to his Chief Executive who, thankfully was in a great influential position, mobilized his comrades, circle of friends and networks including the citizenry through various media campaigns. This effort eventually ended up raising about ten million dollars from individuals and corporate contributions towards this noble course. Amazing, isn't it?

Listening to other Jesuits from varied cultures, backgrounds, experiences both young and old with a view of learning from them is very enriching and definitely shapes our world view. You certainly realize that there is so much you do not know, a lot to hope for and look forward to but that at the same time, there is so much that we take for granted and that we ought to be grateful for but neglect or take as the norm; for instance, our health, our talents, our families including our companions around us.



This has again and again come from the scholastics and companions from the experiments and regency experiences which in many ways are re-awakening.

One special lesson that I picked from Jean Baptiste, a scholastic currently in his regency, is the relationship between our internal environment and how it relates to our external environments. The idea is that things around us change frequently at times for the good and at times for bad; in all these, the biggest weapon we have is choosing our response

ing our response. We, in most cases, do not have power over the external environment and in most cases we react instinctively but *over time* and *through grace* and *practice*, we start to reflect over the kind of response we give and this goes a long way to give us interior peace. Think about it, if we had power over all the things around us, may be faith and Christianity would be irrelevant. This goes without forgetting one Jesuit who shared with the primi his revolutionary experience and at some point was at the verge of tears; this was quite different and goes a long way to show us that we are one big family but our encounters with Christ (God) is very personal and varied. Look forward to such future sessions.*

So Did The Carpenter



Dindi Tobias

A tale is told of a skilled carpenter. He was talented in his work and he specialized in giving houses a beautiful finish that passersby would spend time marveling at the beauty of his work. People could easily identify with his finishes and so he built himself a name. He was a carpenter every builder would want to give the finishing. The story goes that he got employed by a construction company and he worked with them for several years. The company grew tremendously because of his work and the client record soared each and every month. Everybody was looking for this particular carpenter to do the finish for them, thus the company grew on and on.

As the years went on, both the carpenter and the company got amazing fame for the work, and so did his relationship with his employer get better and better. And as it happens to all of us, the time to retire eventually came. The carpenter talked to himself saying, "The time has come to stop working and go have quality time with my family. It has been a fruitful life. I must now leave." Labour regulations dictated he retires and he too really wanted to retire and be with his family. However, his boss requested him to do just one more job. He wanted him to finish just one house and then retire. He obliged though he really did not want to work even an extra day. So he did the job, however, he did not do it to his usual level because he was in a hurry to go and retire, and his dedication was not as in the days past.

The results obviously were not as pleasing either. Onlookers easily identified the job as not his usual standard, it was not very appealing. On the day he finished the work, he went to deliver the keys of the house to his employer as was the tradition and also to bid him bye.

Getting to the office, the employer said, "We thank you so much for the many years of dedicated service you have offered this company. We wish you all the best as you retire to be with your family. Lastly as a gesture of appreciation we would like to offer you a gift." What was the gift? The last house he had made without dedication.

What would you do if you were that carpenter?

The story may be new, but the scenario is not. We too, in our various vocations and apostolates are more or less like the skilled carpenter, we may be producing marvelous pieces of work, beautiful results of service, are we going to be consistent to the end, whatever the end is going to be?

All humans apparently produce whichever results in what they are doing because of a motivation they hold to themselves. Altering the motivation alters the results automatically, whether to the positive or to the negative inclination, it lies with the motivation. What is my motivation for waking up today and starting whatever I am doing? What do I want to see at the end of the day and why, all these will have a bearing to the piece I will produce at the end of the day. We are carpenters; the hammer and saw are in hand, the end in mind and the motivation in heart, consequently, we should be productive.*

During the 4th through the 7th centuries, in Eastern Christianity, the apocryphal document History of St Joseph the Carpenter was very popular and either stimulated or grew out of a strong veneration of St Joseph (Cf. Catholic Dictionary)

Heroes Today

Eddy Onyango



Picture: Fr. General with translators to P.C 70'

