



# RAFIKI

November 2013

A Publication of Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate, Arusha Tanzania



## My Light, My Salvation

*Experiencing the Presence of God in Novitiate Experiments*



Tanzania



Uganda



Sudan



Kenya



Ethiopia



South Sudan

# CONTENTS

**THE RETURN..** *Does the return from apostolic experiment resemble the return of the first missionaries in the Gospel of Luke? Page 6*  
*..Of the thirteen*

'It is so that the works of God might be made visible through him' **Page 7**

## FROM BUSY-NESS TO Business

The novitiate experience vis-à-vis life in a fast paced world outside. **Page 10**



When they  
Were nSJ..

THE **SHORT** CUT  
THAT WASN'T

**Page 11**

**What they learnt ..**

**..about God**

The Primi and Secundi relate their experiences of finding God in the Novitiate experiments. **Page 24**

**And Much More.....**



From right; Fr. Lourduraj Arokiasamy, SJ, David Kiprono, Tobias Dindi, Tumaini Noel, and Ayele Shalamo. *Picture: James Mugwe*

## Dear Editor....

*Rafiki Team thanks you for your feedback. We are always pleased to receive responses from readers, about the Magazine and comments on the articles. Our email address is: [gonzafiki@gmail.com](mailto:gonzafiki@gmail.com).*

**I ACKNOWLEDGE** receipt of your precious Rafiki which promotes *urafiki* (friendship) among its readers and gets us informed of whatever is transpiring in that HOUSE OF FORMATION, SCHOOL OF PRAYER AND HOME OF LOVE as we used to call it in former days.

Sincere congratulations for an excellent job to you and to your team and all the contributors. Tell Eddie I could hear him laughing as he wrote the story of his appreciation of Muslims.

How I would have loved to be present at the vows celebration! I was content with praying for each and all of them and their formators. Your time too is not too far away now. You are next!. God bless the new novices too!

Yesterday (May 27th) was the feast of St. Gonzaga Gonza. I do not know whether you were aware of it. There was a short story of the young hero in Zenith. I hope next year something could be done to remember him and pay him homage for he prays for all of you!

Keep well and joyful. If necessary please remember me to each and all without forgetting your formators and our collaborators.

*Leo Amani, SJ*

**THERE YOU ARE** Rafiki crew doing your thing again!

It just keeps getting a must read. I think its high time we get it "really" published and get the entire Assitancy reading it!

Why not? Well Done!

*Allan Ggita, SJ*

**THANKS, EDITOR** and all for the issue of Rafiki. I had a great time there last week and so glad to have met you all! Continued prayers and blessings for a great year and KARIBUNI SANA to Dodoma!

*-Roxanne De La Torre  
Jesuit Volunteer  
St. Peter Claver High School, Dodoma Tanzania*



## Different Experiences, One Story

**B**eing in the novitiate for slightly over a year now has facilitated my meeting of a diverse range of Jesuits who pass by often. Such meetings give us, the novices, an opportunity to hear from them either as a group or in informal chats. One striking thing is that all Jesuits, who did their novitiate elsewhere and those who did their novitiate right here in Gonzaga Gonza, have rich memories of their novitiate experiences.

Surprisingly, their experiences have never been similar from one Jesuit to another even if they joined the same novitiate the same day and were formed by the same formators. Each person's experience uniquely stands out, whether it carries with it fulfilling memories, or disappointing experiences, none matches another. This uniqueness runs into our experiences too as novices. We go through the same way of life but some of our experiences are outstandingly different like the east from the west.

This issue of Rafiki brings these unique experiences the *secundi* who have returned after their successful apostolic experiments in different communities across the province, undertaken from mid June to mid August .

The experiments in the Novitiate are meant to test one's vocation. That is to verify, clarify, confirm and to strengthen one's vocation. The apostolic experiments are also meant to give evidence of who really a man is or who he is becoming, beside this, the experiments will also show how much the values of the Society of Jesus have been internalized into an individual's personality.

This understanding was implanted in our minds when we set out for the experiments in mid-June this year; and the experiences shared here-in are reflections guided by this same understanding.

The *primi* on the other hand talk about their experiences in the novitiate since their entry in May.

They have also just concluded their thirty-day retreat that fell in September. They give just a sneak preview of that experience, but by the time the next issue comes out, those experiences of God teaching them will have brewed enough and their *fifth weeks* will be the point of interest for that issue.

As Rafiki strives to be better each time, we also appreciate the efforts of our predecessors. Some of their work keeps promoting vocations to the Society out there. We are gladdened by one High School seminarian who has kept correspondence with us after encountering Rafiki. Read about him in this issue.

I wish on behalf of the Rafiki team to thank you our readers for your continued interest in the journey of Rafiki. We encourage all our readers to give us feedback on areas we need to grow, that will be very invaluable to Rafiki.

Since the last issue, Oscar Angaga Nduri, SJ moved out of Rafiki to a nobler mission in the East after pronouncing his vows earlier in May; Burka Usura, nSJ has moved to other responsibilities in the novitiate and John Siyumbu, nSJ and Ayele Shalamo, nSJ have worked tirelessly since they joined the team in June.

I also thank Fr. Lourduraj Arokiasamy, SJ for his continued guidance in the production of Rafiki as he continues commemorating his Golden jubilee in the Society.

Rafiki exists because all of you are. THANK YOU.

Regards,

Tobias Dindi, nSJ;

Editor.

## Formators' desk....



Dear Companions,

*'....this culture of the provisional'*

Greetings! We had a modest celebration, as I desired, of my golden jubilee combined with the celebration of the feast of our holy Founder St Ignatius, on 31 July. On that occasion, my good friend Sch Cyrus Mwangi Catoliki, in all amazement, asked me, 'Father, to what do you attribute this, viz. completing 50 years in the Society?' I quickly responded to him with one word '**Grace!**' Yes, it is God's grace and nothing else. I do not merit it and I do not deserve it. We were twenty-four novices entering the novitiate in 1963, of whom seventeen got ordained. And at the moment fourteen of the ordained are alive, and one of these left the Society just last month, after spending fifty years in it.

I was not astonished by the question raised by my friend. It was not very difficult for us in the 1960s to join the Society and persevere to this day. The Society of Jesus numbered more than 36,000 in 1965, the year Fr Pedro Arrupe was elected general. From then on began a steady decrease in numbers and we are today less than half that number. Not only the Society but all the religious orders and congregations experience the same kind of situation. There were many reasons for that. The world has changed very much. There is now a new culture, the culture of the provisional, as Pope Francis calls it. The Holy Father said on October 4, at Assisi, answering questions by the youth: ***'.....this culture of the provisional: it seems that nothing is definitive. Everything is provisional. Once I heard a seminarian --who was good -- who said: "I want to become a priest, but for ten years. Then I'll think about it again." It's the culture of the provisional, and Jesus didn't save us provisionally, he saved us definitively!***

The same kind of attitude, mentality, we see, regarding married life too. Do the youth not understand the importance of lifelong dedication or commitment to such a life, religious life, priesthood or marriage? Yes, they do. Don't they have the desire for it? Yes, they have. Then why are they hesitant and afraid of making such a commitment definitively? I think many lack the will, the will power, to do it. There is a Chinese proverb: 'The weak have desires, the strong have the will'. The attractions and distractions are many in today's world that scatter the minds and hearts of the young. They do not allow them to focus on Christ. Every year we are happy to watch a number of our novices pronounce their first vows here at Arusha. Our prayer is that these young men truly plunge into this life of commitment definitively. God's grace is always there in abundance. What is needed is our full cooperation!

I appreciate and congratulate all those of our novices who have helped to bring out this issue of RAFIKI, especially those who have shared their experiences. Hope you enjoy reading them!

Fraternally,

Lourduraj Arokiasamy, S.J.



## Secundi return from Apostolic experiments

The Secundi concluded their two-month apostolic experiments that lasted between 17th June 2013 to 17th August 2013.

Their return was celebrated by the primi who were left alone at home after barely a month of their arrival to their novitiate.

The secundi were in different locations in the province; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Gabriel Abonyo, Arinaitwe Francis); Dodoma, Tanzania (Aloysius Lubega, Paul Kilonzo); Mwanza, Tanzania (Burka Usura, Edwin Onyango); Ngara, Tanzania (James Mugwe, Tobias Dindi); Kampala, Uganda (Francis Kyalo, Gilbert Lasway); and Kitui/Nairobi, Kenya (Mark Kimario, David Kiprono, Boniface Mutuku.)

The secundi are back home in the novitiate and the novitiate program is running as usual.

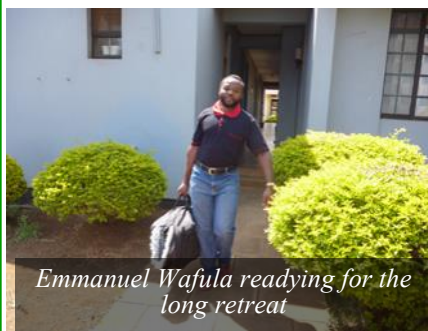
## Community in process of drilling water

We dreamt that drought may be history in the novitiate soon as the community embarked on drilling a water borehole.

Water was expected to be struck at a depth of 90 metres in two places. We were not lucky, yet we say "blessed be His name forever".

## Primi depart for their Long retreat

On 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2013, the Primi departed for their Long Retreat at



the Camaldolese Benedictine Sisters Abbey, in Karatu. The abbey is in the Catholic Diocese of Mbulu. **Fr. Amadeus Shirima, SJ** and **Fr. Lucas Ng'wahi, SJ** guided the novices.

## Secundi resume French course

The Secundi are back into the French class with renewed interest. Under the instruction of Fr. Mawazo, AA, many are putting in their best to master the "plus belle langue."

This interest has also been rejuvenated further with a visit by Paschal Dionizi, SJ from St Peter Canisius, Kimwenza who urged more novices to aspire for Kimwenza.

There is hope for greater things *French-wise*.

## Community joins church in prayer for peace in Syria

Following a call by the Holy Father for the church to hold a special day of prayer and fast for peace in Syria, the novitiate community dedicated Saturday 7th September 2013 to prayer and fasting for the cause of Peace in Syria.

