



RAFIKI

May 2013

A publication of Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate, Arusha Tanzania.



I HAVE BEEN PRUNED



Tanzania



Uganda



Sudan



Kenya



Ethiopia



South Sudan

Editorial

Dear Friends,

On May 16th 1655, precisely 358 years ago, one Jesuit died a very painful but extraordinarily heroic death in Poland. Fr Andrew Bobola SJ, who committed his life to bringing souls to Christ to the extent of being nicknamed 'soul hunter' by his adversaries, set an example worth emulating about following Christ and Christ alone under the banner of the cross. He suffered martyrdom because he strongly believed that he would rather lose his life in this world and gain an eternal one in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The presentation of this issue of Rafiki coincidentally coincides with the memorial of this Saint. Besides that AOR Province also presents to the Society a team of nine new Jesuits ready to commit their lives to the service of Christ our Lord in this least Society of Jesus.



They share their lives in this issue, their vocation journeys, and the experience they have gone through in the novitiate, familiar to all Jesuits but unique to each individual. They are ready to go to their next missions, spread worlds apart, to bring Christ to those they will encounter and to continue living out their vocations as Jesuits.

Parting with them is tough for us, after having created a family, but it is only in doing that they will be freely available for the service that is part of their vocation.

We thank you our readers for being close to our frail efforts as a team here in the novitiate. We are also very grateful for your feedback, a lot of it, it tells us we have brothers who care. Thank you, and have a nice read.

Tobias Dindi Ong'aria, Editor.



Formators' Desk.....

Dear Companions, Greetings!

We are privileged to see the things that have been happening these days. ***"Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear"*** (Mt 13:16). Two events so far in this year 2013 have astounded both the Church and the world, viz., a Resignation and an Election of a Pope. Pope Benedict XVI, a revered scholar and a great theologian, took the bold step of stepping down from the Petrine Ministry citing his age as the reason. And the Cardinals brought in Pope Francis, a First in many respects, from 'the end of the world.' Francis is a Name and a Mission. His words are simple, his gestures and actions are small yet profound, and people get the message. We wish our Holy Father all success in his mission of portraying to the world a Church that is poor and which is at the service of the poor, and in initiating the much desired 'Franciscan Reform' in the Vatican administration.

Today (May 16) nine of our novices pronounced their First Vows in the Society. At the end of the mass the provincial presented them each with a crucifix to remind them that their life will be like that of the one on the cross. GC35 says that Jesuits know who they are by looking at Jesus. It is good for us all to remember the words of Pope Francis: ***when we journey without the cross, when we build without the cross and when we confess a Christ without the cross, we are not disciples of the Lord: we are worldly, we are bishops, priests, cardinals, popes, but not disciples of the Lord.*** (from his first homily addressed to the Cardinals).

The present issue of RAFIKI has a lot of material, especially from the outgoing Secundi, who share with us their experiences of the novitiate life. We warmly appreciate and thank all those who made this issue possible. We hope you will enjoy reading them. Insha Allah, in this year (2013) of surprises, on 10th of June, I will be completing 50 years of my life as a Jesuit. I invite you all to join me **in spirit** on that day to thank the Lord for all that He has been to me all my life.

Fraternally,

Lourduraj Arokiasamy, S.J.

CONTENTS

Rafiki May 2013 Issue



The Rafiki editorial team: From left; Burka Usara Gelato, Oscar Angaga Nduri, Tobias Dindi Ong'aria, and Fr. Lourduraj Arokiasamy, SJ.

We thank Oscar Angaga Nduri heartily for his dedication to Rafiki during his life in the Novitiate. He proceeds for Philosophical studies in India, we wish him well in his mission.

Cover photo



Vowmen from left; Dominic Mutuku, SJ, Oscar Angaga Nduri, SJ, Joseph Mathenge, SJ, and Robert Kangethe, SJ

Inset; Novitiate class of 2013 with Fr. General Adolfo Nicolas, SJ during the Procurators Congregation in Nairobi, 2012.



When they were nSJ

Novice (Now Fr.) Mubangizi Odomaro shares his experience of the experiments in Nairobi with the poor in the slums, as published in the Rafiki issue of December 1995.

Page 8

HAVE A NICE READ!!!

I have been pruned

Kangethe Robert reflects on the Novitiate experience

Page 4

What Next?

Mathenge Joseph explores the experiences, learning and moments of growth in the Novitiate.

Page 5

Apostolates— touching the lives of others.

David Kiprono shares the experience of a novice in the apostolate.

Page 10

The Art of Choosing

Borrowing from a book with the same title, Mark Kimario reflects on the value of discerning the will of God, the Ignatian way.

Page 11

Interviews

Fr. Amadeus Shirima, SJ, the Novice master talks to Rafiki about the process of formation as Fr Steven Nzioki, SJ, the former Vocations Director talks about preparation for Novitite

Page 14

And Much more!!!!

Rafiki Magazine, Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate, P.o. Box 1726 Arusha Tanzania.

gonzafiki@gmail.com

I have been pruned

**Kang'ethe Robert**

Two years down the line and when I look back, I ask myself two fundamental questions. Why did I join the novitiate in the first place? Secondly, as I finish this stage of formation, have I achieved what I really wanted? I will try to answer these questions with flashbacks on what my experiences have been before and after I joined the novitiate.

I come from a background which has been influenced to a great extent by self-centeredness of the society; and this particular factor has found its way into my life. As I grew up, my immediate society taught me to be the best of the best, something I never achieved anyway. In school, it was either I win or lose; there was no room for losing. And so I entered in the line of competition, not just in school but in all places. As the competition grew, it became unhealthy and with it came vices which made me lose that vital communion with God. What the society should have taught me was to be the best I could be but not the best of the best. But how could the society teach me this, when the people themselves are in the line of competition?

As I became independent with a job I climbed the ladder and got a social status among my peers and those that I worked with. A high-paying job and great friends such as I had don't come

easily; but I had them. And don't forget this beautiful girl of my life, who would make my heart go 'yori yori...!'

Regardless of all these, there was always a part of me that felt incomplete; I felt empty-hearted. I wasn't bearing fruit to the maximum. And so, I got out of the box, to find out whether I could fix this void in my heart that never seemed to get enough of what I offered it. I landed in the hands of the Jesuits who have since showed me what this void needs. The greatest of what I have come to get from the Jesuits is that Music that St. Ignatius heard at Manresa and passed it on to the generations succeeding him. The Spiritual Exercises! (SpEx).

As I went for the SpEx, I had one thing in mind: to spend time with God. And I surely got more than just the time. During this wonderful encounter with God, I went through emotional pathways where my hope had been tangled. As I solemnly meditated and contemplated on the Gospel, I took-in the significance of Christ's death on the cross. A part of me which I was oblivious to its existence came to life propelling me to understand deeply who Christ is for me.

Coming from the Spiritual Exercises, I had something purposeful in me; the kind of look an aspirant saint would carry with him from the wilderness.

But it is not easy to accomplish this purpose; there are many factors which come along and I realized just how limited I am. For instance; I would have liked to visit and assist the poor around the village but I realized that I didn't have the resources I needed.

But I do appreciate the grace to remember them in my prayers and to pop in once in a while and give them a reassuring smile.

Prayer, I dare say, is a very complicated and difficult thing that trying to explain what I have gone through won't make a lot of sense. But I have learnt the theory and practical part of this puzzle. If you are lax, you will hear something like, 'you are tepid.' On the other hand if you are too serious and want perfection, someone will remind you that you are *scrupulous!* What should one do? I don't know but I can tell you my secret; **Always be present for prayer!** You will realize that God is always present; He does not miss in action.

Physical work, '*Manualia*', as it is famously known in the novitiate, has been a moment that I have loved as I challenge myself. 'Mediocrity has no place in Ignatius' world view.' This quote by Fr. Peter Kolvenbach is very famous among the Jesuits. It's an invitation to go for *Magis!*

Like any other novice in the novitiate, I involved myself in community work, using my little skills and talents where applicable in seeking for *Magis*.

I have been pruned

Cont'd from Page 4

However, I couldn't help grinning one day when I was reminded that I needed to seek permission to carry out the same task that I had been assigned to do. Has this got something to do with the vow of *Obedience*?

I thought I had become an over-creative novice or maybe I was becoming a workaholic; am not sure. The latter is possible in a community set-up. The issue of having to explain everything you do maybe demoralizing!

What to do? Be positive and if you have a sense of humor like me, you will have a good time and be able to focus on the big picture. That's how I have lived my external challenges. I have learnt to laugh off some things which tend to pull me down unnecessarily.

On the other hand, I admit that transformation is no easy task. I didn't join the novitiate a perfect man and am not leaving a perfect man either. On a day like this, I would like to have some little fun but the vow of *Poverty* which I am about to take comes in and actually it's accompanied by the bluebook!! I end up doing things that in retrospect, I also agree I have done excessively. And don't ask me for an example, they are too many. In any case, mentioning one shortcoming is an injustice to the others. I mean, I have struggled with thoughts, words and deeds.

One thing I am sure about is that, the full implications of this transformation cannot be fully grasped unless one generously opens his heart and asks for the grace to be able to accept oneself. Openness and trust are the keywords to transformation.

I have discovered a lovely part of myself caught and suppressed by a whirlpool of deep-seated and shocking secrets and life's passions. But bringing up this beautiful part must start with humility which is no mean feat. In fact, am sure I have a long way to go before I achieve this humility. But I appreciate what I have learnt in the novitiate; I have already got a kick-start on that. If you wonder how, then here it is.

From working with spanners on flying machines, working in an office where aviation law was the language of the day to cleaning the dogs has been the most radical change in my life so far. But the ability to embrace this change couldn't have been greater. I thank God for the grace to go through this and the continued desire to greater humility with all the challenges ahead. In this way, I have therefore been pruned and prepared to bear fruits as I enter the next stage of formation.

What next

Joseph Mathenge

It all started with a lot of jubilation when I received a phone call from the vocations director to confirm my acceptance to join the novitiate. When I try to relate the events, it seems just like the other day though a lot of events have unfolded. Now the time has ripened and soon scholastics we will be.

Generally the two years have been a grace filled time. The daily experiences have been a learning moment. The way the novitiate programme is structured, it allows the integration of other things and makes the life balanced. The Spiritual Exercises, the apostolates, the villas and outings, the experiments and the class work. They kill the boredom and monotony and there is always something new ahead to look forward to.

I will confess that I benefited a lot from the spiritual Exercises and one major thing I learnt is the image of God in my life. I came to realize that He is my father who has a motherly compassionate heart. Also, it was a moment to deepen my spiritual life, and I am convinced that I am not the same as I joined this place; for this, I also appreciate my spiritual director. Novitiate life is a normal life; by this I mean it has its ups and downs. He has always been there ready to listen to me.

The experiments have been a moment to integrate what we have learnt during the community service. This chance also opened a window to interact with senior Jesuits. It has also been a moment of self awareness and self discovery. Among the many things that have happened, I have also managed to bring to the surface some of my weaknesses and strengths. It has been a moment to embrace and learn to cope with what is hard to unlearn.

For a good period I have been working as a driver and looking after vehicles. This has given me a chance to serve all of the society, from the novices, scholastics, novice master, provincial and Father General. After the final day of the procurators meeting, I was driving Fr General to Pedro Arrupe community from *Chemi chemi* where the congregation was held. He was holding the briefcase containing what was discussed in the congregation and in a joke he told me, 'Now the whole society is on your hands.' I said the *Nunc Dimitis* like Simeon in the temple when Baby Jesus was presented in his hand. This apostolate has given me a chance also to serve the outside society. One Sunday morning I found myself in the doors of the morgue. A neighbour died at night in the locality and the community requested for a vehicle to help take the body to mortuary.

It has been lined with many unforgettable instances. Late last year as we were preparing the songs to record for the novitiate CD, I was to sing alto which is ladies voice, this was terrible. The choir master really harassed my voice though I managed. The many evening we ate "choma" together as a community; all these are sweet unforgettable memories

The companionship and the brotherhood have made this life worth living. I was always sure to get a shoulder to lean on when things seemed not to work as I expected. The friendship has made me understand 'me' even the time I found it hard to understand who I am. This time that has really transformed me, it has shaped me to be who I am currently.