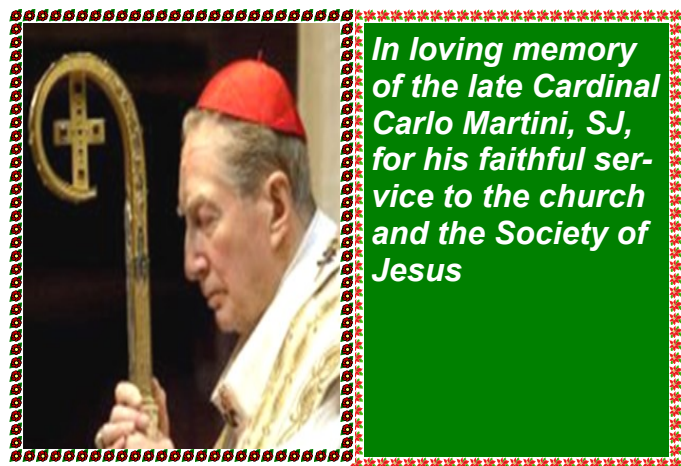
After our interviews (candidates from Kenya), one of the projects we were told to embark on was to ensure that we read the book *Heroic Leadership* by Chris Lowney. To begin with, I have to confess that this book was a mix for me. There are several sections of the book that intrigued me so much to the extent that I found it hard to put the book down. At the same time there are sections that I struggled to be awake and kept turning the pages back and forth as I count 'how many to go'. Chris Lowney's knowledge and understanding of the society as well as Ignatian Spirituality is phenomenal; I guess he was transformed by the experience he had while in the society. It is also exciting to learn that he was able to tweak this to various situations especially to avail the same rich concepts to executives in the corporate world.

One of the things that struck me in this book was the concept of heroes. The London 2012 Olympics have just been concluded with America topping the medals list with over 100 medals proving still that they are our big brothers. Some nations, unfortunately, left with none while others got one but this, in the true African fashion, was celebrated with a lot of pomp and colour (not mentioning names). In the context above, when you talk about heroes, names and faces spontaneously come to mind. Lowney on the other hand looks at heroes not only as those who do big, visible 'Guinness book of records' type of things as perceived by many but also including those who make great contributions in line with the overall picture making the whole team win. The admiration for me, is the driving force behind the energy levels of such groups or individuals.

Taking a look at various departments within the novitiate, for example, men of the garden, projects or even choir just to mention a few, the amount of work, preparation and commitment/dedication these companions exhibit in their tasks including the quality of the output makes one acknowledge that they are great men (little – heroes of today, to put it weirdly) in their own ways, quite in line with loving and serving God in all we do. I am trying to imagine doing what you love and at the same time serving God through it; I guess this does not only bring joy but consolation as well when the project does not go as planned because at that point you also courageously tell Him as another friend of mine, 'Sir Goddy, kuna venye nili try lakini results joh zimejam kukam' (God, I gave it my level best but it did not just work out). As Chris Lowney puts it, heroes of today are driven by true passion for what they do as well as commitment to excellence which is something we can all learn from such people to challenge ourselves in different things.

Maybe looking at it from the angle of making good use of one's talent can also apply. You remember Jesus' parable of the talent (Mtt 25: 14 – 30) and how the two guys made good use of their talent and in turn were rewarded for it. Sometimes the tough bit is always recognizing our individual talents and nurturing these. We see the likes of Rooney, Chicharito, Welbeck and now Van Persie (great footballers), the Roger Federars and Nadals of this world (tennis champions), they spend tremendous hours to be good at what they do such that it is like second nature to them. This may not apply to us as novices but certainly the dedication is a lesson. I think looking at it spiritually it will be close to making a fierce resolve to grow in a particular area and not relenting even if we fail several times. What do we do with the heroes around us? I think appreciating them and a little motivation does the trick.

You know it is very difficult to look at your neighbour, brother and companion in our case, and consider them heroes because these are people we live with and see their shortcomings yet in our mind, heroes are supposed to be holding some sort of high (almost ideal kind of) standard. May be in our case, we should be talking of 'heroic actions' that we should applaud and encourage. This certainly calls for a little level of charity.*



Grappling With Lack of Faith...