A day of personal prayer and reflection it was for the entire community and was concluded in the evening by an hour of adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament led by Fr. Lourduraj Arokiasamy, SJ.

We keep praying for peace in Syria, Egypt and the entire world



## Improved harvest recorded this year

The novitiate has recorded an improved maize harvest this year compared to last year.

The harvest conducted by both primi and secundi after the return of the secundi and before the departure of the primi took slightly shorter time and effort than before because of easier ways of harvesting employed.



Beside the maize, the reap included animal feed too which is expected to last slightly longer than last year.

# THE RETURN..

## ..Of the thirteen

### Lubega Aloysius

In the gospel of Luke 10:1-16, Jesus sends out ahead of him seventy two disciples in pairs (mind you, the first batch of missionaries), with among other instructions, to proclaim the nearness of the Kingdom and authority to heal the sick. Later on in Luke 10:17- 20, the seventy-two come back full of joy, telling of the marvelous deeds wrought in their master's name, especially that of bringing the devils to their knees. But Jesus postpones their party by reminding them that the reason for rejoicing exceeds that of exorcism, because it lies in having their names written in the book of life. You and I can imagine how the disciples felt. Numbers have meaning. Genesis 10 mentions the nations on earth as seventy-two. Thus, the missioning of 72 disciples could imply that Jesus sent the disciples to all nations.

This gospel passage reminds me of our going and coming back from the experiments. The middle of June this year saw the Novice Master here in Gonzaga Gonza novitiate missioning (us) Novices to various parts of the Province for our long experiments. Just like Jesus, he furnished us with a set of guidelines meant to act as points of reference during our experiment. Two months later, we were all gathered in Arrupe Hall, each giving an account of his experiment; mission, community, prayer, challenges, consolations and desolations mention it. In every person's story, no less than mine, I discerned a tone of gratitude, a feeling that everybody had gone through an experience he wouldn't trade for anything else. In everything, everybody seemed to conquer overwhelmingly despite some challenges. I could see that joy is a characteristic of a disciple who obeyed a mission.

To register success is something very commendable and worthy celebrating, because it makes us believe in ourselves and keeps us reaching for higher things. But Jesus' response to the successful mission of the seventy-two reminds us that we can have success and yet celebrate it for wrong reasons. When Jesus tells the disciples that he watched Satan fall like lightning from heaven, he is possibly warning them against pride - the reason Satan was cast out of heaven. It like Jesus is telling the disciples, "Hey guys, you have done some great work but keep guard, lest pride creeps in." For all the success one attains, it's always good to remember that our effort "...is fed and watered by God's almighty hand" (remember the second line in first stanza of the hymn *We plough the fields and scatter?*). Such instances serve to remind us that a disciple's greatest glory doesn't lie in what he has done, but in what the Lord has done through him. Such feelings like triumphalism and "I made it" attitudes are inappropriate for disciples; to be entered in the heavenly book is the ultimate triumph. A disciple is ought to always examine whether the success in his or her ministry brings him or her closer to God; for what is the purpose of saving other people's souls while losing yours?

"What did you find out about God?" was among the questions to be answered. For me, this is of paramount importance because such experience is enriching in as far as it brings one closer to a better understanding of God. Sir James Simpson's discovery of the use chloroform in obstetrics saved the world a million of deaths. He was later asked, "What do you regard as your greatest discovery?" The answer wasn't chloroform. "My greatest discovery is that Jesus Christ is my savior" was his proud response. To do great things for others is heroic, and more so if one is able to find in them, among other things and above them, a coming closer to God and His will. I'm yet to reach this level but I have started the journey, and I trust that as long as I keep reaching, it is attainable and it is what I wish for you too, dear reader.

### A`ma mere

#### Femme noire, femme africaine,

Ô ma mere,

Tu es bonne et belle,

Tu donnes la vie,

Tu donnes ton lait,

Tu prends ton petit fils sur to dos.

Femme noire, femme africaine,

Ô ma mere,

Tu es grande et jolie,

Tu pleures avec moi,

Tu rit avec moi,

Tu montres a' ton fils la maison du pere.

Femme noire, femme africaine,

Ô ma mere,

Tu es jeune et jolie,

J'ai chaud pres de toi,

J'ai froid pres de toi,

La nuit vient, reste pres de moi, o ma mere.

### Une poemme de Gilbert babu



*We thank God for the last batch of nine vow-men, we wish them the best in their current missions...*

## 'It is so that the works of God might be made visible through him' John 9:3

GABRIEL ABONYO, nSJ

Why there is so much suffering and pain in the world is the question I asked myself constantly throughout the period of my long experiment. I was sent to work at Mother Theresa Children's Home, run by the Missionary Sisters of Charity in Dar es Salaam. This is a home for children abandoned soon after birth or so by their parents. It was so sad to find some who were rescued at points of near death after the mothers threw them away in horrible conditions; others mauled by animals, like dogs and bitten by insects. The permanent marks on their bodies always remind one who knows their stories, of the incredible cruelty of our humanity at times. The facility is also home to babies who have lost their mothers after birth and are brought here to be cared for before they can rejoin their families and relatives.

Many physically and mentally disabled people also find a home here. The institution also has a section for old people who have no families to take care of them as well as sick people who live as they get treatment for various diseases and such conditions. Some here have chronic illnesses making their sufferings quite visible. During the experiment I also came to witness death several times, owing to sickness or old age; that was quite painful after having interacted with them and served them for some time. These situations always made me reflect on the question of why all the sufferings, death and evil in the society? What would make relatives and guardians fail to take care of children and the old which are rich aspects of our African culture?

I would think about all these. Why God would not prevent the death of mothers at birth, the birth of the physically and mentally challenged people? It brought with it the inevitable feeling of helplessness and pain.

The words of Christ to the disciples when they asked what made the man to be born blind can be of consolation here. Our good God definitely cannot cause suffering to his people but rather permits evil, pain and sufferings because he can bring a great good out of these situations that to us results only to pain and helplessness. I came to realize that the words of Christ were quite practical at the Home. One of the sisters there once told me that people have seen the faces of Christ and our Lady in those babies they hold in their arms when they visit the home. I did not experience such a miracle myself at the place but I believe I saw the face of Christ, Our Lady, Blessed Mother Theresa and the saints on those of the babies and children, the disabled, the sick and the old people who find a home in the institution

The ever present and evident joy, hope and life in the people there proved the existence of a good caring God who provides a means for living their lives ones again from the good care they are given in the place in all aspects. The numerous stories of success of the institution and the people who have got help from it really indicate the work of God made visible in them. I also recognized the hand of God and so his works in the sisters, numerous donors, well wishers, workers and other people of good will who in a great way contribute to the success of running the Institution.

## Fruits of silence in the Novitiate

Patrick Oyet, nSJ

There is a need to experience the reality of silence at some moment; and in that silence to hear God saying: "You are precious in my eyes and I love you." Each one of us needs to be refreshed, to be changed and to be renewed. I, at most times find myself either lazy or forget to pray. I also find myself in a pit of doubt not knowing how to come out of it. Nevertheless I always take a moment of refreshment, of renewal, of grasping a vision, where it is okay to be vulnerable and it is okay to be myself.

We can each find that place where we do not have to pretend that we are better than everyone else, that our tribe is better than the rest or that one colour of skin is better than the other. Each of us needs to understand that we do not have to pretend anymore, that we are simply human beings, little children with our strengths and weaknesses.

We all need a time of renewal. We need to refine the vision of Jesus, to refine the Gospel message so that it transforms us and gives us life. This time of renewal has been gentle and a moment that I came in touch with difficult things within me.

*With joyful hearts,*



Fr. Amadeus Shirima, superior, and the community thank the Superiors, members and Jesuit collaborators of the following communities that hosted us during the two-month Apostolic Experiments;

- ◇ Inyasi House, Loyola High School, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- ◇ Kiwanja Ndege Parish, Dodoma, Tanzania
- ◇ St Francis Xavier Parish, Nyakahoja, Mwanza, Tanzania
- ◇ Radio Kwizera Jesuit Community, Ngara, Tanzania
- ◇ Pedro Arrupe Community, Nairobi ,Kenya
- ◇ Xavier House, Kampala, Uganda
- ◇ St Joseph the Worker Parish, Kangemi Nairobi Kenya

Thank you for your immeasurable generosity. Thank you for accommodating us with all our flaws as we strove to learn and know who we truly are.

*We are forever grateful to you...!*



# Hope in the Face of Suffering

LASWAY GILBERT

While working with HIV and AIDS patients at Nsambya hospital in Kampala, I came into contact with many patients from whom I learnt something about hope in God. Some seemed to lead a happy life but some others had lost hope and were discouraged.

I spoke to one of the patients who was very friendly to me, Evelyn [not her real name] a mother of two daughters both of whom are also HIV positive. She is a divorcee and she is not financially well off. At first full of prejudices, I asked her whether she has still some hope to live longer and see her two daughters grow to maturity. She told me, after having pocketed a number of ARV drugs I handed her, "I hope in God and I am sure every thing will go well with me and my daughters for He will never let me down"

What is this hope? According to St. Paul (1 Cor. 13:13) hope is one of the three theological virtues; faith, hope and love, and "in hope we are saved" (Rom. 8:24).

It is the desire and search for a future good, difficult but not impossible of attainment. Evelyn has the desire to see her daughters go to the university and have a profession in their lives. This is difficult to achieve considering their health status and the financial constraints but this can be attained because she believes hope is the primary end and motive of a Christian life and its author is God himself. She is conscious of her inner value which is anchored in higher, more spiritual things and she can not be shaken by sickness or poverty.

She has come before God with expectations, even though she is aware of her condition and unworthiness.

From her I learned that without hope in God especially in the face of suffering none of us can live. In this sense, hope is a wager that there is a correspondence between this human will to live and the world which supports and sustains life.

Evelyn's will to live and see all she expects to happen presupposes that life is somehow worthwhile despite all the evidence to the contrary.