To Be a Leader means to be a Slave to Others

Mkoba Martin

When Jesus had finished washing the feet of his Disciples he asked; "Do you understand what I have done to you?" You call me "Teacher and Lord", for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, I



have set for you an example that you too should wash one another's feet. (Jn. 13:12-15)

It is not easy to be a leader. All eyes look at how you act, talk, judge and how you behave in general. They will expect a lot from you, but the truth of the matter is, a leader can do nothing without the support of others around him/her. We hear many complaints about leaders across the World; the question is, what do we do to help them instead of complaining and trading accusations? Everyone is a leader in his position and follow what Jesus said, "you should wash one another's feet".

My experience as Coordinator in the Novitiate community was a great one because it taught me a lot about leadership. From my experience, the weapon that helps in Leadership is humility and accepting challenges from those you lead.

It came as a surprise to me when I was assigned as the coordinator; I had no experience at all in leadership. I thank

God though, that with the support of my Brothers the work was made easy. Whenever I got stuck, I looked for help from Brothers who would advise me on the way to go, and when a problem got big, the formators would be there to help. Generally I did benefit because this position helped me to be courageous, to face and talk to my brothers even sometimes confronting each other when necessary for the glory of God.

I would like to express my gratitude to all my Brothers first and second years alike for their advice, support and help during the time I served as the coordinator. I thank them very much for correcting me from time to time

whenever I went wrong. Without forgetting to express my sincere thanks to the formators for the great role they have played to help and correct me in order to match with my Brothers.

As humans sometimes it is very easy to misuse positions to benefit oneself; I would like to express my regret for the mistakes I made ; I know one area of my weakness and I put effort to overcome; anger. I discovered I get angry easily, I work on this and am still trying. They say even glasses in the basket can not avoid crushing each other. So let us forgive each other as Jesus taught us.

My advice to all my Brothers is to urge them to abide with the Novitiate Rules and Regulations so as to get the good Formation intended in order to be a good Jesuit who is a strong soldier of Christ, who can stand without fear to defend the Church and the people. Lastly, let us pray for the poor, especially, Widows, those who are H.I.V positive and Street children who have nothing to eat and nowhere to sleep. In finally, let us pray for one another in this Journey of our Vocation. Amen

I AM TWO YEARS OLDER!!!

Henry Karanja

May 24th 2011, we came to the Novitiate, green and ready to cruise through these murky waters of discernment. Chinua Achebe would say; what a young man sees standing, an older one sees while seated. This is the same feeling I have after these two years. It has been long yet very short, I can't believe that I have started been nostalgic even before Fr. Shirima shows us the door after our time is due here.

After so much uncertainties', anxieties, joys, fun, we now call it a day, Thanks be to God who has shown us the way despite everything. It's in this place that I have made friends whom I will cherish for a long time, every little or great thing they did to make this two year stay fruitful, I thank them. The formators have been father figures, that even when things weren't working they were still there laying in wait for their prodigal sons to return. I would sincerely want to apologize to everyone whom I made life unbearable; these were moments that were defining the person that I ought to be. I have gained a lot and I give my regards to all for making me whom I am right now. God Bless you all, and may He keep the Society strong and vibrant. AMASEGINALOH!

Jesuit Novitiate, a Home of Love

Oscar Nduri

On 24th May 2011 at 8.30 am, nine candidates from Kenya and Uganda who had been accepted to join the Society of Jesus left Nairobi for Arusha, in the company of the then Vocations Promoter, Steven Nzioki SJ and two scholastics. By 2.00 pm we reached Njiro-Korona and were warmly received by the Novitiate Community.

The other three candidates from Tanzania joined us and before Mass, we greeted one another as well as the novices. After tea at 4.00 pm, each one of us was led to a neatly arranged room that was to be the abode for the coming six months.

During dinner, we (candidates) were honoured to serve ourselves first as the rest of the Novitiate Community sang us a wonderful song. This warm gesture of love made me feel truly at home.

Later on, each one of us met his 'angel,' the novice tasked with the responsibility of briefing a candidate about the Blue Book; a set of rules and guidelines by which novitiate is governed. In addition, the angel introduces us to the Ignatian Spirituality and the Prayer of the Church (Breviary).

My 'angel' with his background as a teacher of Divinity, edified me a lot. He attentively listened to the questions that I asked him and gently responded to them. Above all, he presented the best lesson when he kept the promise of joining me in the evening for sessions of praying with the Scriptures during the first two weeks.

As the saying goes, "You can't know where you're going, if you don't know where you're coming from,"

I was greatly enriched by the session of introduction which was done by the novices during the first week.

Their openness, challenged me into unreservedly sharing my life history as well as the expectations I had of the Society of Jesus.

The world over, games are played with the main aim of winning. Not even the Jesuit Novices are ex-



empted from this notion. Many a time we forget about the care for the brother and focus our attention on the ball. One day, while running very fast, I tried to dribble the ball past my friend, Vincent. He forgot about the ball; hit my legs sending me down.

A few minutes later, as we tried to outrun each other so as to control the ball, I pushed Vincent and so he fell with so much force on the ground. Could somebody say that malice informed our actions? Not at all, we accidentally hurt one another while playing, and being companions in the Lord we buried the hatchet in the field and while at table during dinner, jokingly remarked: "Today the Generals were vanquished!"

In 2011 during my term as a work assigner, I fell victim of the view commonly held that power corrupts and does so absolutely. In preparation for receiving second year novices who had gone for their apostolic experiment, I assigned some of the first year novices, three rooms to clean within an hour. This was occasioned by shortage of manpower since the rest were to work in the ranch.

Those assigned raised their concerns to me. However, I ignored their sentiments. As a result, they had to work past the stipulated time. Surprisingly, when I apologized for not having listened to their side of story, they readily accepted my apology. If this is not an act of love, then I don't know what qualify as one!

During the two-month experiment in Addis Ababa, I was diagnosed as having Typhus and Typhoid. For some time, I had bed rest while undergoing treatment. All my needs were catered for; the Jesuits from the Notre Dame Community would visit me from time to time, monitoring progress and wishing me a quick recovery. This was supplemented by the efforts of my companion for the experiment, Henry, who kept me busy by narrating one story after the other, such that the effects of pains were lessened.

The cordial relationship we had enhanced integration with the workers of the Mother Teresa facility for the destitute, the poor and the dying. It also offered encouragement to university students aspiring to join the Society of Jesus whom we briefed about life in a Jesuit Novitiate. No wonder Jesus says, "As I have loved you, so you should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:34-35).

Vocation Prayer

Loving God

Help e to know clearly
the work that you are
calling me to in my life.

Walk with me and
strengthen me with
your grace so that I
might answer your call.

Grant me charity, love,
generosity and a lasting
dedication to do your
will.

I offer this prayer
through Christ Our
Lord

Amen

All the liberty and
power of the world
compared to the power
and liberty of the Spirit
of God, is but supreme
slavery, wretchedness
and captivity

All the wisdom of the
world, and all human
cunning, compared to
the infinite Wisdom of
God, is simple and su-
preme ignaorance, 'for
the wisdom of this
world is fooloishness
with God,... They
alone attain to Divine
Wisdom who like chil-
dren and ignorant ones,
lay aside their own wis-
dom and serve God in
Love

When They Were nSJ.

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

Evangelized by the poor

Mubangizi Odomaro, nSJ

As soon as I and companion, Elias, arrived at St Joseph the worker Kangemi, Fr John, SJ informed us that our experience was to be an 'insertion' among the poor. In our multifarious apostolate I taught at St Martin's Kibagare, where I also served food to kids, split firewood, shaved, played and talked with the kids. Twice a week I used to visit a slum next door to St Martin's Centre.

Back at St Joseph the Worker parish, I had an opportunity to pray with the small Christian communities and to be with the junior youth on Sundays. As I progressed in my apostolate, one idea struck me. That the poor and marginalized are eloquent evangelizers if only one is not insulated against them. In the faces of orphans, street children and slum dwellers I could see the face of the disfigured and suffering Christ.

The impoverished orphans valued affection and after establishing trust with me, we became very intimate friends. During meals they would offer me their perennial food *githeri* (mixture of maize and beans) and despite the language barrier we were in close communication.

In sharp contrast was the experience with the affluent and bloody rich residents of Loresho and Mountain View estates. I always passed through the well built mansions, well kept lanes and the spacious flower gardens of the two estates.

In the first place, I never had a chance to speak with any of the residents since all their houses or better, mansions were heavily guarded by all sorts of security companies. On the road, the story is the same since they travel in their BMWs. The few times I risked to say 'good morning' to someone coming out of the gate, I got no response.

The few times I visited the small Christian communities, I met the poor sharing their faith in the Eucharist. They have also defined the church as a family of Love and

communion. This is eloquently expressed in their support for the church, concern for the sick and displaced among them.

For my two months' stay at St Joseph and St Martin's, I learnt with great wonder from the school of evangelization, that is, the poor. More than ever before, the preferential love and option for the poor became for me a



must if I am to be a companion of Jesus. The three crucial questions in the first week (Sp Ex 53); 'what have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Chriat? Are clearly written in the faces of the poor but one must be ready to take a close look at the most often unattractive face of the poor. After learning from the school of the poor, then one can have enough spiritual capital to evangelize the church.

ANNIVERSARY— Mutuku Dominic

It is said that one has to stay focused to his or her purpose and let the universe take care of everything else. Well, two years down the line I stepped my feet on this Holy Land having left behind everything not to mention my beloved mum; *but do I say?* I was eager and looking forward to travel abroad and join the Society of Jesus having been accepted sometimes in April 2011. I will not say leaving home was easy, since convincing the family and friends I was going for two years without any break in-between was not easy. But finally I left for this far country-Tanzania-for my novitiate formation in this least Society of Jesus.

The experience I am about to share dates back to 24th May 2011 to the present and due to limited space I will summarize. First, I feel humbled, and would like to whisper a 'thanks' to all who have participated to making this, seemed- to-be- long, journey a success. I remember well the first welcome we received and the parade of honor staged by the companions we met the first time we stepped in the novitiate. It was a welcome which I cannot live to forget and that cemented my stay in this Land of our ancestors. We were twelve candidates accompanied by our Vocations Promoter, Stephen Nzioki, SJ and now, as I call to mind that day, nine of us has managed this far. With the 'least apostle' I would firmly agree 'I have finished the race, I have kept the faith, not only me but all who started this journey on May 24th 2011.'

After the two weeks of being guests-NOVI- we were officially received as novices. In one of our earlier sharings with the rest of the community, I was asked by a companion what my expectation was for these two years. Well, I thought two weeks period in the Novitiate was not enough for me to clarify my expectation yet I had close to one hundred and four weeks if I were to be around for the two years. My response was that I expected to finish Novitiate; but I guess a little voice said to me then 'without me you can do nothing.' It has been a moment of learning about the Society of Jesus and our Lord Jesus Christ and I am still growing in this knowledge; oh God help me! As any other Jesuit would share, I

went for the Spiritual Exercises shortly after reporting in the Novitiate. It was a great moment with my creator and it was this time I felt God was the one who called me. It was four weeks of prayer and reflections and I am more than convinced that I am living my fifth week, courtesy of the Spiritual Exercises. Afterwards I was missioned for two more long experiments in Mwanza and Dar es Salaam respectively. In the former, I worked in a Referral Hospital for the two months and stayed in a Jesuit community whereas in the latter I worked with Missionaries of Charity sisters in their home for elderly and the orphaned. It was not an easy task in both cases but God's grace took me through; as I would believe if God sends you on stony ground He provides you with strong shoes. I felt with the suffering, the sick and even with the dying. If Christ being the son of God suffered then we are all meant to undergo suffering and accept it as Christ did.

What about inside the novitiate? I left my family as I said before and united with several other candidates to join a new family. Over the period of these two years, I am glad to note that I have never regretted leaving my biological family. Community life has been a central aspect for my stay here and I am proud of our community. The quality of life in the Novitiate I would say comes down to the quality of one's contribution. And as many Jesuits who come and go share, 'a community is as good as its members'. It has been our home and sometimes I will like to cook a meal that everyone in the house likes. There is time for everything; prayer, study, work, Holy Mass, recreation, play and the Blue Book will give the rest. On a lighter note I can't afford a laugh when a companion says "your mother thinks you came here to pray, if only she would see you doing this". This is especially on Tuesdays, Thursdays or Saturdays which the famous Blue Book refers to Manualia days. I think any other Novice would agree with me that the Blue Book is the most famous book in the Novitiate though seems the least read yet its not only available in the Library but in each one's room. But ask anybody what the timetable says on such and ssuc and the reply would be "well, consult the Blue

Book". It qualifies to be the Novitiate Constitutions and it undergoes amendments year after year to ensure it's up to date. Fr. Master, next comes the Blue Book.