Aloysius Lubega

(Mt 17:14-20) ‘Why are miracles so rare today than in the early times of the Church?’ More so, why are they common in Pentecostal churches than in the mother church? These are just part of a few questions I often ask myself. And

because I cannot find the answer myself, I turn to theologians in the making; fellow novices. One of them was quick to point out; this current generation lacks faith. This seemed to answer my question, but gave rise to two more questions; ‘You mean even the priests lack faith?’ He refused to answer this one. Yes, the priests themselves are not immune, just like the first priests- the disciples in this gospel passage.

In this passage, the father is worried about the condition of his son. The boy is a lunatic, often falls into fire and hot water. As a parent, he is so desperate to save the life of his son. The symptoms point at epilepsy. Imagine you had this boy as your sibling; it is obvious that each of us would feel terribly sad. And it becomes worse when you know you cannot do anything about it.

The disciples have been healing people with similar ailments and so the man runs to them for help. The disciples who have been performing similar miracles in other places, falter at this one, and they wait for the master miracle worker, who drives out the demon plaguing the boy. The disciples wonder why they cannot drive out the demon. ‘Because you have so little faith’ he tells them.

The reason why Jesus is admonishing them is that earlier on, He had given them authority to drive out evil spirits, to heal every disease and sickness, including this one. **‘As you go, preach this message: The kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons, freely you have received, freely you give.’** Mt 10;7-8. The disciples, it is obvious had the power to heal the boy. But why did they fail this time round?

‘How long will I endure you?’ Jesus asks. It seems our lack of faith gives Jesus pain. But Jesus reassures the disciples that all they need is faith as small as a mustard seed. If you compare a mustard seed and a mountain size, it seems Jesus is talking about an impossibility. What can a mustard seed-sized faith do to a mountain-sized problem? Jesus reminds us how just a little faith can do wonders. But lack of faith is not limited to disciples.

The lack of faith has taken a toll on each of us at one moment in time, yet, faith as small as a mustard seed will do wonders for us. This event shows us that it is not a matter of small faith for small problems and big faith for big problems. It is not a matter of the quantity or the quality of our faith. Just true faith is enough. God gives the harvest at the appointed time.

Wise men of our time have had this to say about faith.

‘Faith is not the belief that God will do what you want. It is the belief that God will do what is right.’ Max Lucado reminds us.

‘The reason birds can fly and we can’t is simply because they have perfect faith, for to have faith is to have wings.’ J.M. Barrie.

Martin Luther King, Jr – ‘Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.’

But having faith also requires complete trust in the one in whom we have faith. And this is not as easy as the young man in the following story.

A young lad named Jack was walking along a steep cliff, when he accidentally gets too close to the edge and falls to something that seems like a bottomless ditch, until he grabs a branch, may be the branch grabs him. Looking down it seems the valley is over a thousand feet deep. He couldn’t go up or down and it seemed he could not hold onto the branch for so long. So, he began yelling for help that may be a passerby may listen and throw him a rope. ‘Help! Help! Is anyone up there? Please help’, he continually yelled. His voice was almost running out, when he heard a voice

‘Jack, Jack, can you hear me?’ a voice asked. ‘Yes, yes I can. I’m down here’ he replied. ‘But who are you and where are you?’

‘I’m the Lord, Jack. I’m everywhere’, ‘The Lord, you mean God?’ he asked. ‘Yes, that’s me’ was the reply.

‘God please, help me. I promise, if you get me from down here, I’ll stop sinning. I’ll be a very good person and serve you for the rest of my life.

‘Easy on promises Jack. Let’s get you off from there; then we can talk. Now, here is what I want you to do. Listen carefully.

‘I’ll do anything Lord, just tell me what to do’.

‘Ok, just let go of the branch’ ‘What?’ ‘I said, let go of the branch. Just trust me. Let go of the branch’.

There was a long silence

Finally, Jack yelled, ‘Help! Help! Is there anyone else up there who can help me?’