Because of her hope in God she has found the true meaning of her life. This has made her faith in God firm and the love she has for God and her neighbors is something every one of us would like to imitate. On her part she has managed to found a small business of selling vegetables and fruits with which she can pay rent and school fees for her daughters. She is doing all these because she believes "wishful thinking about what we should

be without devoting ourselves by taking necessary steps and waiting patiently towards fulfilling our dreams is absurd"

I also asked her whether because of her condition she is stigmatized by her friends and neighbors and this is what she told me "if you trust in God, even if friends abandon you, you will always find solace in him and this solitude makes you hospitable and this hospitality has brought many people close to her who have been of great help especially to her business.

## Moments of Silence

Moses Ndung'u

A wall is anything that gives you your own space. It stops one from seeing what is beyond or gives one a chance to focus on what one can. It could be the physical normal stone wall we see, or silence, a wall of thought, and may be a wall of loneliness among many others. I would like to share slightly on silence.

Silence is an inner experience of peace of mind. Silence is also a serene quiet environment. As I have pointed out earlier, silence gives one chance to focus on what he can see or what he is thinking about. Silence gives one a wall to be in a school where there is one to talk and one to listen.

Being a school of prayer, the Novitiate experience gives me my own space. To listen more and talk less - silence. This results in understanding and perfecting. Silence may make a day long or very short depending on perception. It is through silence that I have learnt to listen to a still small voice thus creating time to meditate about this small voice. In Paul's letter (Rom. 10:17) it is written: "Thus faith comes from what is heard...." Hearing emphasizes personal vocation and obedience and given the fact that truth is revealed in him.

It is in silent moments that I imagine many things. With the extraordinary faculty of the imagination I can go into the past. The simple contemplation of the mysteries of Christ as they are found in scripture allows for identification with the characters of those mysteries, whether they be Jesus himself or the apostles. We can be Zachaeus, ecstatic with joy on being called by Jesus, and ready to give half of what we have to the poor for the great privilege of Jesus' choosing our house to dine. We can be Mary, silently holding her son just taken down from the cross. Silence is a peacemaker.

It is in silence that one is able to review with scrutiny every part of life – the happy and sad moments in life. It gives one a humble moment to learn about forgiving self and others. This reminds me of the intention of Holy Father that people today, overwhelmed by noise, may rediscover the value of silence and listen to the voice of God and their brothers and sisters. It's my hope that I will learn more about the importance of silence, yes, listening more.

**"I hope in God and I am sure every thing will go well with me and my daughters for he will never let me down"**

**By Odinga Owino Odinga**

It is only a few months in Gonzaga Gonza Jesuit Novitiate, yet my stay here has had far reaching effects in my life; living and practicing (the vows of) poverty, chastity and obedience. I would like to compare my experience in the novitiate to my past years. The religious life is a new encounter to me vis-a-vis my past life, in a highly competitive, fast-paced, materialistic and secularized world. I do not, however, insinuate that religious life is led in a superficial world, rather, the novitiate involves a life of prayer and building intimacy with Christ Jesus. It is a time to understand oneself and to keep discerning the will of God in one's life. Quite a lot has changed in me in various aspects of life as I get to settle down and embrace this new life, especially prayer life. If I have ever prayed much in my life then it is this time I have been here. I have learnt a lot through humble tasks done here; that, to be happy in life does not mean being a boss in high professional fields and careers, but doing ordinary things with extraordinary love.

Gone are the days when the demands of life compelled me to wake up. When the phone was used to find out whether there are any deals that would bring anything material to the table. Life has drastically changed. Now the love of prayer inspires me to get out of my bed, a phone is no longer a need since God does not require a phone call. My phone now is the breviary, where I even ask God to open my lips before a word could come out of my mouth, just to say lauds and maintain silence both within the environ of the novitiate and inwards to have enough time to communicate with God.



**Raring to go!:** The Primi, before their departure for the Long Retreat: Standing, from left: Patrick Oyet, John Siyumbu, Ayele Shalamo, Noel Tumaini, Emmanuel Wafula, Cleophas Odinga, Frank Obat. Front, from left: Moses Ndung'u and James Lele

## FROM BUSY-NESS TO Business

This has helped me to build more intimacy with Christ Jesus.

Life here is simple yet interesting, wanting no more than God's grace and love, to forego everything for his love just like our Jesuit forefathers did, the example they set for us is worth admiring and emulating. As opposed to the secular understanding of success as, a competition to win, all that makes one better than others, at the expense of others considered weaker and less influential. Religious life is a struggle to live a life worthy in God's sight.

The Examen is yet another good time to correct where I fell short of expectations. I have done it before though not for the same reason and intention as now.

Noon and at bedtime are precious moments for this exercise. While Examen is a point to look at oneself and review the day, in the corporate world this is a time to review how much has been made; material items, fame, favour, reputation etc.

It was interesting to find out that when I thought I was "crazy" to choose such a life, many young men from different ethnicities and backgrounds have chosen this and many have done before me. If I thought I was "mad" to go against the odds, then I am not alone. We are many "mad" people. This gives me courage to come to a clear conclusion that there must be a good God working out this miracle. All in all I ask for the grace to SEE, SERVE AND LOVE.

When  
they

Were nSJ..

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

## THE **SHORT** CUT THAT WASN'T

**JOSEPH Kiarie, nSJ**

I never thought that short cuts can also be long cuts; but now I believe so after a funny dramatic experience which happened recently somewhere in Dar during my apostolic experiment.

Well one morning after breakfast I decided to take a short cut to Nyumba ya Amani na Furaha. I was one hour late after my alarm watch decided to take sleep thus leaving me to test my own time awareness and sensitivity.

Thinking it would be quick and amusing I decided to take the short cut through the gutters of Mabibo enjoying the beauty of creation and taking cover in the cool shade from the hot Dar' sun.

Little did I know that I had walked for two innocent hours without reaching my destination. Oh! My goodness, something wrong had happened!



The going seemed to have gotten tough so the tough had to get going! My 'short cut took me round and round back to Inyasi community

where I sheepishly stopped, tired, disgusted and full of shame. The whole drama was just disastrous but on the other hand I learnt that my 'short cut' is used by club members who get some professional techniques from a famous member of parliament in jogging and walking exercises.

Anyway the principle of Professor Long cut says that "You have to master the long cuts very well before graduating with a Ph.D degree in short cutology!" Well you

can bet that I will stick to the wise principle in future

---

***"You have to master the long cuts very well before graduating with a Ph.D degree in short cutology!"***

---

*As published in THE RAFIKI magazine of January – March 1997.*

*Fr. Joseph Kiarie works at Loyola High School, Dar Es Salaam Tanzania*

## 'I will be Favorable to You...'



LUBEGA Aloysius

When word was out that the list containing our destinations for experiments is hanging upon our refectory notice board, I was eager to know where I had been missioned. The place got to be Dodoma and though my curiosity wasn't satisfied, I was optimistic that everything would work out for good and that God would be favourable to me in many ways. Paul Kilonzo nSJ would be the companion with whom I would labour in the vineyard. The eight-hour ride to Dodoma was a good one; arid countryside dotted with rock boulders, thickets, manyattas, baobabs and occasional eddies of dust. While in Dodoma, our means of transport to and from work would be Sport bicycles. After a series of crude calculations, and making sure that all possible shortcuts have been explored, I concluded that it takes around thirty five minutes to our places of work. Thus started our two-month experiment, with no clue to whatsoever laid ahead, save for my trust in the God of surprises.

Ursuline Sisters' Orphanage in Miyuji, Dodoma currently takes care of fifty-four orphans, a sizeable number of them (orphans) HIV+. The youngest include such as those yet to develop their full set of teeth and a few of them aged over twenty. In this place, splitting firewood, watering gardens and orchards, cooking, cleaning, ironing children's clothes, rocking babies and others are some of the (humble) tasks that fell in my line of duty. Other smaller ones included; "Aloyse, can we lift these logs to the other side?"; "This chimney retains a lot of smoke. Can you fix it?"; "Kaka, what can we do about this overgrown hedge?"

My experiment provided a milieu in which it was impossible to enter and come out the same person. Each day was a mixture of learning and unlearning, giving and taking, toiling and coping among others.

Whereas it was saddening to learn that many of these kids (some HIV+) were abandoned by their mothers, it was heartening to notice the generosity of the Sisters who devote their lives to nurturing them.

It was a real milestone in my life spending time with these kids, in whom I heard some of the biggest dreams, among them teachers, engineers, medics, religious and astronauts. They regaled me all day with their stories as we worked and played together.

***I'm certain that I have received more than I have given. I have seen with my own eyes the labours of God, and felt with my own heart his wonderful love. If I can précis my experiment, it is my most rewarding experience in recent times.***

They also took it upon themselves to always correct my deplorable Swahili (such as when I could interchange the usage of words *mzi-ma* with *mzuri*, *fasi* with *safi*, or *dada* with *kaka*). Some two identical little girls always teased me as to what their names are, knowing that they would be rewarded with a hearty laughter at the end of my guess, because it was obvious that I would mix them up. With the Sisters, I felt as if I'm among my own kin. We shared jokes, spiritual and secular conversations. They particularly wanted to know about me and my family, why my Swahili is cheesy and how far is my ordination. One was deeply in love with Ignatius and everything Ignatian, the reason she kept me talking about him.

My sojourn at Cheshire Home was an enriching one. Run by the Gemma Sisters, this centre caters for forty children with varying degrees of mental impairment; mild, severe and profound. These kids welcomed me with open hands but this meant that I became dirty on the instant. My time with them in class was torn between teaching them how to shade, settling conflicts (usually over crayons) and putting their toys in order after every five minutes. This would make me dog-tired after ten minutes, for a session meant to last for two hours! Despite their pitiable conditions, they are kids capable of smiling, having fun and loving. This is the reason why we had a lot of fun together on swings and merry-go rounds.

In all these, I saw that despite the despicable suffering in this world, there is a God who cares for our well-being. I felt humbled at the way the Sisters go about their work, full of dedication and always cheerful even in adversity. I thanked God for the bountiful benefactors who give generously so that these children may have a future, and I thanked Him

too for giving me a chance to contribute (however infinitesimally) to such a cause. If ever I had an image of God who doesn't care about the suffering, that image has been crushed.