There are memorable moments in any given society, I suppose. In the Novitiate I have several but I will live to remember one; 'choir'. It is believed singing is every man's birthright but it certainly never was mine. It enriches the celebration of the liturgy and more so the Holy Mass. I very much like Gospel Music but singing myself, God knows. All choirmasters would tell you I am blessed with up to seven voices though they cannot be traced in the keyboard. These vary from Soprano through Bass. As many know, we succeeded to record a CD and I think my voices were of great help though I was asked to major on Alto. It was not automatic to major on Alto and many prayed for a donor to offer a free scholarship in order that I must learn to sing and not disgrace the human race. All in all, the CD was out and hot-selling through Arusha in the same way ice cream would sell in India. There are plans to produce a Video to this but unfortunately they will miss my alto-hope in the next intake they will get one even if it's a contra-alto. And by the way, it's this gift of singing which took me to Nairobi to animate mass during the Congregation of Procurators -my first time being outside Tanzania since May 2011.

We have been living the vows-poverty, chastity and Obedience during this period. The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus says it all. I will not dilute any of the vows whatsoever. I suppose being poor creates in some a desire to be rich and rebellion against having one's own will crossed is a plague to obedience. For chastity, I now agree that if a man gives up his freedom for a woman he loves, it's also possible for a man to give up a woman for Christ. Being a second year student, many will ask what we will be remembered for. Well, you may remember us for: the first May Group (change of entry date to AOR Novitiate), and the election of first Jesuit Pope-His Holiness Pope Francis.

Thank you!

Apostolates -Touching the lives of others



Kiprono David

A novice is a beginner. Daily he sits at the feet of Jesus to listen to and learn from him. He always seeks to know his will and to follow his teachings.

One of the important arts that a novice learns in the novitiate is that of community life. He learns how to live with others despite their differences; he learns how to become a brother to people from all parts of the world. In essence, community life starts from inside the novitiate. In many instances he does come in contact with Jesuits from all over the world and that is how he learns to be part of the human race rather than identify himself with a small group of people from a certain village.

Apart from the novitiate community, the novice learns to interact with people outside. Most of the Fridays are spent outside the novitiate, in the apostolate. The novice gets a chance to share whatever treasure he has with others outside. He knows that interacting with people is not only a means of social growth but of spiritual and intellectual too. The novice has a burning 'candle' which he uses to light the candles of others, and he would like to light as many candles as possible since he is aware that his flame will by no means be reduced. He is always aware that he does his apostolate in response to the commissioning by Jesus the Lord, to make others know Him, to minister to them according to their needs and his own abilities.

Another important apostolate that the novice engages in is village apostolate. On Saturdays or Sundays, he goes out with his companions to meet the people of God surrounding his

community to share life with them. Through village apostolate, the novice gets to know what experiences other people are going through: joys, sorrows, struggles and other such dynamics of life. He presents himself to face the questions which people ask about matters of faith, life skills, religious life, studies in the case of students etc. People outside would like to know for example why a young man with a potential of getting a well paying job and raising a beautiful family would decide to abandon everything and join religious life. Many people hear about Jesuits and have no idea of what the society is or is all about, while others have not even heard about Jesuits. Many more have all sorts of information from hearsay or from the internet, a lot of which is false and malicious. The novice avails himself to tackle such issues so as at least to help those who would like to get the correct information. Often he finds questions which he may not be able to answer, and this gives him a challenge to go and research and hence get more informed.

When he meets the poor and the sick in the villages, he consoles them and prays with them. He tries to help them feel part of the society. He shares their experiences and may offer his opinion and his own experiences to try and help them. At times he may encounter people with too much need and so he has to share whatever material he may have at his disposal. This is the generosity which his Lord teaches him.

At the end of every apostolate, the novice comes back to the novitiate with a full package of experiences that people are going through. He will scan his memory during his *examen* in the evening to thank God for the consoling experiences and to offer petitions for those going through desolations. His life is the sum total of the entire experiences he has gone through; he is neither too happy because of the sad experiences, nor too sad due to the joyful ones. All these make him a complete human being; his satisfaction is to have touched the life of someone.



Prayer for

**HIS HOLINESS POPE
FRANCIS**

O God, shepherd and ruler of all the faithful

Look favorably on your servant Pope Francis,

Whom you have set at the head of your church as the shepherd; grant we pray, that by word and example,

he may be of service to those whom he presides so that, together with the flock entrusted to his care, he may come to everlasting life.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for Ever and ever.

Amen.

The Art Of Choosing

Kimario Mark Constantine

It is the beginning of a new dawn in which I have a lot of decisions to make. In all these decisions I have to make choices. These choices are what make me who I am. They shape me and make up my life. My choices need to take a deeper dimension which is a need to know God's will for me. I'm encountering a lot of choices in my daily life, sometimes involving big decisions. The questions which come up are; what is the will of God for me? What does he really want? Am I doing what he wants me to do? Jesus himself said he always does the will of 'the one who sent him' (John5:38). He even said he is longing to see that he accomplishes his Father's will (Luke12:50). And when things became tough he still prayed for God's will to be done (Mark14:36).

As I'm about to make my choices fear and doubt invade my mind. These two forces are trying to push me to avoid, to ignore and sometimes to postpone the decisions I'm about to make basing on the choices. But I remember that any decision has its own clockwork-timing. Of course we delay the decisions because they are hard to make. Delaying the decision for too long can cause the worst decision to be made as we eventually try to beat time. Here comes uncertainty and darkness but God is still waiting for me to surrender myself to his will.

Sometimes after gathering all the facts required for making the choice, I'm faced with another hurdle. Fear of commitment; to be directly responsible for my choices. Any choice brings a commitment and humans do not commit themselves easily and this can lead us into trying to shift burdens and attributing them to others.

In the course of the day, just before lunchtime, I'm faced with another dilemma; why did I do what I did? Is God the reason why I do what I do? What is my primary motive? Is it because of safety, recognition, pleasure, fame, power or love for God? Am I not trying to manipulate God for my own personal interest? Are my motives not an obstacle towards building

an intimate relationship with God? I go on examining all these for they will help me shape my personal relationship with God and be able to do his will.

As I move on through the day, I remember what St. Ignatius says to me in the *Spiritual Exercises (SpEx)* regarding making my choices in finding God's will. He requires the eye of my intention to be simple (*SpEx179*). While I reflect on this, I encounter Carlos G. Valles, SJ clarifying it to me that, I need a "clear eyesight, a healthy eye, unimpaired vision, a straight view i.e. singleness of purpose, clarity of mind, definiteness of intention". Immediately, another question comes up; how can I achieve this while I'm still attached to many things (Inordinate attachment *SpEx179*)? Immediately I am able to see how my attachments are turning what is supposed to be a means to an end (*SpEx169*). Am I allowing this to take me astray from my goal? I also remember what I've just been told; Listen to and follow your conscience (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church-CCC1777*). But how sure am I that my conscience is well formed in order to be able to make the right choices? (*CCC1783-1785*).The battle inside continues for some time.

More than that God keeps reminding me, for the rest of the day, that he wants a clear choice. He never entertains compromise. He wants me to make a right choice and to give myself fully to him unconditionally and wholehearted as Jesus made it clear (Mk8:34). He continues insisting on it by showing how important it is not to compromise on my choices. He also makes it clear to me that I can't have both but I need to choose and decide (Mt6:24).

At the end of the day I ask myself; have I gained enough clarity to make my choices? Basing on reasoning and judgment; where is God leading me as pertains a particular choice (*SpEx178-183*)? Before I retire, it comes into my mind that every choice is love. Every choice that I make depends on the love I have for God after knowing the purpose of my life and being ready to follow that purpose. Knowing and doing the will of God is what brings

joy and gives meaning to life. It is not easy to achieve that. It's by listening to God who can speak to me through various ways that I can be able to know his will for me and make the right choices. Today it may seem to be easy but tomorrow it may turn out to be difficult given the fact that discernment is a lifetime process and choices (both difficult and obvious) are to be made in various circumstances in our everyday life. I sleep hoping that tomorrow I'll be able to make my daily choices with increasing faith, understanding and joy.

Value prayer

Lord it is good for us to be here together, it is together that we live out the values in our lives

We value time. Make us aware of the importance of taking time with you and with one another. We seem to be busy doing that often we forget simple to 'be'

We value sight. Clear our eyes so that we might break the stereotypes we have of people, which keep them in chains instead of leading them to freedom

We value listening. Help us to listen not only to with our ears but also with our hearts so that we might heal the wounds that have separated us

We value ourselves. Let us discover once again the unique qualities that have been given to us through our creation. Let us live out these qualities so that we can help create a new world; a world of peace, a world of truth, and a world of justice

Aileen Doyle

Breaking the Chains

Kiprono Ng'etich

Fr. Anthony De Mello, SJ attributed all our sadness and frustrations to the attachments that we have on objects around us. I first wondered what he meant by that but now I agree with him. St. Ignatius of Loyola in his Spiritual Exercises talks about inordinate attachments. He asks the exercitant to get rid of such attachments so as to attain indifference which means freedom or deliverance.

There are so many attachments around us. To start with, we know that man has inherent need for possession, and so it follows that we all have attachment to property.

“What does it benefit a man to own the whole world and forfeit his own life?” (Mark 8:36) This verse was used by Ignatius to challenge his friend, Francis Xavier, on the issue of detachment from this world, before they founded the Society of Jesus. This question presents the two possibilities so as to choose one and to let go the other.

The story of Job in the Old Testament depicts an epitome of detachment to property and even persons. He was indifferent enough to bear the loss of property, servants and even his own children.

The rich man who could not detach from his wealth walked away from Jesus (Mark 10:35-41). All the struggles he had gone through in keeping the commandments were rendered fruitless by his attachment to wealth.

You will agree with me that it is not easy to detach one's self from things like a mobile phone, for example. A cell phone is a very small gadget but very useful. Having used it for a while, it becomes almost like a part of you. So far I have had to part with my phone in two incidences: one, I was in Nairobi and if you have already guessed what happened, you are right. Someone got into a *matatu* (a public transport vehicle) and sat next to me.

I thought he was my fellow traveller, but he jumped out as soon as the vehicle started moving. Soon I realized that I had lost my phone. I was confused and did not know what to do. I could not easily accept that it was gone; I kept checking my pocket several times just in case I might not have checked it correctly. Well, you might have gone through a similar experience maybe more than once. The second incidence was when I was joining the novitiate. It took me a while before I could figure out how I would survive without it. The only good thing is that I was informed in good time that I would part with it, so I had a couple of months to break the chains of attachment to it. In fact for a few weeks in the novitiate, I used to find my hand in the pocket trying to search for the phone. I later felt so free without the hooks of a mobile phone on me.

The psalmist (Ps 62:11) urges people of God to be indifferent to wealth, “Even if wealth should increase, do not set your heart on them”.

People who are obsessed with the need of possession will never get contented with what they have or what they legitimately earn. That is why corruption, stealing and robbery are so rampant in our world. Many rich people cannot sleep at night. Instead of enhancing sleep, the silence of night provides an opportunity for them to fantasise, to keep planning and undoing the plans on how to increase their wealth and protect it, until morning. It is not surprising also to discover a religious person who should be living the vow of poverty, running a personal account with millions of shillings.

Secondly, we all have attachment to home and loved ones. Detaching from home and from loved ones is not a simple task; however, for missionaries there is no option. Imagine what it was for the missionaries like Francis Xavier to leave Europe and head for Asia in the 16th century, on a journey full of uncertainties. Where exactly would be his destination and who was there to receive him at a place where people communicate in a strange language? He was ready to get into the sea not knowing whether he would find himself ashore due to the perilous voyages of those days, leave alone the question as to whether he would ever come back to Europe again.

His only motivating factor was the salvation of souls, and so when Ignatius asked him whether he would go, his answer was simple and instant: “Good enough, I am ready.” The same applies to Mateo Ricci who had to go to China. He had overcome attachment to family, to Europe where he would obviously be comfortable among the people he knew, and even to his culture and that is why he could easily immerse himself into the Chinese culture, language and mode of dressing (no attachment even to his black cassock which was the habit of the Jesuits). His mission was very clear; to bring people under the banner of Christ, he was ready to enter through the Chinese ‘door’ so long as he would get out through his own having done his best to save souls.