Our lack of faith makes us completely helpless, but little faith can also make us wonderfully powerful. We are not to look at our faith, its strengths and weaknesses, but we are to look at the God of our faith- His power, strength and might. The words of Jesus, of course do not give us room to ask for anything that comes into our heads. It is not an opportunity to manipulate God. On the contrary, it is an invitation to put all our trust in God, knowing that whatever happens to us, He has only good plans for us. Such a faith, accompanied by deep love, is what brings happiness and peace in our lives.*

Come with me to a deserted place



Tobias Dindi

In the Gospel according to Mark, Christ invites the apostles to come away by themselves to a deserted place and rest a while (ch. 6). He had previously sent them out two by two to proclaim the good news. And upon their return, there was a beehive of activities that they did not even have an opportunity to rest. So off they went,

their rest was not however to be. The crowd noticed it and by the time they got there, they found a mammoth crowd waiting for them.

Here, Christ manifests his compassion and performs a miracle that seems to have made the greatest impression on his disciples. This miracle is related in all the four gospels; the feeding of the five thousand.

This act presents a sharp contrast between Christ and his disciples and though they had retreated to rest, Christ teaches them a few very important lessons that we can easily copy and paste to our novitiate experience.

How? The deserted place is more or less similar to moments of solitude, reflection and prayer. In these times we realize gradually who we are, and who Christ is. That is exactly what happened. Though theirs turned out not to be solitude. The feeding of the five thousand must have given them enough food for thought; just like it does to us, probably more than what a silent rest would have done.

To begin with, they said, “This is a deserted place, it is

This is a deserted place, it is already late, dismiss them...

already late, dismiss them so that they can go to the surrounding farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” Christ said, “Give them some food yourselves.” In essence they said, “These folks are tired and hungry; send them off from here so that we need not worry about them.” Christ said, “These fellows are tired and hungry, let us do something.” This contrast tells us who we are to one another even as we learn to live in community.

The other contrast presented follows immediately. “Are we to buy two hundred days’ wages worth of food and give them to eat?” They said. Christ answered, “How many loaves do you have?” In essence, they said “What we have is useless,” Christ said, “What do you have, it is useful.” This second contrast talks to us saying in us and among us there is so much goodness to offer to and for each other; if only we knew.

Some people argue that what Christ did was not really multiplying the bread and fish, they insist that the gesture of generosity of that young boy of giving what he brought motivated everyone to give the little he had brought, and so there was enough for everyone.

I have previously come across debates about the *Gospel of Generosity* as this act of Christ is sometimes referred to. Some people argue that what Christ did was not really multiplying the bread and fish, they insist that the gesture of generosity of that young boy of giving what he brought motivated everyone to give the little he had brought, and so there was enough for everyone. If this were to be the case, then which would be the greater miracle? The other argument is where the twelve baskets came from, might they have belonged to the twelve disciples? Maybe, maybe not; but the greatest reflection they had to ponder about in their *retreat*, and it fits in our context, is that you are because I am.

And so in this deserted place where Christ has invited us to come with him, we learn how to be there for each other and Christ nourishes our souls with bread and fish that is multiplied through our generosity and self giving.

And after their retreat, Jesus and his disciples set out teaching, healing and proclaiming the good news both to Jews and Gentiles. We hope that after this we will be energized and radiate the love of God, to share it with humankind, All for the Glory of God.*

As we forgive those who trespass against us

David Kiprono

According to Oxford English dictionary, to forgive means to stop feeling angry with somebody who has done something to harm, annoy or upset you. So when I forgive you for what you did to me, I no longer feel angry with you even when I recall the incident. Forgetting that you did something wrong to me is a different thing altogether since forgetting, (I think) is involuntary.

Do I need forgiveness? Yes! Even you, unless you are an angel. This is because we are prone to sin as human beings; we commit sin either knowingly or unknowingly. Sin leads us to **hell**. By hell I mean a state of being unable to **Love**; refusing the love of God. One can be in hell while still here on earth and if death finds one in that state, one proceeds to eternal hell. Therefore when Jesus tells me that my sins are forgiven, it means I have been taken out of hell – isn't it good news? That is why Jesus would forgive his patients their sins before healing them: otherwise the healing would be temporary and meaningless.

To obtain forgiveness, we are given a condition that we must forgive those who offend us. First of all, we come across this condition in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-14); "... forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us," and the Lord goes ahead to explain to us that unless we forgive others we shall not be forgiven. My question: is forgiveness as easy as swallowing an orange seed?