The Jesuit community in Dodoma, which hosted us, was a very supportive one. The members demonstrated in many ways how their generosity exceeds mine. I specially admired their hard work in the Parish ministry and they increased my appetite for becoming a Jesuit. Their collaborators such as many parishioners and Jesuit Volunteer Corps are now part of my catalogue of friends. As for a co-worker, I couldn't get a better one than Paul Kilonzo. Despite the times we differed, such as at what speed to ride our bicycles, he was an invaluable companion who always energized me with the words, "God cannot allow His prophet to suffer". But my experiment wasn't an amusement ride. First, I had a number of flat (bicycle) tyres. Some tasks were grueling and others exacting. Sometimes, such as when I failed to communicate well enough left me dismayed. My shortage of Swahili vocabulary was a nagging glitch that served to delay my work in case I needed to make a few consultations. But all these challenges are trifles compared to the times I was surprised by joy (to borrow a phrase from C.S Lewis).

On August 16, the Sisters organized a soiree for us. I was deeply moved by the kids at the Orphanage when they sang "OooKwaheri, Kwaheri, Kwaheri, Mungu akipenda tutaonana". (bye, bye, bye, if God wills we will meet); Sr. Gloria, the Superior of the Orphanage made two requests; that Fr Master sends her other Novices as soon as possible and if possible they stay longer. After a couple of hugs and "We-will-miss-you's, I and Paul returned home, ready to catch the next day's earliest bus to Arusha, and thus ended my experiment. When I look back, I get filled with gratitude to the hand of God that I have seen working in my own life and the life of others. Just like God was favourable to Ignatius when he went to Rome, I feel that God has been very favourable to me in a number of ways. I'm certain that I have received more than I have given. I have seen with my own eyes the labours of God, and felt with my own heart his wonderful love. If I can précis my experiment, it is my most rewarding experience in recent times.

KIPRONO Ng'etich

### Children of God Relief Institute (COGRI)

is an organisation which offers services to the most vulnerable members of the society who are infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS; these are the children and the old who are left behind by the breadwinners who succumb to the pandemic. It was started by the late Fr. Angelo D'Agustino, S.J. The project is dependent on donors including USAID and well-wishers for its financial demands. COGRI comprises Nyumbani Village based in Kitui, as well as Nyumbani Children's Home and Lea Toto programmes, which are based in Nairobi.

**Nyumbani Village** lies within a 1,000 acre piece of land which was donated by the Catholic Diocese of Kitui. It has about 100 houses in 25 clusters, which accommodate over 1,000 children and grandparents. It has institutions including Hot Courses Primary School, Lawson High School and a polytechnic to cater for educational needs of the children. It also has a dispensary for medical needs and supplies to the village community. A number of agricultural projects are running in the village in an attempt to make it sustainable.

**Lea Toto Programme** is a Community-Based Organisation under COGRI, which offers services to HIV infected children while they continue to live with their caregivers at their homes. Clinics are established in Kangemi, Kawangware, Kibera, Dagoretti, Mukuru, Dandora, Kariobangi and Zimmerman areas in Nairobi.

**The Experiment:** I arrived at Nyumbani on 17<sup>th</sup> of June for my long experiments, with two companions. We were to spend half of our period of experiments here. After some orientation, we were asked to choose a department in which we would like to work and we chose to start with Sustainability, a department in which we thought the need was greatest. This is the department in which we spent most of our time, engaged in plenty of manual work.



# The World is Our Home...

My first experience was in the Agro-Processing Department. Here I was engaged in threshing green grams and beans. Next I went to the Livestock Unit. My responsibilities in the unit would include cleaning of the cowshed, feeding of the rabbits and the chicken and also collecting eggs. In the afternoon we would clean milking containers in readiness for milking which took place at 4.00pm. After milking, the milk would be distributed to the children and the grandparents from different houses in the village; they would already be waiting with containers as we continued milking. I worked in the cowshed for three days.

In the Green Houses, I had an opportunity to experience production of tomatoes and some other vegetable crops. Apart from these, I also had a two-day's experience in the Clinic. My last week was spent at Lawson High School, where I was teaching. I used this opportunity to create awareness among the students concerning involvement of the religious in professional work like teaching.

We left Kitui on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July, to Nairobi, where I parted ways with my companions as I left them in Nyumbani Village in Karen. I joined the Kangemi community which hosted me for the one month I was there.

On Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup>, I started my work at Lea Toto where I would be involved in visiting the children at their homes. At the homes, in the company of social workers, we were interested in finding out how the children are taking their medication, how they are doing health-wise and how they are committed to the visits to the clinic. We were also interested with how they are doing in school for those who are students, their living standards and needs in general since the organisation could chip in to help in the very needy cases e.g. in paying for house rent, providing food, school uniforms among other needs. After the home visits, I would come back to record the reports and do filing of the documents.

Some times we would go

out for community mobilization and provision of VCT services to help people know their HIV status. Here we would visit the people at their homes and try to convince them to accept to be tested. Those who accepted would be tested while others declined. Of those who did not want to be tested, some gave a reason that they would rather remain ignorant of their status because if it is revealed they would get stressed up and might even die early. Others were women who would not want to be tested in the absence of their husbands; we would find only very few men at home since they were working days and they would be at their places of work.

One main challenge in Kitui was language, since I could not communicate with young children and grandparents. However, we were lucky to have a companion who could understand the language; so he would do the interpretation and so help us communicate. I had no fellow novice while in Kangemi. In several occasions I would feel very lonely. When I was free during the weekends, I would walk around alone. I also missed community prayers, especially when it comes to reciting the breviary.

In addition to our routine programme in Kitui, every Friday we would teach the Programme for Pastoral Instruction (PPI) at Hot Courses Primary. We also were involved in teaching Catechism to the primary, secondary and polytechnic students, in conjunction with the Brothers of St. Joseph, who are working there. On Saturdays we would visit the various clusters to be with the children and their grandparents, to have a chat with them and to assist in some duties that they would be doing, mostly laundry work.

In general, the experiments were so enriching and I can say that they were worth doing. It is very interesting to note how God provides for his children in need; for instance, it is unbelievable that the Children of God Relief Institute was initiated by a poor religious and is now serving thousands of needy members of the society. One can be deeply moved on seeing how people who would have otherwise lost hope in life, moving on courageously, well aware that they are living with an incurable illness. Isn't it God who gives his people a new hope of life every day?

## The Novitiate, ante-Spiritual Exercises

JOHN Siyumbu

On May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013 circa 1530 GMT, Arusha was not as warm as expected; well, at least the Novitiate and the environs. There was a chilly breeze, most likely, courtesy of the distant but visible Mount Meru. This land form provided for a dazzling entrance into Tanzanian territory. Clearly, there was a marked difference from the vast expanse of shrub-land in the bordering Kenya. Add a



smooth ride to all these (thanks to **Cyrus Mwangi, SJ**, the Novitiate Minister) and one can appreciate the fun.

The jubilation of Second Year Novices (otherwise called the *Secundi*), on the arrival of the nine *Novi* (the new Ones), was a sight to behold. One would be excused for mistaking the scenario as a meeting of old friends after a long time. With enthusiasm, each *Novus*, with the guidance of an assigned Second Year Novice was led to their neatly-arranged room. Holy Mass, a fitting welcome, was celebrated in *La Storta* Chapel. The marvelous pattern of a white cloth woven around the empty cross on tinted glass beyond the altar could not fail to capture one's eye. By being in Gonzaga Gonzales Jesuit Novitiate, at that point in time, a longing, rather, a yearning was being fed. The rays of the setting sun, striking the glass at an angle, had the overall effect of accentuating the realization that in our journeys, God always accompanies us. It is in the Psalmist's affirmative spirit that one's presence in *La Storta* on that day is aptly captured: 'He [the Lord] leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.' Moreover, though now misty and mysterious, hidden from the eyes and yet visible by faith, the end cannot be mistaken on one aspect – it is through



and, thanks

to our Lord Jesus Christ, beyond the looming cross. For all intents and purposes, life in the Novitiate had just began.

The *Triduum*, a period of prayer prior to the Novitiate proper, and guided by **Fr. L. Arokiasamy, SJ**, was a most considerate design. It allowed for a sober and purposeful transition to a life of prayer from a previous fairly fast-paced lifestyle. The *Blue Book* was, and continues to be, of invaluable help in getting a grip of the Way of Proceeding in the Novitiate. Precepts in this 'Compendium' were augmented during classes that commenced after formal acceptance into the Novitiate. These classes included: *Instructions* taught by Fr. Master; *History of the SJ* taught by Fr. Socius; *Prayer* taught by **Fr. L. Arokiasamy, SJ** and *Autobiography of Ignatius* taught by the Novitiate Minister. Through these sessions one's understanding of the fundamental goals of the Novitiate - formation and probation – were expounded to the benefit of the *Primi*. Queries

*...time in the Novitiate, before the Spiritual Exercises, has involved a growth in understanding.*

were answered and clarifications made. We were introduced to the Personal Hour, *Lectio Divina*, Praying the Divine Office and *Manualia* too. It can be safely held now that no *Primus* (a First Year Novice) is under the impression that the Novitiate is a holiday camp; nor the phrase '*Manresa*' means a man who stays on planet Mars.

The glamor of the Novitiate constituted, in good measure, the visitors – Jesuits and others - hosted on different occasions. It was quickly learnt that the *Ni baraka kutoka kwa Mungu* (It is a blessing from God) tune is a component of the elaborate traditional visitor-welcoming rites here in the Novitiate. Having received this deposit of the art of welcoming from the *Secundi*, we, the *Primi* tried to replicate it. Well, were a grading system available, it may not be certainly stated that excellence was achieved with flying colours. Through the Meet-a-Jesuit sessions that were a corollary of most of the aforementioned visits, the Jesuit life was revealed in an enriching collage.

One **Fr. Joe Kiarie, SJ** appears to stand out. An undoubtedly animating Jesuit, that one is. It may be within imagination that there could be a *Primus* running around these Novitiate grounds wondering whether, due to his robust

baritone, Fr. Kiarie has banned microphones in his Parish. Gee!