Another interesting attachment is to one's own life. When I first came across this during my Spiritual Exercises, it sounded rather funny; attachment to my own life? Who doesn't have attachment to his own life? How can one detach from one's own life? How could even Ignatius himself imagine about this? On further reflection and meditation however, it became a very practical matter. In the light of the scripture, I saw how necessary it is to actually detach from one's own life. Jesus tells those who want to become his disciples that they need to deny mother, father, siblings, and even own self to be able to follow him. This is actually the meaning of detachment.

Those who accepted martyrdom for the sake of Christ had successfully detached from their own lives. They were ready to die rather than deny Christ. They could not be gagged to silence from preaching the gospel. In Acts ch. 4, we see how Peter and John spoke boldly to the authorities who had jailed them for preaching about the risen Christ. They were courageous enough to point fingers at their persecutors who could even execute them, and to remind them about the bitter truth that they crucified the innocent Jesus but God raised him from the dead.

Cont'd on page 13

Breaking the Chains

Cont'd from page 12

If the apostles of Jesus were attached to their lives, we would not be having the gospel today; they would have feared to proclaim the gospel of Christ and kept quiet. Their shed blood fuelled the spread of the good news.

St. Stephen (Acts 7) expressed himself when he was put to task concerning his preaching. He had no need of self-defence; neither did he have apologies to make.

During the Spiritual Exercises, the exercitant is helped to get rid of disor-

During the Spiritual Exercises, the exercitant is helped to get rid of disordered attachments. This would help them to achieve the purpose for which they were created; “to praise, to reverence and to serve God our Lord and so

dered attachments. This would help them to achieve the purpose for which they were created; “to praise, to reverence and to serve God our Lord and so save their souls” (Principle and Foundation). Detachment means being indifferent to something or someone. When he talks about the degrees of humility, Ignatius tells the exercitant to be indifferent as to whether to dispose or retain a property, whichever is to the service and praise of the Divine Majesty.

Detachment is a process which could take a long time. Some chains of attachments are very difficult to break and may require divine intervention through prayers. Some may require counselling while others need a practice of self discipline. The lesser the attachments a person has, the freer he feels and the happier he becomes. Check your level of attachment to something by trying to imagine how it would be without it.

THE JOURNEY HAS JUST STARTED

Martin Mkoba

As mortal beings we always need always the grace from God in everything that we do, hence I would like to give Praise to the Almighty God for the gift of life he has given to me. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my Formators for the care and protection throughout my stay in Novitiate, they were true parents to me enlightening me on the right path to tread.

For three years, I was a candidate aspiring to join The Society of Jesus. I was very happy when I was accepted to join the novitiate. Things were not easy as usual when one has to adopt a new life. A life of solitude, life of community, life of prayer, all these were not easy at the beginning but slowly I managed to follow the beat of the drums. After a period of time in the novitiate, we went for the Spiritual Exercise in Karatu which were Thirty days of Prayer and encountering the wonders of God and to know more about myself. It was an amazing experience I had never gone through before. It really gave me the light to my life. I discovered that I was living as a van which travels at night without light. The Spiritual Exercise transformed my way of acting, praying and associating with my brothers and other people.

Then we went for the first Apostolic Experiment of which I was missioned to Nyumbani Children's' Home in Nairobi for a month and to Kitui for another month. In Nyumbani Children's' Home Nairobi and Kitui, I helped in weeding, milling, working in a green house, helping in the garden, and counseling boys and girls living with HIV. I also tried to help kids in their studies and spiritually.

Finally I went to Dar es Salaam to Mother Theresa (sisters of Charity) for the second experiment. Here I helped in washing clothes, feeding the disabled, cooking and setting the tables ready for meals, taking care of the Mentally handicapped boys and assuring harmony among them, I would also clean the compound every Morning.

In general these experiments helped me to know that God called me to serve him through his suffering and poor people. I also learn that God's love to his People is unconditional. God loves the healthy, sick, poor, disabled, and all kinds of people on the Earth alike.

My life general was good in the novitiate although challenges were here and there and that is normal everywhere; Solitude and Prayer life somehow were the challenges taking in consideration that, you hardly live in religious life without prayer. Before I joined the society I was praying very often but I found it quite different here, totally different ways of prayer from what I was use to. Previously, it was difficult to spend 15 to 20 minutes in prayer, but now I can spend even an hour praying. In two years I have got a lot which I hope will be the shield in my Jesuit life. I will love God with all my effort and my Neighbors, I will love the society and abide to its constitution and further I will love the Catholic Church and follow her Doctrine. The journey has just started I'm looking forward to going further still serving God in this least Society of Jesus. I trust in God to use me the way he likes.

He Accompanies them in their discernment

Fr Amadeus Shirima SJ talks to Rafiki about formation in the Novitiate



Fr. Amadeus Shirima, SJ

What does it take to prepare a man for the first vows?

The life of the novitiate for a formator is essentially a task of accompaniment. He knows that a novice enters the novitiate of the Society of Jesus convinced that he is called to serve God in the Society; and by admitting him into the novitiate the Society accepts and shares this conviction and undertakes the process of discernment alongside the novice to discover ever more the meaning and clarify the vicissitudes of this call. And as our former superior general, Fr. Kolvenbach says regarding the Jesuit Formator, the first Formator is God; the second is the person in formation, that is, the novice in our case. The formator (s) comes only in the third place; to accompany the one in formation in his dialogue with the Lord. Thus, it takes the whole process of the novitiate programme to prepare a man for first vows. This is what is noted in the **Instructions for Novices** I share with novices at the beginning of the novitiate:

At the end of the novitiate one is to commit oneself by the vows to a life of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. One can do this only if one has a very solid conviction: -That he has, with God's grace seen and, as far as it is humanly possible, tested, that God really calls him, that he will be happy in this life; that he will be able to live up to its demands.

-That he has clearly understood what the religious life, and the Jesuit vocation in particular is and demands from him.

-That he has already seriously begun to live it, even if not yet bound by vows; and he realises both from personal experience as well as from testimony of others, that under God's grace, his efforts have produced real fruit.

How do you measure the progress of a novice as regards formation?

When a novice is actively finding the best ways of living out his call/vocation, responding to God who is calling him in the Church and in the Society of Jesus, deepening his knowledge of God/Christ, of the Church and of the Society so as to evermore love Christ and follow him more closely, such a novice is making progress in his formation. In other words he is responsible, that is, able to make a response- for his own formation convinced, as said in the answer to the first question, that after God, he is the agent of his own formation. The task is to find out, to verify this progress, first and foremost in the way the novice leads his novitiate life-honest and sincere, open and eager to learn, ready to be lead and corrected, cooperating with others and ready to give oneself for others, etc.

The different levels of evaluation, that is, self evaluation, peer evaluation, and evaluation by formators are some means of measuring the progress.

How does a Jesuit novice in 21st century compare to a Jesuit novice in the 16th century?

We should avoid making comparisons even among contemporaries, let alone between people of different times, epochs, cultures and histories.

What is important is the total commitment to Christ in the Church and in the Society of Jesus. There is no doubt that the novices during the time of Ignatius committed themselves fully to the mission of Christ in the Church and in the Society of Jesus. Christ's call today demands the same commitment from the present day novice. To grow evermore in the characteristics of our way of proceeding as outlined by GC 34, Degree 26:

'the first Formator is God; the second is the person in formation, that is, the novice in our case. The formator (s) comes only in the third place....'

-Deep personal love of Jesus Christ; Contemplative in action; an apostolic body in the Church; in solidarity with those in need; partnership with others; called to learned ministry; men sent always available for the mission; and ever searching for the magis A Jesuit novice today is called to learn the life of a committed Jesuit of any time, culture and circumstances, completely available as a servant of Christ's mission today.

What do you say to your latest vow men?

Be grateful that Christ is calling and choosing you to serve him in the Society of Jesus. Listen to him and let him mould and guide you. Pray that you may always be faithful to him and make an adequate response in the measure of the grace he is giving you.

The thing I admire about Islam

Eddie Onyango

The seminar we had recently on Islam could not have come at a better time especially now that there is simmering tensions between Christians and Muslims here in Tanzania. I have always known little about Islam. Nevertheless, I knew a bit about *Allah*, Prophet Muhammad, *Id-il-fitr*, the famous greeting (*as-salaam aleikum*), Imams as well as *Kadhis courts* and *sharia law* as these were critical campaign issues during the referendum of a new constitution in neighbouring Kenya. I however only came to realize the magnitude of *sharia law* from the story of the 16 year old Pakistani boy who had been sentenced to paralysis by injection or a fine of 240,000 Euros for stabbing someone and making him paralyzed neck downwards.

The stories about the extremist and fundamentalist activities have also fuelled their own share of perceptions and prejudices among many, leading to fear, fright and a connotation to violence despite the existence of many peaceful Muslims who live peacefully with their neighbours. Many have attested to this.

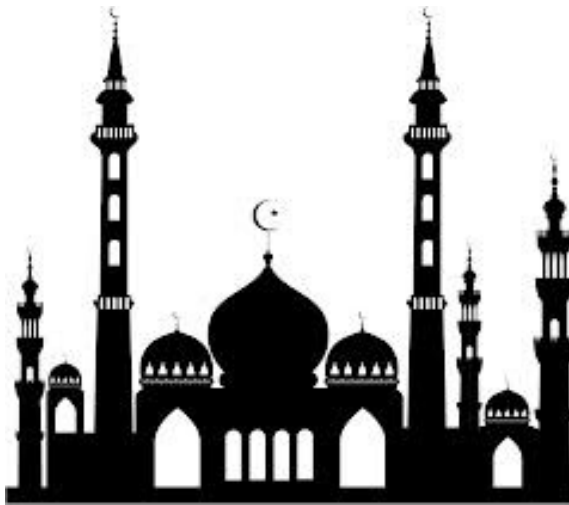
I was once really moved by a statement from a comedian of Arab origin who during one of his sessions to a predominantly Arab audience, besides killing them with laughter about themselves and their faith (I enjoyed the comedy by the way), shared information about this career-making invitation he got to act in a grand movie on terrorism where he was supposed to be this great, fierce terrorist. He had to respectfully decline the offer, since, to him these were the things that were fuelling the fire when it came to the stereotypes on the image of Islam out there especially with regards to Arab connections. For me, this was a selfless act done for the love of one's faith.

Islam which is the second largest monotheistic religion after Christianity, also in my view, does have some admirable aspects that we could emulate as Christians. Their commitment to their faith and to their spirituality is just incredible. I was once lucky to be amidst very senior citizens which related to an activity I was engaged in.

As people were dispersing for lunch, there was a gentleman who really challenged me; especially with regards to my prayer life.

He took water, removed his shoes, did his pre-prayer rituals and there he was on the grass in the open field facing Mecca diligently doing his mid-day prayers.

Sometimes I sit back and cannot help but wonder how or why we Christians are 'shy' (or Catholics for that matter) about our faith? You know, at times it is even a problem making the sign of the cross or



saying grace before eating in a public restaurant and worse still in the presence of special company. This may sound trivial but it's true. Most of us almost have a nervous breakdown when invited to pray in public gatherings. I could go on and on with plenty of examples. My dilemma is, what is the genesis of our disconnection? I think Christianity is one of the most (if not THE most) fantastic religion that has ever existed but at the same time I wonder, why we (myself included) are not so confident and enthusiastic about our spirituality?

Let's go back to Islam. A Muslim would not shy away from dressing like one, waking up at 5 am even as they wake us in the process (come and pray; prayer is better than sleep – that's what the call means-) in fact at that moment one feels really irritated by the loudspeaker. They sure have a good knowledge of the Quran and the life of Prophet Muhammad. It is said that a good Muslim attempts (should attempt) to live like Prophet Muhammad which is true for us as well with regards to Christ.

This in-depth knowledge is true for both the fundamentalist and the modernist Muslims. May be for us Christians, our Pentecostal brothers may be perceived to be more passionate with the word and faith than us Catholics which to some extent could be true depending on how you look at it. What could be the issue? Is it our catechism that is more cramming based? Is it inadequate grounding in scripture? Is it Bible classes etc? Is it about minimal or no enthusiasm infused in us about Christianity and Christ as we grow? Or maybe it is excessive freedom that Christianity accords its faithful. What about modernization? Is it also catching up with us such that little by little God is becoming irrelevant? Maybe the fact that we are inherently weak and sinful as Saint Paul said? The speculative reasons can go on and on but the big question remains, how we can move from 'Sunday Christians' to everyday Christians?