In the scripture, Peter asks Jesus, "If my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" The Lord answers him, "I say to you, not seven but seventy seven times. Forgiveness has nothing to do with numbers.

Why is it be very difficult to forgive? It is because forgiveness has to come from the heart, and the heart in this context does not refer to the organ in our bodies that is involved in the pumping of blood; it means the innermost part of you, your spirit. Have you ever travelled into your heart? By the way, it is not a short journey and yet you have to take it alone. Travelling into your heart can be very scaring. You need to get into a quiet room, close the door, sit down, close your eyes and start moving. Watch the movie of your life starting from the present backwards as though slowly rewinding a video film (St. Ignatius teaches us how to watch the movie of our life).

You will come across so many people who have offended you and if you are fair, you should also find many whom you have offended. Make a list of these people and after watching your movie, start forgiving these people one at a time. Make it a form of prayer and narrate to Jesus what each one of them did to you and at the end say, "Jesus, I forgive so and so from my heart". I suggest that you don't rush through this exercise but take time to experience the feeling of forgiving. You might come across some cases which are very difficult to forgive: here you need to pray for the grace to be able to forgive. You might even feel painful tears flowing from deep within you. This is poison! It can kill.

It can cause ulcers. Allow it to flow out so that you may get inner healing; even if you are a man, don't fear to shed those tears (men in my culture very rarely shed tears). It is not a sign of weakness and after all you are in the room alone. If you find that you cannot forgive someone, it may be useful to share with your spiritual director. At the end of the day you should have forgiven all your offenders, at least for the sake of God's kingdom otherwise, you will not be able to say The Lord's prayer. You will not have been forgiven all your sins. This will definitely block you from experiencing the love of God, the state which we referred to above as hell. So you realize that not all offences that have been forgotten have been forgiven.

When you tell someone, "I have forgiven you," it is an act of generosity and courage because it is possible to forgive without mentioning by word of mouth to the offender. You bring healing to your neighbor who might be suffering for having offended you. Sometimes it may be difficult to approach someone for such an expression but you can apply the method of actions (actions speak louder than words, they say); for example, you may visit the person to chat and laugh, it all depends on your culture and personality.

Why is it important to forgive? First, your own sins are forgiven and you are removed from the hell of failing to appreciate God's love for you. Secondly, you obtain peace and joy within yourself after forgiving everybody. In addition, you restore your relationship with others; your relatives and friends. Forgiveness is good for your health. You escape stomach ulcers, heart related complications including cardiovascular disease and your mental problems. Remember that you also free your brain to think about other things which are helpful to you; you free millions of your brain cells for your own constructive thinking and you allow yourself some moments of excitement.*

Catholics believe that sins are forgiven by God through the mediation of Christ in view of repentance of the sinner and by means of the Sacrament of Penance (Cf. Catholic Dictionary).

A Christian? You need to insure your life in Christ.

Paul Kilonzo

In Matthew 14:1-12 we meet Jesus who has been a preacher and a teacher accompanying his service with both words and mighty deeds. We all know that his name is both identity and mission and so our names. He fell totally in love with his Abba Father who faithfully supplied him with support and power to work amazing miracles. Where there was blindness, what did he do? He brought sight, where there was hunger, he fed, where there was disease he restored to health, where there was death he brought life in abundance. People, amazed and overwhelmed by these mighty deeds decided to cling to him trustingly. Those who were snared by oppression and affliction triumphed, now hope and love met within their squares. Countless number of people, young and aged, weak and strong alike followed and surrounded him like bees around a hive. Ululations engulfed the people as they acclaimed him as king; - a substitute for Herod Antipas- the fox as referred to by Jesus meaning something more or less than hyena.

Jesus' reputation and fame grew 'farther still' and reached Herod's palace. He became suspicious but he was not sure who it was. He thought it was John the Baptist who he beheaded had risen from the dead. His rule was ruthless, so he feared he would be overthrown from the dynasty.