Vocation stories of **Br. E. Mokuu, SJ** of Hakimani Centre and Fr. Kimonge of Wau helped crystallize the notion of what a Jesuit is. We also had several sessions on the *Suppression of the Jesuits* with Scholastic Victor as he prepared to begin his Theological Studies at Hekima College, Nairobi. Preparation and celebration of St. Ignatius' Day without the *Secundi* in the Novitiate was a fitting emphatic lesson on the Do-It-Yourself stance indispensable in men being moulded for the frontiers. Seminars attended within the Novitiate and in the neighboring Canossian Convent have served to contribute to the general formation of the Novices.

As September 1<sup>st</sup> approaches, I look forward to the *Spiritual Exercises* with a prepared and informed eagerness. It is my God-given chance to know myself, gain an intimacy with my Creator and stay in Him and Him in me thereafter. It shall be a moment to experience what each son of St. Ignatius already has; whether he's an SJ that puts on a red pair of shoes some-



where within Vatican City or works with the poor in Kangemi. Time in the Novitiate, before the *Spiritual Exercises*, has involved a growth in understanding. With St. Paul one may say: 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.' AMDG

## Rafiki's Guest . . . . .

We received a letter from one of our readers recently who requested a copy of Rafiki henceforth. We did send him the same in the last issue, including some information about the Society, thanks to the vocation directors. This is his correspondence;

*April 28, 2013,*

*The dearests in Christ,*

*Praise be to the Lord Jesus Christ, it is my hope that you are all fine, I am fine too.*

*My name is Francis Lujaji, I am a seminarian at St Augustine's Minor Seminary Bihawana in the Catholic Diocese of Dodoma, I am in form four.*

*I write to appreciate the Rafiki issue I read though it was a past issue of February 2011. Despite being long past, I enjoyed reading it because it was informative. It provided several answers to questions I had*

*I decided to write to you because I want to be one of your friends. I will be grateful if you can send me some other issues of your magazine and I also will appreciate if you reply to my letter.*

*May God bless all your works and life so as you can preach his glories universally. I also would like to congratulate you for our Pope who is from your Congregation. May God bless you all, pray for us so we can approach well our examinations in November. Thank You*

*Francis Lujaji.*

To this letter we responded and he was swift in his appreciation;

*August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2013*

*Dear Editor,*

*Peace of Christ. I hope all things are going well with you in the novitiate. Am fine and going on well with my studies.*

*I write this letter to you to thank you on behalf of the novitiate for the copy of the magazine you sent to me and the brochures about the Jesuits. I received them and my fellows and I enjoyed them, many have been interested to know more about the Jesuits. Thank you very much brother.*

*I also would like to congratulate you for the good work you do in Rafiki.*

*Since I would like to get more information about the Jesuits, I will create an email account when I finish my O-level in November so we can keep in touch more easily. Between now and then I request that you keep sending me the hard copy of the magazine if possible.*

*Thank you for keeping me in your prayers I also pray for you to finish your novitiate and continue with your formation.*

*Yours in Christ*

*Francis Lujaji.*

Kindly keep Francis in your prayers as we strive to make RAFIKI a vocation promotion tool,

## With thanks!!

# PICTORIALS



*Secundi on Villa, Tarangire National Park, Manyara region Tanzania*

*Primi and their retreat directors during repose*







Working with Love

When entertainment becomes the business



# A Bitter Pill to Swallow

EDWIN Onyango

I remember when I was a kid and down with malaria - which happened quite often than I can imagine now - or even down with pneumonia or any of those common ailments kids get, since I feared needles so much, my mother at times was kind enough to give me the tablet option for most malaria cases. Most of the medicines were those white or yellow tiny and extremely bitter pills which was still an uphill task for me as they made me want to throw up. Sometimes I could simply pretend to be swallowing quickly when she is not looking and throw away the medicine. I think there is a time she suspected and could stand watching. Now this was the terror; when I acted as if to throw up, a hot slap would follow my cheek or back so much so that the idea of throwing up could completely disappear. Now, the interesting bit was that subsequently, she needed only to stare at me or threaten a little and I knew what that meant. This implied that I not only needed 2 glasses of water but a little sugar to lick as well in a bid to keep the medicine down in the stomach.

Criticism, I think at times, is something similar to this childhood tablets ordeal of mine especially for the recipient. It is one of the most bitterest – that is if such a word ever exists in English – pill to swallow. Criticism is a form of feedback. The fact that in most cases it is given firmly in public and with various motives and emotions entangled therein (which at times unfortunately, even bars the message generally from coming through instead), it sometimes generates resentment on the part of the recipient depending on how it is done and more importantly how the recipient perceives it. The other day I was having an interesting chat with a companion on how weird it is that sometimes one undertakes an action with utmost good faith but the same act is completely misinterpreted by another or at times others may find it completely inappropriate. How come? This is the question I was later asking myself.

Nothing came top of mind but again I thought to myself, may be at times it is easy to read mischief from those we are not very close to or maybe this could be side effects of rivalry or maybe simply basic disappointment which makes one want to vent.

During my experiment, I once talked to a formed companion about the subject and he was laughing at himself and his fair share of criticism he has had in his life and his ministry. His point was that sometimes we just do whatever we want to do to the best of our ability and move on. More like the Swahili saying, *'tenda wema nenda zako'* meaning 'do good and walk away'. He was like, "do not wait for gratitude because instead what you may end up getting is criticism." Mmmh, weird, huh!

Anyway, in all these, coupled with my own observation and a little experience of criticism, I have come to make three deductions about this subject. **One**, that at times criticism is good and even necessary on the part of the recipient (especially if he/she chooses to look at it positively irrespective of how it is done) as it serves as a wake-up call. It is a call to act swiftly however bitter-a-pill it may be to swallow. Being human, in most cases we have blind spots that others see way before we do ourselves. This means that if there is any truth to whatever is said, then one simply has to compel himself/herself to swallow the bitter pill, pick up the lesson and move on. It is more like the two glasses of water and the sugar I referred to in my earlier story. This of course is extremely hard as in most instances; the first reaction is always that of anger and deep resentment because of may be the embarrassment experienced et al. I think the key thing is to accept and let the anger face pass then enter later into deep reflection for the lessons.

**Two**, that there are some criticisms that are completely unwarranted and quite unnecessary. These may also have a message at times but in most cases they don't since they are not done in good faith.

Sometimes they are also embroiled with bits of sarcasm. They mostly attack than build. These too however, if we choose not to respond, take us to a practical class of humility; you know, like we have Biology practicals et cetera. It is said that a humble pie is one of the *distastiest* pies in the world.

**Three**, that there are those criticisms that simply needs to be treated with the contempt they deserve, that is, entering with one ear and leaving with the other. They are really irresponsible so much so that they border the line of being juvenile at times. These actually do not deserve any attention and the best one can do is to empathize with the source.

In summary, at the end of everything; it boils down to our own conscience which over the years, as we form well (as objective as possible which is almost ideal even) is to either convict us or liberate us as regards our thoughts, words and deeds. Our tongues and consequently our words can build but they can also sharply destroy. Just as we have a duty to be responsible for our actions, I think that to some extent, we also have a duty to be responsible for our words as well. One interesting thing with words is that once they are out there, they can not be taken back. May be the best we may do is to mitigate the damages caused. Criticism is and will always be part of our lives as human beings. This implies that on the recipient's part, one needs to pay attention and more importantly listen to the message and where necessary/possible, make an adjustment. Where not, just as the wise and experienced companion said, "have the conviction of what you are doing and forge ahead undeterred."

*"Our tongues and consequently our words can build but they can also sharply destroy. Just as we have a duty to be responsible for our actions, we also have a duty to be responsible for our words as well. "*

## Seeking the Magis

KIPRONO Ng'etich

*Magis* is a Latin word which means more or greater; it is an Ignatian word which does not stop at its literal meaning, it rather has to do with relationship with God and others. It is about going an extra mile for the greater glory of God (*ad majorem Dei gloriam*).

St. Ignatius told the Jesuits to work as if everything depended entirely on them and to pray as if everything depends entirely on God. Working as if everything depends entirely on you means going beyond what is expected of you; it means giving your best, hence the saying 'there is no room for mediocrity in the Society of Jesus'. According to Ignatius, one should ask one self, "What have I done for God? What am I doing for God? and What MORE can I do for God?"

During their sharing of experiences after apostolic experiments, none of the *Secundi* failed to share what he did as a personal initiative in the course of the period of experiments. Some were teaching catechism, others were helping in the children's homes, and some found time to talk to the youth in the parishes among others. Personal initiative is a piece of work which one does without any compulsion or without being under any obligation.

It is out of one's own ***Magis is not a term for use only in a free will during one's religious context; it is applicable also free time. in contemporary secular world.***

*Magis* is not a term for use only in religious context; it is applicable also in contemporary secular world. To give an example, a friend of mine graduated from the university with a Bachelor's Degree in Education and then he went to look for employment.

The Teacher's Service Commission could not offer him a place since he could teach Biology alone in high school. He had to go back to the university to do a Bachelor of Education (Enhancement) to be able to teach a second subject. He was a graduate yes with specialization in Botany and Zoology, but he was required to be able to do more in school; to teach another subject – *magis*.

In an interview for employment, the employer usually looks at the qualification of a prospective employee. If he has a number of qualified persons for a given job, he will go for the one that can do *magis*: someone who is capable of doing something else apart from his properly assigned duty and even to work outside his area of specialization.

Many people who work find time to do some other work and you will hear them say I do such and such work for part time. Usually, people who do part time jobs have the intention of earning some additional income and in some cases they even earn more than their normal salary out of the part time job. *Magis* is not to be ignored; it can be of great benefit especially now that the cost of living has escalated to almost unbearable heights.

The spirit of *magis* is all about flexibility and willingness to do something extra, to take one more step for the sake of God and others. At times it demands sacrifice since it could mean foregoing enjoyable leisure activities.

## Be ready to forgive and live in peace

PATRICK Oyet

"Humanity leads us by the hand to treat our neighbor in the best way possible; that is, understanding everyone, living at peace with everyone, forgiving everyone; never creating divisions or barriers; and behaving – always! – as instruments that foster unity."