How can we re-ignite the zeal for Christ in our life and times today? You know, even Mahatma Gandhi challenged us Christians. He said that suppose we Christians lived according to the principles and teachings of Christ, he too would become one.

Islam has its own fair share of challenges that she has to handle just as we Christians have to. For me, the biggest hurdle for us as Christians, and Catholics specifically is to first and foremost convince ourselves in a deep way of the relevance of Christ and his bride, the church, in our lives today even before trying to fire up others about Christ and Christianity.





Tracing the Fishers of Men,

Rafiki talks to Steven Nzioki SJ, former vocations director

What was your experience like as a director of vocations?

My experience as the director of vocations was a good and enriching one. There is something both refreshing and assuring in seeing people interested in joining one's group or organization. It was really a similar experience; seeing, dealing with and trying to work with people who want to join the Society. It was not easy at the beginning, given the fact that I had just been ordained. However as time went on, I grew into the office; I got to know what was expected of me. I must admit I got a lot of help from my predecessor, Fr. Terry Charlton SJ. He was always there to help me know what to do. The more time I spent in the office, the more I liked it, and the more humbler it made me.

What does it take to prepare a man for the novitiate?

Well, for me, being a vocations' director, preparing a man for the novitiate involves mainly walking with the man, accompanying him. My first task was always to present the Society to the man, to expose the Society to the man, to let him get to know the Society better through reading books about and by Jesuits, and through meeting other Jesuits besides the Vocations Director. At the same time it involves the Vocations director getting to know the man more and more. In this give and take situation, the hope is usually that after a period of time, the young man will have known the Society enough to decide to join or not join, and likewise the Vocations Director will have known the man enough to advise about him joining the Society or not; all the other things that the Vocation Director does fall within this framework.

The first batch you prepared for the novitiate is going out of the novitiate as Jesuits, what's your view of them as their vocations director?

I think, as is the case with the first-borns, I have been watching that first group as they develop, as they grow more and more into the Spirit of the Society, as they learn more about the ways of the Society, and as they slowly become Jesuits. I am very proud of them, I must admit. As I read some of their own reflections in the Rafiki, I realize that they have in fact matured in their spiritual lives, and I feel that the Novitiate has helped them grow. Clearly they are more than the gentlemen who joined the novitiate in May 2011. They helped me grow into the office, and as I eagerly look forward to their vows, I am grateful to the Lord for being with them, and I wish them joy in the Society.

What is the vocations situation in the US, where you are, as compared to Africa, especially AOR?

In brief, I think we in AOR are blessed with many vocations. Truly I think AOR is one of the places now where there is an abundance of vocations. We need to harness these vocations, promote them and thus be able to get as many good men joining us as possible. Here in the USA in general, the vocations are not as many as we have in AOR.

Every Jesuit is a vocation promoter, what should this statement ideally mean?

Tobby, this means that we are all invited to help others discover their vocations. It is not just the work of the Vocation Director, but rather, all of us as Jesuits can, and are invited to, first attract them by our lives, by our way of doing things, by being exemplary in word and deed.

Then after that, whenever young men approach us about vocation, we are invited to talk to them, answer their questions, and then eventually direct them to the vocation promoters in the places where they are.

While it is true that the Vocation director has the job of doing the in-depth accompaniment of the young man, I think we are all in a position to help, especially in places where we work, when we meet people.

This however demands that we be ready to share who we are with them, we be ready to walk with them, and we be ready to assist them. I think each one of us can recall his vocation journey, and this could be a good starting point for us to accompany these young men, truthfully and meaningfully to help them in their decisions.

And any final thing you would like to tell them?

I will remind them of something I often told them as they prepared to join the Novitiate: The Novitiate period is very important, it trains one to be a Jesuit. My invitation to them would be to invite them to live out the good things they have learnt in the two years they have been in the Novitiate. They have completed the first stage of training; it is time to put these things into practice. What I can tell them is that they now have a foundation; they now have the tools and the training. What they need to do now is to build on that foundation, to grow everyday on the spirit of St. Ignatius and become the Jesuits they are being invited to become!



How to Feel Good About Our Feelings

Mathenge Joseph

Daily as we respond to our call and as we interact with others, we meet life threatening and energy draining situations. To counteract these, we, unaware, bring our feelings and emotions on to the surface.

I may say that feelings and emotions are neither bad nor good. Many view emotions as a sign of weakness though we all have them and we need to admit, acknowledge, and freely express them when they are triggered. Our superego which is highly contributed to by the society, have taught us to hide, deny and avoid those feelings. I grew knowing that a good boy should not get angry. Hiding them makes no solution either but makes us bear a lot of interior wounds. Unattended anger and repressed emotions are like a gas can, looking for a weak point to explode.

Jesus in several instances publicly expressed His emotions and feelings. When His friend Lazarus died, He wept. When He met merchants doing business in the temple, He felt angry and used the whip to curb their behavior. He often felt pity and compassion, Jesus felt hungry and in return He cursed the fig tree after approaching it and realizing it can't satisfy His hunger. In the garden of Gethsemane He felt weak and lonely. We too need to embrace our feeling and emotion and channel them on to constructive ways.

Anger is among the complex emotions that we often have. It can be as a result of either an external or interior stimuli, which may include; frustration, threat to self esteem, injustice or even physical attack.

It's okay and normal to feel angry, it isn't a sin. In fact the opposite could be true. It is abnormal not to be angry when an occasion warrants it. To let some of the life's injustices go by without getting furious demonstrates either, ignorance, a deliberate short sightedness or tolerance of evil none of which is defensible. Anger at the absence of justice is not a failure but on the contrary it can be the only response. What can be sinful and we need to avoid is getting enraged and trivial or even showing our anger in an improper or inappropriate manner.

How then should we handle our anger? This is a broad question. First we are required to analyze the situation that has brought about the anger itself. Each and every case is tailor made, though they all have a common denominator. First and the most crucial stage is to acknowledge that you are angry. Admit the situation, tell yourself how you are feeling, the magnitude of the anger. Second, name what has made you feel what you are feeling, evaluate the scenario and see whether you are justified to feel the way you are feeling. The way we interpret the situation triggers an equal capacity of the anger or the opposite of it.

Let us courageously and positively deal with our anger. An expanding understanding of dynamics of anger helps to choose the reaction which is life giving to counter our anger; feelings are neutral, let's express them rather than repress or suppress them.

OUR LOVING GOD SEES ABUNDANCE IN US!

Musiime Roman

When I make a flashback of my past experiences before I got a desire to embrace Religious life to the time I came to know the Society of Jesus, and even to the time I was accepted to join the novitiate here in Arusha Tanzania; I really see the great hand of our loving God in it all.

Sometimes I feel so vulnerable and unworthy! The only conviction I have had and which is still deeply rooted in me is that he who brought me to Life has all the plans for me and he dominates in all situations that have happened in my life and all that are to happen as long as I Live. I refer this to what is written in the scriptures that: 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future' (Jer. 29:11).

And now, as I come to the completion of the Two years in the novitiate, I still realize that God is continually beckoning me to a greater affirmation of this wonderful vocation he has chosen for me regardless of all my former self-doubts which almost made me lose trust in my inner voice that actually is the voice of God speaking in me.

My experience in the novitiate has been a great one and highly enriching in different aspects. Certainly, sometimes I feel how short and long these two years have been. Short because of the joyful moments I have had with my companions and now see myself parting from them. It's through this companionship, this oneness, this brotherhood that has in some way kept me strong and even made the voice of God clearer and louder in me. Second, it has been long in a sense that I have always longed to finish and join the other companions in the service of the Lord's vineyard!

In his book; 'The inner voice of Love', Henri Nouwen said that: 'the farther the outward journey takes you, the deeper the inward journey must be, and that; only when the roots are deep can your fruits be abundant.'

Borrowing from this quote, I would like to mention two major aspects that have strongly kept me through this journey and the vital invitation from our Loving God to serve in Christ's Mission which I desire always to refer myself to for the rest of my years.

Cont'd on Page 20

Cont'd from Page 19



As part of the Jesuit formation, there are a number of requirements especially to be attained before finishing the novitiate. In the two-month apostolic missions we joined our brothers and sisters in serving the poor, the abandoned, the sick and all

other groups of people with all sorts of challenges, difficulties and sufferings both physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally. The other one is the experience of the thirty days retreat in which we commune with our Lord Jesus Christ through his incarnation, death and resurrection until his ascension to heaven.

These experiences among others have made a great impact in my life and they have brought new peace, new joy, new freedom and new light in my life. Once, Thomas Merton said that: 'True encounter with Christ liberates something within us, a power we did not know we had; a capacity to grow and change.' This to me sounds very real especially as I reminisce the experiences I have had during these two years of novitiate.

Finally, I would like to end my sharing with this doxology we find in the Letter to the Romans 11:33-36. 'Oh God of the riches of wisdom and knowledge; who can explain your decisions, who can understand your ways' As it is written in the scriptures; who knows the mind of the Lord

'Who is able to give him advice? Who has ever given him anything so that he had to pay him back?' For all things were created by him and all things exist through him and for him, To God be all the glory forever! Amen.

Mutuku Dominic

It's beyond my conviction that anyone would ever forget the Lenten Season of 2013; and especially the Society of Jesus for giving the church the Jesuit pontiff following the retirement of Benedict XVI. Though the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Fr. Adolfo Nicholas, would say on a stricter way "It's the cardinals who gave the church the new pope". The Holy Spirit knows why a Jesuit pope but as some humorously put it, Benedict XVI sacrificed the papacy during the Lent Season only for Jesuits to go for it. I think the Jesuits sacrificed one of their own during this Lenten season to the papacy history.

Funny enough, Cardinal Bergoglio was not even in the top-ten candidates for the post and am sure Africa watched with aspirations having two candidates in the top-ten list. Was he to come from Africa, Europe, Asia or America? No one was sure to any extent though many supported the media in that a Pope outside Europe was not necessary. This I suppose was a message passed to Italians following recent scandals in Vatican and the church; keeping in mind that cardinal Angelo Schola was a leading candidate for election. But what's impossible to man is more possible to God since the first Jesuit Pope and the first Latin American pope was in waiting, courtesy of the Holy Spirit. Days passed slowly as preparations for the Conclave were in progress and heightened ambitions for the world could not be housed. Was the new Pope to be conservative or Liberal? And the latter was a preference for many. Fortunately he would address the hot matters of Women Priests, same-sex Marriage, Contraceptives and Married priests. This was the only time the church would forgive its people for thinking outside and questioning its teachings.

The resignation of Benedict XVI opened all leeway for people to have freedom of thinking as far as the need for Vatican III. The Jesuits would have been worried about the second suppression but I remember Father General writing a letter to request prayers of all companions towards the election of the new pope. If only someone would whisper to him that a Jesuit Cardinal was soon ascending the papacy. But the novices around here would wonder why the church was tensed since we had a black pope in power already: Fr. Adolfo Nicholas could have heard this.

Fortunately or unfortunately, this was the same time Kenyans were electing a new president. So it would follow that Kenya has a president, if voted in Round one, and the church also has a new pope by Easter. Since it was Lent, fasting, prayer and alms giving, I suppose, were directed towards this: Kenyans and the church for new government. Though Kenyans went to the ballot before the Conclave they had to wait longer than the church, actually up to Holy Saturday. But it was the 14th of March which preceded this dual ambition for Kenya and the world, since the pope was elected after two days. At 9:00 PM East African time HABEMUS PAPAM (we have a pope) appeared on local and International TV channels. And white smoke appeared on the chimney on top of the Sistine Chapel for about seven minutes. Though, some Kenyans were convinced the smoke was not black enough, to mean the cardinals should go to court to challenge the election of the new pope since the Kenyan case was still in Supreme Court.

Crowds outside Vatican waited in eager for the newly elected Pope and in an hour's time it was Pope Francis, the former Jesuit Cardinal George Bergoglio.

What exactly made me desire to join the Jesuits?