Prophet John the Baptist was sent by God to help people amend and reform their ways to enter the kingdom. He labored tirelessly in extending God's kingdom. He desired to decrease as Christ increases- a call to all Christians. He cried in dire need in the wilderness calling people for conversion. He advocated for a sinless generation living in freedom and away from God's wrath. This is explicit when he confronted the dishonest tax collectors and military personnel not to take more than what was legal [Lk 3:12-14]. He, being a courageous man was moved by the spirit of God just like the first disciples were moved and told of the mighty deeds of God in their own tongues, he denounced God's wrath upon the marriage of Herod Antipas with Herodias the wife of his brother Philip

. Looking at it with 'eyes of faith he declared it unlawful. This irritated Herod Antipas and put John in prison. Herod's character was dishonest, cunning, luxurious and comfortable. He had a heart of stone and in fact righteousness and virtues did not find a place in him.

Moved by luxury he opted to celebrate his birthday and invited guests. Of course guests in celebrations should be entertained to feel honored and at home, though away from home. I hope your culture supports this. The stubborn Herod promise to give the little girl-Salome whatever she would ask of if she entertained the guests well. Herodias prompted her daughter to request for the head of John. The girl danced well to outdo marionettes. The gathering applauded in praise of the wonderful dance performed.

What about our corrupt government officials who live a life of self for the self?

The saying," A promise is a debt." It had to be fulfilled.

John the

Baptist got executed; his disciples picked his body for burial and went to tell Jesus. Dear people of God, John got beheaded, died a martyr's death. Having insured his life in Christ, he felt even more hopeful that someone would continue the message of love when he rumors of someone performing mighty deeds. He sent his disciples to confirm whether it was Jesus. Today we stand in John's place, his heart is gone but many hearts survive-yours and mine. We should not be afraid. Looking at our society, it has lost the moral conscience and we witness numberless cries for justice and honesty among the poor, oppressed like orphans and widows. Those who share and support them need our praise. What about our corrupt government officials who live a life of self for the self? Should we desire to remain silent and see the suffering of the poor for the fear of death? Yet we claim to have grown in Christ by living the Gospel values. I tell you it is not enough.

Indeed, if we are truly Christians witnessing the unconditional love of God, we need to break the news and condemn the oppressors. Our part to play is to stir hope, love, joy and mutual help and support. We might suffer humiliations, just like John, but let us know that any suffering that is endured for the sake of Christ should be valued as the greatest gift from God. Even if it is death for the sake of God's kingdom, our lord God is pleased to witness it [Psalms 116].*

What am I Thinking that my Thinking is not Thinking?

Vin Onyango

Several philosophers have made it clear that man is a *Rational Being*. We are all entitled to a life of reasoning for the purpose of getting a satiable opinion.

Sometimes it makes us wonder why it becomes a great challenge and a difficult task when one puts his/her mind to think on a certain matter. I once came across a friend whose study of Mathematics was like oil and water; curiosity made me ask him why he has such a negative attitude towards this Subject which even Jesus himself applied in feeding five thousand people. He was frank enough to say that the more he engages with this subject, the more he risks becoming schizophrenic; this is quite contrary to the biological proof that says, the brain that is exercised is always well aerated and it quickly googles the stored information in the Central Nervous System.

The novitiate is neither a school of Mathematics, Engineering nor Metaphysical studies but at times, it can always make most of us scratch our heads in order to come up with an appropriate solution in any matter brought into discussion.

What I find most difficult is a combined reflection on a particular topic to bring one common idea with the so called "Rational Animals"; another struggle is in **FRENCH Studies** which novices for sure have agreed that "*it is not their Mouth*"; it has been baptized "*a dead corpse waiting to be resurrected*" since it is dead in our brains and the teachers have taken an initiative to resurrect it so that it can be effective in our brains.

When it comes to argument, this is where you will find many people with unidentified Doctorate in philosophy. Ideas brought forward are always filled with pros and cons which make the original point to be inverted to another perspective. We are absolutely certain that without thinking, one can always be so shallow in decision making; but also, thinking can complicate everything to make the complication a complete complicated complex complication.

What misses in our thinking is reflection. "A life that is not reflected is not worth living." This is a very concrete comment that tries to express how innocently we can opaque our future. Some live only 'today' and tomorrow is left in God's hands; this is a laxative way of life, and God is given a very hard task in order to affirm our future according to the expectations we opt to attain. Can it be possible to reflect on

what God will bring us tomorrow? "It is possible," is my response. It is right for every individual to put into account the awareness of who he has been in the past, who he is at the present and who he wants to be in the future in line with what God has been to him in the past, what God is to him in the present and what God would be to him in the future. Christ granted us hope of life's redemption, therefore, we should trust hoping that what Christ has prepared for us shall come into fulfillment; and our role is only to reflect and make our minds think positively.