These words were written by a man who suffered the loss of friends in war and narrowly escaped being killed himself.

Perhaps you are one of those always eager to forgive. However, for as much as we all want peace, love and harmony, what do we do when our enemies will not rest until they enslave or slaughter us? Ultimately we conclude; I am ready to do away with all the human barriers that make it impossible for people to get along and work together. I am even ready to forgive. But for the common good, justice demands that we imprison those who are determined to kill innocent people and steal their property.

---

*If you have been a victim of injustice, seek justice but seek it peacefully.*

---

How, then, can we bring peace and justice together? Anyone familiar with God's revelation knows that "peace and justice" shall embrace only with the coming of Messiah. The Messiah will "separate the wheat from the chaff". The Messiah will gather the good grain into his barn and throw the weeds into everlasting fire.

In the present age, we patiently await the "Day of the Lord" at the second coming. Any judgment made in this world falls short of establishing both peace and justice. Only God can read the hearts of all people with infallible wisdom. God alone knows when someone has truly repented.

If you have been a victim of injustice, seek justice but seek it peacefully. It is one thing to defend yourself while being attacked, another to seek revenge taking the law into your own hands. Do not allow yourself to be overcome by rage or you too will be guilty.

If you find no one to defend your cause, and your enemy laughs at you, don't think Jesus has abandoned you. If God's own son could be crucified, do not be surprised when Christ asks you to experience something similar so that you can become more like Him. To be truly Christ-like, we must "share in his suffering so as to share in His glory."

# Excerpts.. ...from the journal of a novice

**TOBIAS Dindi**

On 16th June 2013 my companion James Mugwe and I left the novitiate for Radio Kwizera, in North Western Tanzania for our two-months apostolic experiment. It was a rich experiment in a million ways. The story cannot be told here in its totality. This is a tiny glimpse of how I started off. These are excerpts from the journal of a novice

*Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2013, 'who do you say that I am'*

I woke up a little late because I had slept late. Mass would be at eight in the morning at the cathedral being a Sunday. That's good time for me, I have some time to pray before mass.

I reflect on the gospel passage, 'who do you say that I am?' That question mysteriously sounds too difficult for me this morning, its not new, but today it truly is, very new, 'Who really are you Jesus of Nazareth? Especially for me.

I probably would have rushed to say that he is the full revelation of God, the messiah, the word made flesh, all those descriptions, the question would still be, who do I say that he is, maybe those answers would remain merely at the level of what I have heard being said about Jesus. Was I convinced really about the identity of Jesus? Did I know what it meant that Jesus was the son of God, the King of the world? Maybe, maybe not; that is what he was asking for; my own personal proclamation. And I do not get it by my own, but it must be revealed by God himself, who reveals his mystery to us. I therefore must rely on God himself, so that he may reveal himself to me in whichever way he deigns it right.

Mass at the cathedral was very interesting, I loved the liturgy, the people this part of the world just like most places in Tanzania are very musical, this brings life.

'Who is Jesus for me?' that question filled the remaining part of my afternoon.

Late afternoon, we go across the Rwanda border for a drive. A lot fills my mind about human suffering, after an experience I haven't gathered the guts yet to write about, in a while I will. It fascinates me crossing the river Kagera with the car on the ferry, interesting it is I think. The Rusumo falls are a good sight to behold, the beauty of God.

I enjoyed the day, it was filled with a lot to think and reflect about, I spend the last few hours of the night with Mohamed Makonda in the studio and after my examen, sleep is handy.

*Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2013; Solemnity of the nativity of John the Baptist*

Mass would be at eight in the morning and so I was not under pressure to wake up so early. I therefore refreshed up and got to the chapel, I needed sometime alone with God before mass, I recited the breviary alone and sat there silently listening, I hope I did listen to God. Mass was good, Fr. Damas was in and so there was no need of going for mass outside.

The Baptist, the forerunner of Christ had a lot of influence in his own time, he even had the capacity to proclaim himself the messiah, but he sticks to his role, a mere forerunner. That was humility. It wanted just that kind of humility for him to fulfill his mission. And that is what he did.

'Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending.

*'Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility'*

You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility,' the words of St Augustine, I thought about my humility, I doubted I was doing well, or even if I had done well before, could I point out any instances? No, I could not, how could I be sure that was humble, furthermore, that pointing out in its own is a pointer to the failure of humility. That would be pride in itself in a way. I left it at that point, I just told myself, you ought to do better.

That day, we went to the productions officer to continue with our orientation. She was a young looking woman, beautiful and charming. I liked how she treated those under her leadership. She was sensible and I think we would get on well, if we didn't, I most likely would be the problem. She took us through the structures of the radio station, the leadership channels and a few policies here and there as she deemed necessary for us to know.

After that she took us to the newsroom where she handed us over to the news editor. The news editor was a young lad, Seif Omar Upupu. I liked him from the first day we met, he was so human I thought. We had a long conversation, mainly about where we would fit most in the newsroom and what we would do. We later agreed that we would start officially the following day. Things were set.

And this beginning cemented the experience I had in the apostolic experiment.

## Just for Laughs!!!

An Irishman moves into a tiny hamlet in County Kerry, walks into the pub and promptly orders three beers.

The bartender raises his eyebrows, but serves the man three beers, which he drinks quietly at a table, alone.

An hour later, the man has finished the three beers and orders three more.

This happens yet again.

The next evening the man again orders and drinks three beers at a time, several times. Soon the entire town is whispering about the Man Who Orders Three Beers.

Finally, a week later, the bartender broaches the subject on behalf of the town. "I don't mean to pry, but folks around here are wondering why you always order three beers?"

'Tis odd, isn't it?" the man replies, "You see, I have two brothers, and one went to America, and the other to Australia. We promised each other that we would always order an extra two beers whenever we drank as a way of keeping up the family bond."

The bartender and the whole town was pleased with this answer, and soon the Man Who Orders Three Beers became a local celebrity and source of pride to the hamlet, even to the extent that out-of-towners would come to watch him drink.

Then, one day, the man comes in and orders only two beers. The bartender pours them with a heavy heart. This continues for the rest of the evening - he orders only two beers. The word flies around town. Prayers are offered for the soul of one of the brothers.

The next day, the bartender says to the man, "Folks around here, me first of all, want to offer condolences to you for the death of your brother. You know-the two beers and all..."

The man ponders this for a moment, then replies, "You'll be happy to hear that my two brothers are alive and well... It's just that I, myself, have decided to give up drinking for Lent."

## Finding God in all things

AYELE Shalamo

I have learnt many things and received many gifts since entering St. Gonzaga Gonzaga Eastern Africa Jesuit Novitiate. I feel there is a great progress in my vocation. I am learning to live the spirit of "Finding God in all things", a key aspect of Jesuit Spirituality. It is a great gift from God to me in these three months before the long retreat.

I faced some challenges at the beginning. These included: waking up early for Morning Prayer, being assigned as time keeper which meant I was entrusted with the task of waking up the community every morning at 5:40 am. Adapting to different types of food for me was to an extent a challenge. I did not realize I would later on relish the most popular *Ugali* and *matoke* (a type of cooked unripe bananas mostly enjoyed by my companions from Uganda) and porridge (*uji*). Nevertheless, I miss our Ethiopian '*Enjera*'. By the grace of God I am able to enjoy them. Surely, life is just a matter of attitude and willingness to adapt.

As already noted, I have come to learn and understand many important things about the Society and God. For

*In our Novitiate, which is the home of love, prayer, and formation, we can see and understand that there are different ways and different activities to find God and to thank him.*

instance, the movements of the spirit and God's love for me. Being able to live and grow in line with Ignatian Spirituality is a special grace for me. The beautiful phrases like 'A.M.D.G (For the Greater Glory of God)' and 'Finding God in all things' are among God's gift that have helped me to understand his greatness and love in my daily life. Thanks be to God, I am blessed by living these spiritualities especially 'Finding God in all things' which is the core of Jesuits Spirituality. Before I joined the Novitiate, finding God in everything, was an idea I never had. Of course, many of us fall into the subtle trap of thinking that the only place to find God is in the church or some specific place of prayer. If we do not expect to find God in everything, we might just miss great opportunities for help, healing, and spiritual growth. From what I have understood through the formation, it's true that we can find God's grace, see his greatness by looking at things around us opening both our interior and exterior eyes. We all are surrounded by his wonderful creation which shows his greatness.

In our Novitiate, which is the home of love, prayer, and formation, we can see and understand that there are different ways and different activities to find God and to thank him. For me, finding my companions from different countries with different cultures and personalities helps me to find God and to think how great God is in all our differences in culture, in attitude, knowledge and so on.

Apart from our community prayer time, finding God in my daily activities involves our daily activities in the Novitiate. This has been in and through *Manualia*. It includes harvesting, weeding, raking, watering the flowers, cleaning (in-door apostolate), scullery and cooking. Out of these and during my recreation time with my brothers I have become aware of God's presence in my life. The novitiate's serene environs have greatly contributed to this realization. From the Second Year's sharing on their Long Experiments, I have learnt that the love of God may be known through suffering. Indeed. If we expect God's presence only at the places like the church or in our happiness or during moments of consolation, that expectation may lead us to a wrong and incomplete view of his love in our life. If we understand and open our interior eyes, then God's love is everywhere; his grace is in all things. We can find God even when we are in desolation and suffering. If we try seeking him and his unlimited love in everything, all our times will be our prayer time, as Jesuit spirituality guides us.

## God amidst a suffering Humanity

TOBIAS Dindi

God is a compassionate God, but a mystery beyond what my mind can grasp. 'God is good all the time' is a common phrase, but how do I reconcile this with the suffering poor that I interacted with, directly and indirectly during my long experiment

I have always held the image of God to be good, whether things are fine or not. I will give a case; a few days after we had arrived, Angelo offered to take us to the Rwandese border, a few minutes' drive from radio Kwizera, just to familiarize with the surrounding. While standing at the border post seeking clearance to cross to Rwanda, a family of about six walked by to get cleared too, a man, his two wives and three children or so.