Gabriel Abonyo

The first thing that attracted me to the Society of Jesus is quite related to the recent happenings at the Vatican; the election of Pope Francis, the first Pope from the Order of Jesuits in about 500 years of its existence. This followed the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, the first Roman Pontiff to do so out of free will in over 700 years in the history of the church. Pope Celestine V resigned in 1294 and the only other recent abdication being that of Gregory II forced to do so by the Council Fathers of Constance, Germany in 1415 to end the two related unfortunate and successive periods in the history of the papacy and the Church-The Avignon Papacy and the Great Western Schism; when the cardinals had elected more than one Pontiff to lead the Church at the same time 1306-1378,-1417.

In 2005, I was a freshman at the University, the JKUAT in Kenya. During the time of the *sede vacante* following the death of Pope John Paul II, I was reading an article about his succession from a newspaper in the University library. The article was trying to give the opinion of bookmarkers why they thought the cardinals named in it could be elected pope. When it came to some three of them in the article: now late Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, then Archbishop Emeritus of Milan, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio Archbishop of Buenos Aires and Cardinal Julius Riyadi Darmaatjaja, Archbishop of Jakarta Indonesia, the story seemed interesting to me because the argument was that they were considered Papable, but there were many other factors that made it unlikely for them being elected pope ranging from apparent old age of cardinal Martini at 78 and having retired from active church leadership to his perceived liberal theology, and most of all because of the fact that they were Jesuits!

The article pointed out that unlike the other religious Orders in the Church like the Benedictines, Franciscans and Dominicans from which popes had come,

Jesuits had never in their history and were very unlikely to get their members elected to the papacy because Jesuits 'promise' never to become bishops, leave alone pope. Of course I did not understand at that time any of that and why Cardinal Martini and the other two Jesuits were cardinals despite being Jesuits if that was the case. This was the moment the desire to join this Order, whose members are humble in my opinion, began. I had heard about St. Ignatius and the Jesuits earlier on in high school history lessons, as having helped the Catholic Church in Counter-reformation in the 16th century. Though the desire to become a priest and a missionary had always been there before this time, I had never thought of joining them and at that time I was considering some other Orders and congregations.

I later on came to understand during the candidacy period and more clearly in the Novitiate during the study of the Constitutions that this is one of the five simple vows the professed of the Society take, neither to seek prelacies or dignity outside the Society in the Church nor to accept being chosen for such, as far as they can, unless compelled by obedience to the Church's Authority under pain of sin.

Well Pope Benedict XVI was elected by the cardinals in the conclave of that year. So this year it came like a bomb shell to hear Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, in his capacity as the senior most Cardinal-Deacon announce Pope Francis to the world,! Well my Latin is very poor but I could understand the announcement of the famous *Habemus Papam! Annuncio vobis gaudium magnum... DominumBergoglio....* I knew its him since the surname is not Latinized like the other names, and since he was the only Jesuit in the conclave with cardinal Riyadi having indicated he would not take part in the conclave due to health reasons.

I had like many others ruled out the possibility of the then cardinal

Bergoglio being elected due to old age at 76 and mostly because he was a Jesuit just like in the newspaper article I had read 8 years earlier at the University.

I remember a colleague of mine in the Novitiate joking immediately that since my motivation to join the Society was simply because no member had been and could not be elected pope so I had no motivation anymore to become a Jesuit! Well my motivations have gone through purification and development.

The election of Pope Francis has now been welcomed and received happily in the Society of Jesus and all Catholics and other people of good will.

Many believe that Francis is indeed a humble servant of God who can lead His Church to greater heights through the various challenges affecting it. From the reorganization of the Roman Curia which other pontiffs have done before too, countering the scandals in the church and coming up with a plan that would enable the church to bring the Gospel values to people of various cultures and regions of the world. This he has begun straight away by various approaches including the recent appointment of eight Cardinals from around the world to help him get the framework of this plan. *Viva il Papa!*

Pope Francis is the first religious pope in almost 200 years since the Benedictine Camaldolese Gregory XVI in 1831 and the only other recent religious popes being the Benedictine Pius VII in 1800 and the Franciscan Conventual Clement XIV elected in 1769, who was forced by Monarchs of Europe and other forces to suppress the Society in 1773 after trying as much as he could to prevent it, .

The writer is a "Vaticanologist and Papal Historian who earns his living by scrutinizing the Vatican in the Novitiate"!

Life Beyond the ‘E’ Moment.

James Mugwe

When Pope Francis was elected, one of the leading media houses in Kenya had the humiliating moments of its kind. In a rush to break the news first of the new pope it wrote a caption on the screen “*HABEMUS PAPAM is the new pope.*” By the time they realized that this statement means something totally different from the pope’s name, the screenshot of their caption was circulating all over the internet. It was a very embarrassing moment for a major media house.

Well each one of us has had that moment in one time or another. Most of the time the embarrassing moment gets us off guard that we get so much confused not knowing what to do next. We wish the ground could open up and do what the fish did to Jonah.

Many times the embarrassing moments are too much that they knock us to the ground heavily; we feel weak, out of place and if we have more strength we manage a fake smile and pretend we are ok while we are dying inside.

Thought about the embarrassing moments Jesus faced during his passion. Looking back at my own life and some of the moments I have faced I’m certain they were nothing compared to what Jesus went through for our sake but at least I learnt great lessons.

Indeed humiliating moments can force us to do anything to overcome them. Peter swore by the name of God and said “may God punish me if I am not telling you the truth... I don’t know this man

Embarrassing moments are part of our life and as long as we live, we will face them. At times for standing for our rights; truth and Justice, but sometimes there is joy and life after the humiliating moments.

Think of the woman, who for twelve years suffered a severe bleeding (Matthew 9:14). It was not only tormenting but an embarrassing disease too. It meant restrictions. But despite twelve years suffer-lose hope of living. She didn’t lock her-mourn and pity her-heard that Jesus was hope and courage she made her way between people and touched Jesus. After twelve years of suffering her health was restored, her shame was taken away. What if she let her embarrassing condition take the best of her hopes, faith and courage?

Never let it take you down, life must go on no matter what comes your way. When you fall wake up and tread on.

tion of her move-her situation of ing, she did not She was a fighter, self in a room to self. When she within, with faith,

There is life after embarrassing moment. Never let it take you down, life must go on no matter what comes your way. When you fall wake up and tread on. Today’s pains and humiliation makes your tomorrow better. Jesus went through the worst embarrassments for our sake. He is a great example to us and we should not also shy off even if it means getting embarrassments and humiliated for his sake and in Mathew 5... Jesus assures us,” happy are you, when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my follower. Be happy and glad for a great reward is kept for you in heaven”.

VIEWS OF COMPANIONS: E. MOMENTS

Eddy Onyango: In my view, embarrassing moments are always part of life and we can not do without them. A friend of mine used to call them opportunities to ‘chew the humble pie’. Despite the fact that they are the least tasty of all pies, they remind us of how human, weak, imperfect we are and from time to time they help us to grow in our journey to wisdom and maturity. When faced with such moments, I think the first thing to do is one to own up his or her contribution first to himself and then possibly to those around (Prudence may be necessary here) if possible. Calm yourself to avoid panics attacks that could worsen the situation and hence further embarrassments. Use the opportunity to remind yourself how human/imperfect you are and laugh at yourself. At the same time, tell yourself that like any other thing, this too will pass. Indeed the common denominator to overcome such situations is how one personally interprets the event and the actions one takes thereafter. At the end of everything, please ensure that you pick up the lessons for they are the recipes in growth and wisdom.

Aloysius Lubega, life is full of ups and downs. The Ups aren’t very hard to cope with, but the downs are most problematic. Embarrassment can make one wish the ground would be kind enough to swallow him/her! Each of us may have had a fair share of embarrassing moments, when we make a song of ourselves and everybody starts singing ; ‘how could John do such a thing?’ our friends start whispering behind our backs. There could be no such thing as ‘embarrassment’ if one was living alone, or if our mistakes were hidden from the public. Real shame creeps in when we realize others have seen our grave howlers;

Cont’d on page 23

E-moments, Views of Companions

My Two years in the Novitiate

Vincent Onyango

Cont'd from page 22

and if someone is not composed enough, this could be the beginning of an incurable inferiority complex and a depletion of one's self-esteem. It becomes even worse when companions use the opportunity to 'cheer' you, leaving you with pitiable reserves of self-worth. But wait to despair! Remember that to err is human; a sizeable number of us aren't perfect.

Do not worry about anything once it has happened. Be sure that some not-very-kind people will make fun of you and be prepared to join them in making fun of yourself. Take precautions to guard against repeating similar or related faults and use the moment as an opportunity to learn. Although it is learning the hard way, at least you now know another way of not doing it.

Arinaitwe Francis: When you are in such situation, you realize that even your best friends run away from you. They don't want to be associated with you. You feel like you are all alone in the jungle. I think this is the best moment to look up to the Lord for He is a friend who will never leave you. It's the best moment to pray and seek the graces to move on.

Tobias Dindi: Embarrassing moments are great learning moments because we sit down with ourselves and look seriously into that part of us that is trembling out of shame. It is never easy to just stand there and endure embarrassment, this is because we feel exposed, stripped naked and it seems like the whole world is gazing at that part of us which we have done everything to conceal. That is not a moment any of us wants to go through, because we regret our behavior that led to such moments and regrets have never been good moments.

All in all, it calls for us to learn, grow and get to be better people. No one reaches a perfection point where nothing is normal enough not to be embarrassing, but a lot of growth happens after that.

Vocation is one of the most common words on the lips of religious. I think this word means a personal desire of feeling called to a certain life either married or religious with a "pure" conviction that the primary source of this call is the transcendent God.

Occasionally, I wonder how this bold step I made of becoming a religious proves to be God's call; leaving aside dozens of enticing plans I had for my life and surrendering my entire life to God's will. Yes! I cannot complain about having been granted this vocation.

My vocation to follow Christ under his banner in his own Company has brought several insightful moments in my life. Many a time I had not been able to identify my inner life proper; but through progressive practice of Ignatian Spirituality, I have experienced several instances depicting what living a life according to God's will entails.

When I felt this call I thought that there was some crazy spirit trying to pour scruples in my life. Getting to the novitiate did not absorb the shock I had, but I was still confused more so from the fixed program which was well labeled and placed on every *Novi's* table with the title, "*the Blue Book*". No sooner had I thought of changing my mind to convince the rector how unworthy I was to stay in the novitiate, than I continuously was psyched up by the common prayers in the novitiate together with the private prayers during the "*Hour*". Something was speaking to me similar to Christ's advice to his disciples saying, 'take courage, and do not be afraid' Mt. 14:27.

What an awesome experience I had of the Spiritual Exercises! This is the time I enjoyed watching interior movies of diverse episodes borne from reflecting on my own sins, the Two Standards, of Kingdom, Life and Passion of Christ among others. This revelation proved to me that self exposition to the will of God is capable of transforming us a great deal; and indeed I can testify that it is here that the Election of what I need to do with my own life was revealed.

I have been humbled by the apostolates inside the novitiate together with the two two-month apostolic experiments outside the novitiate; moreover, my gratitude goes to the orphans and the children I taught catechism; they have greatly inspired me by their love and interest to assimilate my instructions; which has encouraged me to embrace this vocation; and at this point I believe that God is leading me in the right pathway.

Life in the novitiate has also challenged me seeing the simplicity of the formators, fortified by the 'ecstasy' of my brothers, comforted by the support of the minister(s) and calmed by the commitment of collaborators; may God bless these companions for their selfless input of ensuring that I reach this point; and I pray that their effort may grant me ability to embrace and practice the virtues that are key and expected of every religious.

I do not know what follows next but I pray that God may lead us who toil in this life especially those committing themselves to God's service this year to perform the new mission and other missions to come with zeal and vigor.

My heart is ready; oh God my heart is ready

Tobias Dindi Ong'aria

The song of a delivered soul is joyful. The words that escape the lips of a purified heart are enthusiastic about proclaiming the greatness of God. The thoughts of a soul that has encountered God are full of energy and zeal to reach to the ends of the world with the message of the powerful designs of the divine majesty. So are the desires of a freshly vowed Jesuit; to join the fold of the men on the missions after experiencing Christ personally during the two years of the novitiate to be men of steadfast hearts, enthusiastic spirits, and zealous souls.