"An idle mind is the devil's workshop". This phrase is theologically positive but theoretically arguable. The devil can also make the mind to be so busy leading one to the enticement of the soul while on the other hand it can lead to the progress of the soul under the guidance of good spirits. Therefore, we should let our minds be guided by the good spirits to be positive in our thinking in order to reach the end through the means which we have taken in our lives. We should not let idleness overcome our minds but to put our minds into work of thinking constructively for the development of our spirituality and ministries.*

The whole dignity of man lies in the power of thought-St. John of the Cross.



Is Man Part Of The Earth?



Karanja Henry

In the Book of Genesis, the author describes how the universe and all it contains came to be; the chronology of events and the epitome of it all, being the creation of man. For scholars, this is a very ingenious myth to explain the presence of a Creator, and for a common Christian and children it is a basis for their faith. But the works of Lynn White a historian and a researcher show that he has misgivings about the Genesis story. For him, knowing 'THE TRUE UNIVERSE STORY' will help us human beings identify and orient ourselves in relation to the earth. Why does he think so? Read Genesis 1:27-30; in short, the author indicates that God implicitly and explicitly gave everything to man and told him to subdue it. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word SUBDUE means: *Bring something under control, especially by use of force.* But man has destroyed the earth and boy, the earth is groaning. Watch this pace. If man doesn't reconsider his action, mother earth will retaliate. Lynn White also adds that the philosophical theories of the Neo-Platonist which influenced Christianity to date, has played a role in making the earth a second place for man.

This Neo-Platonism is the philosophical view of the 'other' world, in a more Christian language 'heaven'. Men/Christians are struggling to go to heaven by all means, and for them the end justifies the means. Well it may sound a bit harsh but I think his way of looking at it is not so erroneous, Christians no longer see this world as permanent, heaven is their destination and therefore earth a passage; it is just a means towards heaven. This is also a very dangerous stand which one as a Christian may not explicitly say but implicitly mean it. For White, in order to solve this earth/ environmental crisis it is wise to go back to the original problem: The original problem is 'RELIGION', which has brought about a roller coaster of events such as; political, social, and economical, to devour the earth. We have to redefine the universal story in order to revive the Earth, the primordial home for all creatures and the ultimate expression of God's love.

St Bonaventure exclaims: *Therefore any person who is not illumined by such great splendor in created things is blind. Anyone who is not awakened by such great outcries is deaf. Anyone who is not led by such effects to give praise to God is mute. Anyone who does not turn to the first principle as a result of such signs is a fool. Therefore, open your eyes, alert your spiritual ears; unlock your lips and apply your heart so that in all creatures you may see, hear, praise, love, adore, magnify and honor your God, lest the entire world rise up against you.*

Man is part of the earth community and both are manifestations of the emergent universe story, therefore, nature or earth is critical to human meaning and fulfillment. When you think about 'you' think about the 'earth'!*

When
they

Rafiki traces its archives and brings you writings of senior Jesuits when they were Novices at Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit novitiate. Just as they wrote....

Were nSJ..

He knew when he was told..



Once upon a time, a traditional gentleman visited his cousin sister who lived by the banks of the River Nile in East Central Africa. He was in this visit for a long time that he forgot his water bag the day he left for home.

While on his way, the faster he tried to walk, the hotter the sun was and the higher his body temperature rose. This continued until he fled for a shade under a huge 'kamura' tree. He cursed the sun as he remembered his scorched body. He even forgot it was the month of June, the hottest month of the year in that part of Africa. As his body temperature normalized, he felt relaxed and started staring in admiration at the huge tree that had restored his freshness. On looking up into the tree he stopped short of surprise to see tiny fruits of the huge tree. For him, there was a contradiction which forced him to talk to himself in a low tone, 'Ah the maker of these things forgot to put the right fruits on the right tree,' he paused. 'This huge tree ought to bear such sizeable fruits of the like of pumpkins and smaller plants tolerate the size of these small fruits,' he continued, 'this tree has been cheated of its fruits....'