They were refugees from Rwanda who were staying in Tanzania and were going back home. The man had an old bicycle, on it tied a few belongings; it was being pushed. The women and children were walking along. Upon climbing the stairs

*'We truly can find God in all things, more-so in the unattractive part of life, like human suffering.'*

to the office where we were waiting, one of the women fell because she was too weak to climb, it looked like she had gone without food for a couple of days, all of them were actually too impoverished, and that picture of a woman falling on the stairs because she is too weak to climb remained implanted in my mind, and I started asking myself where and who God is for them. This was one case. A cross-section of our listeners were poor illiterate village folk. Where is God for them all?

Upon reflection and sharing my thought in the community, especially in relation with the theology of the book of Job, I came to get a better picture that as much as suffering is part of human life, God himself is very present in that suffering and this is the best scenario to explain that we truly can find God in all things, more-so in the unattractive part of life, like human suffering.

---

## To Be Human Means to Be Lonely Sometimes

EDWIN ONYANGO

Loneliness is a reality in our lives. It is a privileged experience because it prepares us for a deeper interaction with others (a.k.a. 'intimacy'). Familiarity with the dynamics of loneliness helps recognize the options for dealing with this rather inescapable reality. The initial stirrings take many forms; dissatisfaction with whom I am or with something about my current situation, for example, being dissatisfied with being alone even if it's by my own design or it can be dissatisfaction with my participation in a group. At times I explain readily the disconnected feeling by the unpleasantness of my environment or by the failures in communication between me and the others.

My initial dissatisfaction requests that I acknowledge it is there – whether I find a plausible explanation or not – as this allows me to make decisions about how I will respond to the inner loneliness I am feeling. Ignoring or denying my lonely feeling (*re-investing energy in the projects or interacting with this group with whom I find myself*) will lead me only into further isolation. Once I am aware of my sense of disconnectedness, I can work towards being attractive or involved or appreciated as a significant contributor to whatever I consider worthwhile causes.

My sense of disconnectedness if it remains unacknowledged can grow until I feel like I am the only person who is adequately contributing to what is worthwhile. When I find myself speaking down to others or disapprovingly of them, I now take this as a clue that I am feeling isolated and have ignored it for long or have denied my own sense of aloneness, separateness, incompleteness or neediness.

Once I acknowledge the feeling, I can decide what to do with the experience; I may not explore the depths now but I may explore other options like listening to music that engages me at the feeling level, join others in conversations or card games or call friends, that is, deliberately distract myself from my

loneliness or do something to alleviate it. At times it helps to admit to friends that the reason why you are calling is because you are lonely.

The most beneficial way to deal with that initial glimpse of my aloneness and neediness is to enter deeply into a reflective solitude. Self-reflection is possible only when we have accepted, achieved and maintained interdependence as a mature way of life; though we are still vulnerable to the disappointment in our relationships. Only those persons confident of their identity can establish and maintain the connectedness of intimacy with others. Resentment is a defense against dealing with loneliness at a deeper level just as avoidance is at the surface level. It can show itself in a low level hostility toward all those who have failed me and those who have received more of what I craved, for example, attacking people's character instead of challenging their ideas can be a clue that I am in touch with my own fragileness and I am resenting it.

Loneliness has sadness to it as it deepens which may be felt only vaguely as dissatisfaction or a mild discomfort with what had been familiar and pleasing. Friends are liable to notice the sadness in me almost before I do. My recognition of the depth of my neediness in a moment of profound loneliness will allow me to '*free the slaves*', let go of those for whom I care, because I don't want to use them for my need-fulfillment. The sadness I feel will eventually give way to a new freedom for myself too. The new freedom is strange and uncomfortable at first. The monument I built to my own neediness does not disappear but uncovered at last; it is no longer an idol demanding homage. It stands now as a silent reminder of a former bondage to which part of me will always be inclined to return. I am less tempted to refashion others into my own image of who they should be and I am less demanding that they respond to me as I anticipate the desire.

But now, I am free to choose to care for others because they need care, not just because I need to care for them; to engage others because they too feel disconnected. Now I leave others free to receive or reject the care I offer. Having unmasked my own idol, I knowing how fragile I am and having experienced acceptance by my God, I can reach out to others whom I know are also fragile. Having been stripped off my own pretense of others of self-sufficiency, I can see beyond the pretense of others. I do not disdain them for their pretense because I know how very fragile they sometimes feel in their apparent strength. My fragileness had not been tampered with by God who acknowledged and accepted me; I will not tamper with theirs. I am now able to connect with others now not only out of my own unacknowledged need to do so, but because I appreciate much more deeply their need to be accepted as they are. I am also less willing to be untrue to myself in an effort to have them connect with me. I will be less tempted to manipulate others to get the affection and appreciation I crave. I am prepared to directly pursue the fulfillment of my need for intimacy, that is, to come together with others in a way that leaves us all intact.

In solidarity with fragile brothers, I can connect with them without feeling that I have to be somebody else or demanding that they be different. I may not like some of their behavior and they may also not like some of mine. But if I enter into my own experience of loneliness which motivates much of my behaviour, I may be able to recognize and sympathize with the fragileness which they protect and which prompts much of their behaviour.

*Adapted from: Being sexual & celibate, by Keith Clark, cap*

**'Loneliness has sadness to it as it deepens which may be felt only vaguely as dissatisfaction or a mild discomfort with what had been familiar and pleasing.'**

# Gospel Reflection

St. John's Gospel 14:1-11

JAMES Lele

Chapter 14 of the Gospel according to St John begins the last Supper Discourse. St. John gives us Christ's profound reflection on His relationship with His Father and the Holy Spirit around the table of fellowship, where Jesus celebrated His Last Passover with His closest friends and He invited them to share in His relationship with His Father and the Holy Spirit. That was the ultimate meaning of Communion with Him in His body and blood. Jesus' words to them are His words to us. The Great Sermon at the Last Supper was meant to be written on our hearts.

Jesus knew (although His apostles did not suspect) that within the next 24 hours, He would be crucified. People who know that they are about to die will sum up a life times' worth of wisdom to pass to their families and friends. The same way Christ's Great sermon at the Last Supper was delivered in this Spirit.

Christ remarks involve words about leaving. He tries to relieve His Apostles' fears and anxieties about losing Him forever. Christ assures them that His going to the Father is more gain than loss for them, for they will enter into a deeper communion of life with Himself and the Father. However, Jesus asks them to trust in Him, no matter what happens.

---

*To imagine the Way without suffering is to corrupt Christianity.*

---

Jesus goes on to speak of 'a place' where He is going to prepare and welcome His disciples; of 'many dwelling places' in His "Father's house" - these are all images for that 'area' of communion of life with Himself and His Father. Thus disciples will be where Jesus Himself is, in the Father's house that is, they will with the help of the Holy Spirit, enter through faith, in this life, into a close relationship with Himself and His Father - a special relationship that is a gift of Jesus and His Father.

Jesus reminds His disciples that He had many times described for them the **way** to this new love and life. But do they know? Thomas speaks for them all by claiming that they do not - (v. 5) - "Master, how can we know the way?" Christ's witness, teachings and miracles had not yet penetrated the hearts of these eleven men who had been given the most extraordinary seminar in History. For three years, by means of one-on-one personal encounter, dialogue, miracles, debates, dinner conversations, responses to problems and questions, the impressive example of Jesus behavior, the personal pull of His personality and every other imaginable effort to reach them, Jesus had still only touched the surface of their souls.

This difficulty, which Jesus had with the disciples, becomes even clearer when Philip makes a remark similar to that of Thomas. It takes the sign of glory - the sign of the cross - to open them up and rip apart the veil of their dull comprehensions. Even after that, it required the continued presence of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit to make this possible.

## ... We do not know the way

The way that will bring us to deeper communion with Jesus and so to His Father, will entail both life of moral virtues which, as Christians, we are called to try to witness; and above all our commitment to discipleship. This means revealing the glory of God, through living the sign of the Cross, which is losing self; taking the cross and following Jesus. We Christians will always struggle with this particular way. We will want only Easter and not Good Friday. We will seek a pretty Religion and not the suffering and the difficulties that come with the cross. Jesus made it clear; that the way would never be easy. He first walked that way Himself to show us how to do it. He did not promise us a rose garden without thorns. To imagine the way without suffering is to corrupt Christianity. But to be lifted up on our Cross is to be lifted up to glory, to be flooded with divine light and transformed into a lifestyle that will provide us with the most extraordinary possibilities of happiness.

Jesus tells His disciples that He not only has the **truth** but also He is the **truth**. Truth in the Gospel is not an abstract idea or an object of intellectual research (as understood in Greek literature) but it is closely associated with the person of Jesus. This truth is Jesus Himself as He reveals God in His words, actions and in His own person. By accepting Jesus, who is the truth, we receive the gift of life and a Christian is "of truth" if he/she accepts the self-revelation of God in Jesus and makes it part of living; and this sets believers free from sin. Besides, the Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth because he is the one who internalizes and grants a deeper understanding of the self-revelation of God, present in person, words and example of Jesus.

Jesus' truth liberates our minds as Christians and opens us up to the inner freedom; that is such precious a gift. Christ's vision of truth is greatly necessary for our society, now more than ever. Our modern culture has become a desert of scattered bones of broken commitments; just because we have not embraced Jesus, the source and the living example of fidelity. He kept His promises. Jesus is the only one who will do much to heal the broken families, fractured friendships and all the other kinds of chaotic relationships in our contemporary world. Our world that has been totally engulfed by the climate of relativism; no more truth, only opinions. This is nothing new to anyone. Funny enough to me, is that, century after century, one or another form of it has surfaced again and again, always hoping to dislodge the truths of Jesus from influencing people's intellectual and moral lives.