The psalmist paints for us the picture. Psalm 57, coming in two parts, is a perfect expression of this. The first part is a trustful prayer for deliverance from enemies, the second is a song of praise that brings to the fore the goodness of God whose 'Love towers the Heavens and his faithfulness to the skies.' It is this praise in word and deed that characterizes the life of a new Jesuit delivered from his enemies – disordered attachments – and is now ready to rouse the dawn and praise, reverence and serve God our Lord so as to save his soul as St Ignatius explains in the Principle and Foundation in the Spiritual Exercises.

St Ignatius' ideal vision of a Jesuit, besides being a zealous man ready for the frontiers, was a man first and foremost attached to God. He explains thus; 'He will make it his concern ever to keep his gaze fixed on God first of all, and then on the design of this our institute which traces a path to him.....,' Formula of the Institute of 1540.

It is this vision that dictates the first and foremost apostolate on the Jesuit novitiate universally, spiritual formation. Any man who wishes to enlist in this least Society of Jesus must pass here, in the school of prayer, home of love and house of formation. It therefore goes that the latest vow men, ready to give their YES, have immersed themselves in the things of the spirit, are convinced of their readiness to join the band and that same band is ready for them. And so they say, 'my heart is ready, oh God, my heart is ready.'

What have they been through? The two years of Novitiate involves an all round formation of a man to be ready for a life of heroic exploits for the Greater Glory of God. They go through the Spiritual Exercises, the backbone of the Jesuit life, they engage in apostolic activities not only to help the poor but to learn to be humble like Christ poor, and to find the same Christ in those pushed to the borders of the society. This too is embedded in their vocation, being humble enough to offer a preferential option to the poor.

They also take time to immerse themselves in studies of the constitutions of the Society of Jesus and other documents of the Society of Jesus and the church so as to know the true identity of one of the most misunderstood Orders in the Roman Catholic Church. In this they get to know their roots, their history, their forefathers' vision of religious life in this Society, and above all, what a Jesuit vocation entails.

It is this praise in word and deed that characterizes the life of a new Jesuit delivered from his enemies – disordered attachments

Most importantly however, they discern their vocation. They learn to live in community, they shed off their old self and don a new self and humbly learn to be generous with their lives. They do this in doing menial works in the novitiate, serving each other as Christ served his disciples, accepting reproaches where need be so as to assimilate positive growth, and once formed, they come out ready to awaken the dawn with praises of an *orchestraic* example of their lives in both word and deed.

That is their song, 'My heart is ready; Oh God my heart is ready.'

Prayer of Trust and Thanks

Protect me Oh God; I trust in you for safety.

I say to the Lord,
'You are my Lord; all the good things I have come from you.'

You, O Lord, are all I have, and you give me all I need; my future is in your hands. How wonderful are your gifts to me; how good they are

I praise the Lord, because he guides me....

I am always aware of the Lord's presence; he is near, and nothing can shake me.

And so I am thankful and glad, and I feel completely secure, because you protect me from the power of death... and you will not abandon me to the world of the dead

You will show me the path that leads to life; your presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure forever

Ps 16:1-2,5-11

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT

Aloysius Lubega

John Henry Newman, known in religious history as Cardinal Newman, was one of the leading figures of the nineteenth century. His poems, *The Dream of Gerontius* and *The pillar of the Cloud* are sources of touching hymns *Praise to the Holiest in the height* and *Lead kindly light* respectively. Newman's journey from being the most popular Anglican priest in England to receiving a Cardinal's red hat in the Catholic Church was a grueling spiritual warfare. Newman was born of a banker in London, England on Feb.21, 1801. He had a conversion at the age of fifteen, of which he writes that it was "more certain than that I have hands or feet". As an Anglican priest and a staunch evangelical, he was a strong opponent of the Catholic Church. But as he advanced in age, his Protestant faith started weakening. At thirty-two years, his spiritual struggles began weighing heavily on him and it was during this time that he visited Rome. His return journey to England was fatal and frightening. He fell dangerously ill, and suffered great physical, emotional and spiritual despair. In his own words:

"Before starting from my inn, I sat down on my bed and began to sob bitterly. My servant, who had acted as my nurse, asked what ailed me. I could only answer, "I have a work to do in England." I was aching to get home, yet for want of a vessel I was kept at Palermo for three weeks. I began to visit the churches, and they calmed my impatience, though I did not attend any services. At last I got off in an orange boat, bound for Marseilles. We were becalmed for a whole week in the Straits of Bonifacio, and it was there that I wrote the lines, *Lead, Kindly Light*, which have since become so well known."

This hymn is an allusion to God's guidance of the Israelites through their wilderness journey. (Ex 13:21-22). The first stanza portrays Newman's spiritual and emotional struggle, which he compares to his personal experience aboard a ship that seems to be going nowhere, his loneliness, and a desire for a guiding light. The second stanza is a confession of his rebelliousness that characterized his youth. The final two lines of the third stanza are interpreted differently. Some say the "angel faces" in these verses refer to loved ones lost in death. Thus, this song is common at funerals. Others feel that it refers to actual visions of angels that Newman is said to have had in his youth, the loss of which greatly grieved him in later years. A fourth verse was added later by Edward S Bickersteth Jr. Shortly before the RMS Titanic struck the iceberg on April 14, 1912, this hymn was among those sung during a hymn-singing gathering.

Twelve years after writing this hymn text, Newman was finally baptized by Fr Dominic, in the midnight of October 9, 1845 and embraced the church he once branded "polytheistic, degrading and idolatrous". This conversion had consequences; he suffered broken relationships with family and friends, but secured prestige for English Catholics. Newman considered it as "coming into port after a rough sea". As an Oratorian priest, he worked for the revival of Catholicism in England through giving lectures, which he described as his "best written book". When Pope Leo XIII named him Cardinal in 1879, he exclaimed, "The cloud is lifted forever". He died in 1890 aged 89. Pope Benedict XVI declared him *Blessed* on Sept.19, 2010 during his visit to the UK. Cardinal Newman can be remembered for many things among them, theologian, educator and writer. Yet today, our most enduring memory of him is in this one fine hymn penned during a time of great personal anguish and despair in the early years of his ministry. For us too, our times of agony and despair can be times of a rich spiritual harvest. If we keep searching and trusting, the kindly light will surely shed its light upon us and will leads us to the calm of everlasting life.

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT (The Song)

"Lead kindly light, amidst
th'encircling gloom,
Lead though me on!

The might is dark, and I am
far from home,
Lead though me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not
ask to see
The distant scene; one step is
enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor
prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my
path; but now
Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and,
spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will. Remem-
ber not past years!

So long Thy power hath blest
me, sure it still
Will lead me on.
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag
and torrent, till
The night is gone.
And with the morn those
angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long
since, and lost awhile

Meantime, along the narrow
rugged path,
Thyself hast trod
Lead, savior, lead me home
in childlike faith,
Home to my God
To rest forever after earthly
strife
In the calm night of everlast-
ing life."

What about Work?

Mathenge Joseph

Our daily life in the novitiate, viewed on a wider horizon, is an incorporation of work and prayer. Further still, Jesuits are known to be contemplatives in action, which means they highly value work.

In the gospel, Christ came across his disciples on the lake, who were busy trying to earn a living by fishing. When the ministry enterprise seemed threatened after the Roman Empire took away the life of their leader, to be on the safer shores, Peter, with his companions, opted back for the nets. After resurrection, Jesus meets them at dawn, miles away in the lake. The disciples having unsuccessfully toiled overnight.

Here in the novitiate, we have specific days and times that are stipulated for work. In most cases, the time allotted seems not enough to

accomplish all the chores and we go for what we call 'Magis'. This term has been used and abused in our community, I could hear it often, more so when there are delicacies on the table; 'Am going for magis.' That would mean one is going for more, *chapatti*, *kitimoto* or what the refectory had provided.

On the other hand, this term has been of great help also in our community. The contemporary Jesuits have even given it another term- *personal initiative*. This simply means spending some extra time over the stipulated time, to do some constructive work in the community. I am sure no one will dispute on this. There are two departments that are more demanding; the projects and the refectory. You can't distinguish what is done when.

My last assignment was in the projects; dealing with poultry and rabbits. Here, it's hard to draw a clear cut line between what is personal initiative and the usual job description. Projects deserve your attention throughout the day and even at night. When the community bought one day-old chicks, we learnt the value of being available at all times.

Because of their being delicate, we had to light a charcoal burner any time there was a blackout. This was common then because of frequent power rationing. Whenever this happened, the guard would respond swiftly by knocking my door to light the fire, This taught me what per-



sonal initiative meant

During the jubilee year in our province which ended last year in July, the province selected this as the theme of the year -*Going further still*. We are called to be men for others, ready to go an extra mile regardless of the time and situation. I write this to commend what has been going on in the novitiate and encourage all in in the community to emulate the spirit

My last assignment in the novitiate was work assigning. At times I felt what we achieve with our personal initiatives was more than what we achieved during the stipulated time of work. I really appreciate the spirit that we have in the community toward work.

WOMAN POPE TO IMAGINE?

Mutuku Dominic

It goes without saying that women are majority in the attendance and participation of church's activities and events. In the political arena and other social events the same trend would be witnessed. Some preachers tend to argue that during the feeding of the five thousand, only men were counted since the number of women could not be easily obtained following their massive numbers. But I leave this to Jesus, who knows better, if not to theologians. It even remains a fact that in voting, women are the majority and could elect any person if they are convinced enough but Martha Karua, a Kenyan female presidential aspirant, won't be willing to buy this idea. She will forgive me, but the majority speaks at times.

If Vatican was to give the attendance of those who waited anxiously for the new pope to appear, women would be the majority. I am concerned why they don't elect women leaders especially in Kenya as far as Martha Karua is concerned. But men will always claim they hold women so high only for them to mock each other. If they hear me, they will automatically question why the church doesn't allow them in its hierarchy, a question many men are posing too. But who has the answer anyway. These are not rumors on the idea of women priests but I wonder between men and women, who is campaigning more for it? Thank goodness we have a Pope again who won't allow continuation of this debate. Thus the long wait for women clergy continues.

During the Easter celebration of the resurrection of our Lord, Pope Francis asked the church to fight for women's rights. He insisted on the preference awarded Mary Magdalene to announce Christ's resurrection.

Cntd on pg 27

WOMAN POPE TO IMAGINE?

From pg 26

The world earlier on Holy Thursday had witnessed a pope washing lay people's feet and more so of two women. This usually is not the case in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome where Popes have been known to wash the feet of priests on Holy Thursday. How many women had their feet washed by priests during this Holy Thursday? Their number would be low as many hold it a tradition that Jesus did not have women apostles hence he only washed his twelve men apostles. He never washed any woman's feet then. We attended the Holy Thursday mass in our local parish outstation and men had to be pleaded to come for feet washing since twelve men could not volunteer to be washed their feet. And guess how many women were willing and ready to have their feet washed? But the tradition in this parish does not allow them that; have they heard of Jesus washing Mary Magdalene's feet? Who will answer them why the pope is washing women's feet yet priests all over are not extending this service to them? Or may be they keep and ponder this in their hearts the way our Blessed Virgin Mary did. Many are expecting Pope Francis to name women to be in charge of certain departments if not works in Vatican government. But I don't know what the women themselves are saying; I even don't have the slightest remarks.

Many have thought in the line of women priests and books on this have been disallowed publication by the church. Women share in the common priesthood through their baptism but not the ministerial priesthood, God knows. I am sure even if one day there will be women priests it won't stop there; we will hear of subjects like: what about women bishops, women Cardinals and Woman Pope. Jesuits are used to these claims since many complain why they don't have Sisters until some answer that only St. Ignatius knows why there are no Jesuit sisters.

The Gardener's theology

Lubega Aloysious

True to the spirit of the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus (282), all novices take part in some indoor apostolate. Here in Gonzaga Gonzaga, to be a gardener is one among the many options. His work is ministering to plants during *manualia*. He ploughs plants, weeds, waters, sprays and harvests at an opportune time. Clad in boots, hoe on shoulder and basket in one hand, the gardener will head to the garden in the silence that follows morning breakfast. Close to an hour, he will keep his back bent and his hands besmeared with soil. Because the way of proceeding for AOR recommends the eating of more vegetables and fruits than animal products (Ch.1, sec. 3.4), the gardener shares in this mission by providing *Agape* with vegetables daily.