No sooner had he finished his remarks than a loose fruit fell on his nose. He felt blood spurting and started feeling more pain as cold air started blowing into the now bleeding cut. He got up hazily, nowhere to get water for washing the blood away. 'Ee...' he exclaimed, 'surely the maker is right and I was wrong in my thought. What if it were pumpkins that fell on me?' he wondered. He felt sorry and apologized for his prior unworthy judgment.

Later, he was convinced that the order of the maker should not be overlooked. Things are arranged for reasons better known to him. So, his short experience changed his mind, though little, like Saul to Paul on his way to Damascus.

Simon Drasiga, Nsj; November 1991

(Fr. Simon Drasiga SJ. is now Socius to the Director of Novices at Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate)

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Fun corner

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DOWN

1. Pertaining to the life of a hermit
2. Centimeter cubed; abbrev
3. The unit of money in Japan
4. A document of the Vatican II Council
5. Like a lion
6. Work in Latin
7. University
11. The smallest particle of a chemical element
12. The head of the Dominican Order
14. The past tense of was
17. Order of Preachers; abbrev
18. Objects such as sculpture, painting or drawing
22. He lives with prophet Samuel
24. The country of Leo Messi
25. Third person pronoun, singular
28. African Union; abbrev
29. Having two parts or aspects
30. Local Network; abbrev
33. Defending champions of Euro cup
34. A law book
35. An inert gas
37. Central Association; abbrev
40. Wine in French
43. Same as 28 down
47. American Broadcasting Company; abbrev
49. Type of beer, usually sold in cans
51. Used to introduce another possibility
52. Used to say hello
53. United Nations; abbrev

ACROSS

1. Official letters written by the pope
5. Open University; abbrev
7. Uniform Resource; abbrev
8. Same as 37 across
9. New
10. Building made to hold dead bodies
13. International Movement Of Catholic Students; abbrev
14. Risk money by predicting the results
15. Salvation Army; abbrev
16. Information Technology; abbrev
17. A person who knows a lot about wine
19. 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
20. General motion ; abbrev
21. Registered Nurse; abbrev
22. Estimated time; abbrev
23. Containing tow atoms of the same type
25. Used when referring to God.
26. Tease
27. Priest of the highest rank.
31. Irish Republic; abbrev
32. A mendicant order congregation.
35. Extra large; abbrev.
36. Same as 47 across.
37. Common Era; abbrev
38. Neurolinguist ; abbrev
39. Ultraviolet; abbrev
41. Average
42. Connected with ships
43. Friend in French

41. Library
42. Intensive care unit; abbrev
43. No.
44. East Africa; abbrev
50. An inert gas
53. Universal Resource Locator; abbrev.
54. A gift presented to Baby Jesus at the Manger.

Jokes By Kang'ethe Robert

A man loses everything due to drinking. One day he discovers some bottles in the house and starts smashing them shouting, "because of you, my wife and children left me...." He smashes three bottles and then discovers a fourth one

which has not been opened with its content in order. He holds, smiles and says to the bottle, "You stay aside you were not involved in the mess. Your case is different!!!"

Kim and Mwash went to a mini-mart and Kim managed to shoplift three candy bars without being noticed. When they got out, Kim starts bragging to Mwash how he is the best. Mwash who had not seen it happening tells him, "let me show you real stealing." So they go back to the minimart and Mwash says to the teller, "I want to show you magic, but you must give me a candy bar first." So he gets a candy bar the requests for another one. On the third candy, the teller complains, "but I can't see the magic!!" Mwash smiles at the teller and says, "Now you can find them in my friend's pockets!!!"

As a teacher, I stopped asking small children some types of questions after I asked them one day, "what do you call a person who keeps talking even when no one is listening?" one child said from the back "a teacher!!"

Personal Prayer of Pedro Arrupe

Grant me, O Lord, to see everything with new eyes,
to discern and test the spirits
that help me read the signs of the times,
to relish the things that are yours, and to
communicate them to others.
Give me the clarity of understanding that you gave
Ignatius.