Just like the gardens of Eden and Gethsemane, the novitiate garden has its fair share of consolations and desolations. Like in the rainy season, crops grow vibrantly in breadth and height, often surpassing the height of the gardener. The sight of green everywhere is so breathtaking that Adam and Eve would stare with envy! Come the dry season, and everything is undone. The scorching sun forces some plants to wither and perish into oblivion. The multiplication of vegetables reduces a great deal, and the gardener starts pondering what to take to the refectory. Monkeys are not good collaborators. The other day, on the feast of a Jesuit saint, they had a feast on our cassava. While pigeons helped themselves on the maize just before it germinated, a troop of caterpillars invaded the greens. And that was the day after the birds had pecked off all the leaves of young beans in one garden! Tell me, although a Jesuit finds God in everything, how does a novice find God in caterpillars and monkeys invading his apostolate? Some plants really try the gardener; like the ginger I planted three months ago and I have been waiting for it to germinate,

only to check under the soil and finding that it's already rotten!

The bible has many stories, which paint the garden as a place of desolation. When the first children of God misbehaved, he gave them marching orders out of the Eden. It was in the garden that David saw and admired Bathsheba. What about Suzanna in Daniel? Jesus, and his treasurer Judas, also have their own garden experiences. But despite these, the garden is an ideal place for contemplation. It is a place to work with God in protecting, nurturing and enjoying creation. The gardener works with God. He cannot sit and wait for God to plant, weed, mulch, keep away monkeys, harvest oranges, and erect scare crows. It is true that God works and that he works through us. Sometimes, the gardener borders on thinking that the vibrancy of his garden is entirely his own effort. But he remembers in time that he cannot make it rain, nor create sunshine. Also, knowing that the fruits of one's labor do not entirely depend on one's effort is an invaluable lesson learnt from the garden. After much toiling, the gardener looks forward to a bumper harvest. Sometimes, he has to be patient with those which take long to bear fruit.

I am much aware of how the Chief Gardener, after nurturing us with tender loving care and showering on us every spiritual blessing, is avidly waiting to see us bear fruit. He longs to see us grow in virtue, faith, hope, love of Him and of one another. He wants us to cooperate with the graces he grants us and be better people. He's so patient when we fail to bear fruit and deals with us equally. That's why you, plant, who is reading this, must be grateful that the Gardener has not uprooted you. You continue basking in His sunshine, his rain and cool wind but you are not bearing enough fruit. Worse still, you even deny that he provides these. The owner of the vineyard is coming soon. Wake up then, and bear fruit. That's the reason you still see another sunrise, why you are breathing right now, why you have all your faculties fully functional. Live for Him then, the chief Gardener and author of life. It is only then that your life will become rewarding and the whole garden will be paradise.



Counting the triumphs and losses

Francis Kyalo

Games are one of the many activities in the novitiate which bring people together for closer interaction. Apart from class work and *manualia*, we meet twice a week to flex our muscles for the good of our health. More than these, it is a moment of discovering on how to coexist. These activities have brought us growth emotional, social and talent wise. There are no cases of overweight in the novitiate for extra fat has no room in our active bodies. Talents are advancing remarkably in many people in various games. A case in point is novice Gilbert Lasway who has shown improvement in nearly all the games.

As usual, once in a while we invite or are invited for friendly matches with our neighbouring congregation. As reported in the last issue of Rafiki, desolations dominated the season, we had to undo. This campaign began on 17th April this year when the missionaries of Africa invited us for friendly matches in volleyball and basketball. We arrived in time and the matches kicked off as planned, beginning with volleyball, the match was hotly contested. The first set was the hardest of all. We lost it after drawing at 24 three times. The fourth time we got it at 25-23 scores. With these the players got reenergized for the next set and truly all eyes were on the ball

Being a game of only three sets, we had to finish up in time and so players acted accordingly. We won the second set at 25-18. The missionaries having lost the first two sets, had to surrender and so victory went to the Jesuits.

That accomplished, the next point of action was in the basketball pitch. Life here proved to be really hard for Jesuits, for the missionaries of Africa were well organized not to mention their wonderful skills. With their sharp shooting capability, they earned 23 points by the end of the match against our only 4 points! Not bad for a start.

This was but the beginning of a serious fight to follow. On Sunday 21st April, the youth of our outstation, St Josephine Bakhita requested for a friendly volleyball match. They seemed confident but the last whistle caught them off guard when they found themselves down by two sets out of the five which were played..

So far so good, I guess the answer of the last sports issue is slowly unveiling, we are going further still, this time, consolations prevailing.



LAUGHTER THE BEST MEDICINE.

It is said that laughter is the best medicine for it sweeps the heart cobwebs. Researchers have demonstrated various ways why laughter is good for your health.

10 reasons why you should laugh often.

- 1.Exercises muscles leaving them relaxed – A good hearty laugh exercises muscles leaving them relaxed for up to 45 minutes after.
- 2.Improves moods – We are likely to laugh 30 times when we are with other people than when we are alone.
- 3.Prevents heart diseases – It takes 10 minutes on the rowing machine for a heart rate to reach the level it would just after one minute of hearty laughter.
4. Lowers stress hormones – Laughter lowers the level of stress hormones like cortisol, adrenaline, dopamine and growth hormones
- 5.Boosts energy – Laughter increases energy enabling one to stay focused and accomplish more.
- 6.Reduces food cravings – Laughter increases the secretion of endorphin (the body's natural feel good chemicals) which reduces cravings for comfort foods.
- 7.Decreases pain – releases the endorphins which can relieve pain.
- 8.Strengthens the immune system – Laughter increases the immune cells and infections fighting antibodies thus improving resistance to diseases.
- 9.Anti-aging : Facial muscles are toned and increases blood to the face which nourishes the skin giving it a healthy glow.
- 10.Eases Anxiety – Laughter brings away the focus from negative emotions, a more beneficial way than other destructive.

Keep laughing!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

JAMES MUGWE

Courtesy of The East African.

Who Will Save Her?

A
R
T



W
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H

Tobias Dindi Ong'aria

Water is one of the softest liquids, but it is aggressive in its humility. That explains why it is able to wear out rock and change the view of the land over a short period of time. This is also true for the painting that is the most talked about piece of art in the novitiate.

Humbly mounted on wood that appears at first to rotting away, this painting by **Busobozi Kizito, SJ** has been hanging in the novitiate refectory for the last ten years. It is dated 2001 which makes it roughly a dozen years since Kizito, a novice by then, narrated a vivid and eye catching story of the condition of the African woman.

It forms topics of discussion more than often during meals among community members and guests alike, as the themes presented in it are never exhausted.

Agbonkhanmeghe Orobator, SJ in **Theology Brewed in an African Pot**, *Paulines Publications, 2008*, uses the same painting to highlight an image of 'Obirin-Meta,' a Yoruba term used to depict a many-sided woman who can do a number of things at the same time. A concept he eventually uses to explain the Trinitarian God.

Kizito however directs the theme of his painting to a specific direction. He probably intended to narrow down the discussion to the one thing that disturbed him most and compelled him to paint- the situation of the African Woman.

He does this by a small but visible caption on the top left of the painting that reads, 'WHO WILL SAVE HER?'

In the painting, a woman, carrying foodstuffs and firewood on her head, a hoe in hand, a baby on her back and another in her womb, comes to the shock of a man at home waiting only to suckle from her breasts. The man dressed in tattered clothes cares not about the dilapidated house, whereas it should be his primary duty to provide a decent home to his family as is expected of a man in most African cultures. Another baby watches from the door as the whole ordeal unveils, with nothing to learn from his father about taking care of his own future family.

On the tree outside the homestead, a rope is tied. What the painter intended by this rope is not clear, but companions in the novitiate have suggested that the rope is probably there to tie the woman home once she comes back from fending for the family.

This situation is not new in African homesteads, manifesting itself in different ways. But recent struggles for liberation of the woman have borne fruit and created a more decent place for the woman, a place that ensures a woman is accorded the dignity she deserves a human person. A lot still needs to be done though, but the stone rolled already and the journey to that ideal kicked off.



Rafiki team Thanks you for your feedback. We are always pleased to receive responses from readers about the magazine and the writings, including what you would like us to cover, get us on; gonzafiki@gmail.com.

Dear Rafiki Team:
Congratulations on your recent edition! It's very well done; the contributions are rich and enriching, informative and educative. Thank you for the excellent editorial work. Do keep it up!

Blessings, Bator.

Dear Editor,

Peace!

To you and to your Rafiki Team, my hearty, though belated, congratulations. Every issue of your "RAFIKI" is an improvement on the previous one. That means, "magis" is the spirit at work, never to be complacent with the past, however good it may have been but to forge ever forward, for better, for excellence, for gold! Nothing less! Every generation of novices will build on what has been and improve on it and be original.

So, if this was that good, what will the next issue bring? Surprises!

A very blessed Holy Week.

Leo Amani, SJ

Dear Editorial Team,
Greetings! Many thanks for the latest issue of Rafiki. I am always inspired to read about what the future of the Society share in this noble newsletter. The Newsletter is well done; Its content is rich. Keep up the good job!

Michael Ochieng', SJ

Hi brothers,
See you have made it again. Thanks for this great work. I shall go through it all and share it with my friends.

Taddeus Bwesigye, SJ

Thanks for the copy friends.
Indeed you've improved a lot n this time you even brought some on-going issues in the assistancy n beyond. That has been highly appreciated by some companions who are not from our province as well. Keep up!

Africanus Kimario, SJ.

Companions and friends,

Peace ... and just a word to invite you to accompany us on our second Graduation event ... in a modest way, historic for us in South Sudan! And yes, we are more than grateful to you for friendship and inspiration ... and accompanying us during these early years.

We ask your prayers ... and this with many Blessings and Best wishes, to each and all of you and your own concerns!

Your brother in Christ,

Mike sj
Fr. Michael J. Schultheis, sj, PhD
Vice Chancellor
Catholic University of South Sudan
P.O. Box 257, Juba (CES), Republic of South Sudan

Hongera Catholic University of Southern Sudan!!!

Thank you very Much Editor and team,
May The Lord bless you guys, it is a wonderful job. It reminds me of those rich moments when I was in the novitiate.

I enjoy reading it bwana.

Dear Rafiki Editorial Team,
You just keep on making us proud with every issue that comes out. Keep the flag flying at greater heights.
Congrats on this one!



Fr Amadeus Shirima, SJ, the Director of Novices launching the last issue of RAFIKI.

The Unemployed Graduate

An unemployed graduate woke up one morning and checked his pocket. All he had left was \$10. He decided to use it to buy food and then wait for death as he was too proud to go begging. He was frustrated as he could find no job, and nobody was ready to help him.

He bought food and as he sat down to eat; an old man and two little children came along and asked him to help them with food as they had not eaten for almost a week. He looked at them. They were so lean that he could see their bones coming out. Their eyes had gone into the socket. With the last bit of compassion he had, he gave them the food. The old man and children prayed that God would bless and prosper him and then gave him a very old coin. The young graduate said to them 'you need the prayer more than I do'.

With no money, no job, no food, the young graduate went under the bridge to rest and wait for death. As he was about to sleep, he saw an old newspaper on the ground. He picked it up, and suddenly he saw an advertisement for people with old coins to come to a certain address.

He decided to go there with the old coin the old man gave him. On getting to the place, he gave the proprietor the coin. The proprietor screamed, brought out a big book and showed the young graduate a photograph. This same old coin was worth 3 million dollars. The young graduate was overjoyed as the proprietor gave him a bank draft for 3 million dollars within an hour. He collected the Bank Draft and went in search of the old man and little children.

By the time he got to where he left them eating, they had gone. He asked the owner of the canteen if he knew them. He said no but they left a note for you. He quickly opened the note thinking it would lead him to find them.

This is what the note said: 'You gave us your all and we have rewarded you back with the coin,' signed God the Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost. 1 Kings 17:10-16; Matthew 11:28-30



We wish the Secundi all the best as they take their vows and head for their next missions. May Our Lord who calls them guide them in their vocation journeys and in their missions.

To Our esteemed readers, we wish you a nice read. We are waiting for the arrival of the new group of novices, nine in number, we will tell you more about them in the next issue of Rafiki. God Bless you.

The RAFIKI TEAM.



Lord, you create all things in your wisdom, love and power
Give us eyes to see the wonder of your works,
Wills that are strong for your service,
And hearts that love you, who first loved us.

Lord, forgive our misuse of things you have made

Forgive our failure to discern your purpose and to share in it

Make us thankful for all your good gifts, and faithful in the use of them;

And deepen our trust in your love and care; through Jesus Christ our Lord