---

*'Thy had unseen sustains the poles, On which the huge creation rolls;*

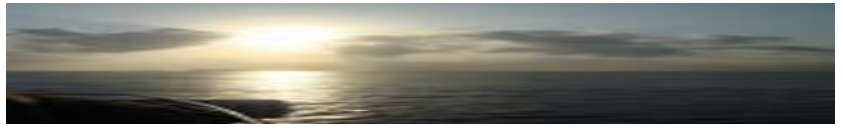
*The starry arch proclaims thy power, Thy pencil glows in every flower*

*There's not a spot or deep or high, Where the creator has not trod*

*And left the footsteps of a God'*



# What they learnt ..



By Rafiki Team

## ..about God

The constitutions of the Society of Jesus (#64) stipulate that before anyone is admitted into a residence or college, or after that, he must undergo six main experiments besides many others. The first is to go through the spiritual exercises for about one month; that is to examine one's conscience, reflect on one's sinfulness; then contemplate the scenes and mysteries of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ our Lord; and to pray vocally and mentally according to one's capacity and divine guidance. #65

The second is to serve for a month in one or more hospices, eating and sleeping there or spending some hours daily, according to circumstances of time, place and persons, assisting and serving all, ailing or healthy, as may be required. This is in order to progress in humility, and to give proof of a rejection of worldly pomp and vanity, so as to be entirely available to the creator and Lord, who for us was crucified. (#66)

In light of these two directives of the constitutions of the Society, both the two classes in the novitiate, *primi* and *secundi* have gone through these experiments in the recent past, the *primi* through the spiritual exercises and the *secundi* the *hospice* experiment.

Both these experiments, done with generosity and a good disposition present deep avenues of an encounter with God. RAFIKI samples these experiences of meeting and learning about God and a few novices generously share here briefly what they learnt about God. This is a sneak preview specifically of the Spiritual Exercises which the *Primi* will share at length and depth in the next issue of RAFIKI.

### **What I learnt about God in the Spiritual Exercises, by the Primi:**

**Judge not and you will not be judged;** Equality before our God is a gift to us as His children. We are invited to accept our brothers and sisters as they are, i.e., with their strengths and weaknesses. This realization is a fruit of my making the *Spiritual Exercises*. I'm filled with gratitude to the Society of Jesus for the opportunity to make the Long Retreat. I have received, in them, what makes me to be 'living with others'. Love rather than judge; since, in loving one does not show the negativity associated with rash judgment. **Frank Obat**

Our God is a powerful God. He is the creator of heaven and earth. He is the God of love, of tenderness. It is God, through his prophets, and finally through His Son announced the Good News to the poor, freed the captives, gave sight to the blind and liberated all the people who had been oppressed. Through his vision the rejected and the poor get to hear our God's 'I love you.' **Patrick Oyet**

I can say that the Thirty-day retreat (the *Spiritual Exercises*) gave me a deeper understanding of God as the Supreme Creator of everything that exists on this planet; therefore it is Him alone that knows why things happen the way they do and there is always a purpose as to why they should be the way they are. Personally I have come to know more, that God has been the one responsible for the entire life of each individual and all His creatures. He provides for all of them. Therefore He is a God to whom, as human beings, we should entrust all our future, because He is already aware of it.

### **James Lele**

The Lord, my God; He listens to me. In a quiet, receptive and calm way. God communicates to me. By listening. Not by shouting at me. All His graces come to me through listening. Many a time, I am not at home when He visits. These are the times when I'm not listening; times when I'm not 'tuned to the wavelength' of my God. Yet, even with this knowledge of me, my God does not tire visiting by listening to me. I keep asking for the grace not to let Him down; not to ignore Him. I can get that grace. Yes, I'll wait for that grace from my God, even if it delays, it will surely come. AMDG. **John Siyumbu**

### **What I learnt about God in the apostolic experiment (by the Secundi)**

**God is a provider:** Nyumbani was started by a poor religious person but is now a big organization catering for hundreds of poor people. God is mysterious; I failed to understand why he allows people to suffer. I encountered many children who are orphaned owing to the AIDS pandemic. Many of them are infected with the disease and have no one to veng for their needs. In His own ways, God knows how to veng for and how to console his suffering children. **David Kiprono**





## INTERVIEW

All things have a common origin; GOD. All humanity has a common parentage; GOD. In this sense, God is seen as a parent, Jesus as a brother, if all humanity gets conscious of this, we will be charged like a battery and we will know who we truly are, brothers and sisters and children of God. This is what the **Undugu Family** strives to propagate as a Jesuit apostolate. RAFIKI's **Tobias Dindi** had an interview with **Fr. Steven Msele, SJ**, and he sheds more light on the genesis and state of Undugu Family today.

**Rafiki: What is Undugu Family?**

**Steven:** Undugu Family is rooted in the literal meaning of the word 'Undugu' (brotherhood), and this stems from an understanding that we have a common origin. This origin is God. We however can not use this to define everything as brother and sister, Humanity distinguishes itself because of a parentage with God. Looking at God as a common parent of all is what makes Undugu be. This creates a united world, a great root of peace.

**Rafiki: Is this a realistic dream in a world divided like we have today?**

**Steven:** My dream is that the world will get this consciousness; but this gives me the opportunity to be who I truly am in this relationship whether I manage to take this message to the whole world or not.

Everyday I have an opportunity to share this with someone, it makes someone else conscious of this relationship. I reach many people, since we started in 1996, and each single day I share this message with a person, with this I cannot estimate the number of people I reach.

When I share with people, they come together and start an Undugu Family. These families form a branch, and these branches struggle to be a form of light to make people know who they truly are. Music, dance, walks; all these are used to show the world what we are all about.

# UNDUGU

*We are all Children of God*

Our hope is that in East Africa, after years of this campaign, people will be aware of who they are and we will not relate as a 'market' but a family. We expect that we will be and we will celebrate what we are, no longer a global market but a human family under the parentage of God. I do not have an idea when this will be achieved, but we have started working, so we have no alternative.

**Rafiki: You currently have a concentration of this apostolate in Uganda, how is the progress there?**

**Steven:** We have mostly groups of youth and children involved in music, drama and dancing. Many people however mistake us for an ordinary entertainment company. We also do have a music academy though it is informal.

We have a lot of men and women involved in behind the scene running income generating activities for the same purpose, people have also began joint businesses to celebrate who we are in Kampala, Gulu. We are currently a registered trustee with the advice of the Jesuit provincial of Eastern Africa and we do hope to have a meeting of founders next year to see how Undugu can work as a registered trustee in Eastern Africa.

**Rafiki: How does Undugu fit into Ignatian spirituality?**

**Steven:** St Ignatius experienced a lot in his journey with God. In my own attempt to journey with him, I see Ignatius understanding his relationship with God as creature and creator. God took this understanding to a

different level, an understanding of God as Lord, he strove to help others understand this relationship.

God took him further to a rarely understood level, being placed with The Son, seeing Jesus carrying his cross and him being placed with The Son.

This is where Ignatius understands deeper his relationship with God as his parent. This is who he truly was though he talks little about it.

Am simply struggling to introduce the principle and foundation but at this

level of relationship of God as father, Jesus as brother and have all people get to this experience of being placed with The Son, by The Father, not at the level of Master and Lord, but at the level of Father and Son. I wish all people will get to River Cardona.

**Rafiki: What is the composition of Undugu families, especially in terms of religion?**

**Steven:** Many groups in Uganda are started by non-Catholics; Anglicans, evangelicals and Muslims. I have a feeling of them sending out this principle and foundation despite not being Catholic. All we strive to achieve is people to understand that humanity is a family, despite our varied backgrounds.

**Rafiki: Where do you hope to reach?**

**Steven:** We have a long history, rich as it is, we have a long way to go. This is not just something I want to do, it is something I have no choice about, but to do. It is more a matter of life and death, not just for me but for humanity. Why, because, the mission of Christ was a matter of life and death for him, making humanity what it truly is.

For more information about Undugu families, visit [www.undugufamily.com](http://www.undugufamily.com), and on facebook Undugu family east-ern africa



## We are Companions –we break bread with one another

GABRIEL Abonyo

When we arrive in the novitiate to begin the two years formation, one reality that dawns on us on the very first day is that we find ourselves among many new people most of whom we have never met before and immediately begin to learn to live with them. The variety of the people here makes the scenario and issue more complex. These are people from different backgrounds, countries, cultures, ages, education backgrounds, personalities etc. we are to become companions from the very first moments we find ourselves together despite these numerous differences.

No sooner than we reach the novitiate do we begin to experience even the literal meaning of the Latin word *cumpane*, break bread with, from which the word companion is derived, among us. We share bread and other food together. Surely people with whom you break and share bread with are definitely your friends, brothers and family members. So after having just left our families, relatives and friends from wherever we come, we immediately find a replacement of all these in the novitiate.

We soon realize that in the novitiate it is not only bread that we will be breaking together but also nearly every other thing in the community. We break each new day with one another in the novitiate in form of the morning prayer of the Divine Office as the very first thing after waking up, break the word and bread together during holy mass after, then break the fast of the night together in the refectory followed by working together once again before classes or

*'The hard times and joyful moments at home in the novitiate are experienced once again with one another.'*

any  
other  
activities

thereafter.

Even in the classes, we study the Constitutions, history of the Society, the Church, Religious life and the other topics together, with contribution from our companions. The apostolates in and out of the novitiate are always done in companionship. Recreation activities and games are always done together. The hard times and joyful moments at home in the novitiate are experienced once again with one another. So in a word we are always companions sharing every moment together.

We are always conscious too of what St Mark tells us in his gospel-that just as the Lord appointed the twelve 'that they might be with him' and that 'he might send them forth' we too have the common factor that we are the Lords companions in this place for the two years. Just like the twelve were comprised of a tax collector, fishermen, Zealot, the Iscariot and the other ordinary Israelites into this companionship we too have been called to be companions with people from a wide range of background and personalities.

That is not always a very easy thing and of course even amongst us arguments and debates come up, not of who is the greatest or who will betray our Lord like it happened with the twelve, but those arising from different opinions, worldviews, personalities and other issues. But the most amazing thing is that despite these challenges we still learn to be very good companions and friends in the Lord with the obvious hand of God and his graces being visible in the beauty of our companionship.

In fact we immediately realize the indispensable significance of our companions in the novitiate and see how difficult or impossible our stay in the novitiate would be without companions to share with the joyful moments, to seek their help and support during the hard times and to share nearly every moment within the Novitiate. Our companions soon become our very good friends.

## We thank you for the bountiful harvest

Lord we marvel at your Love,  
Love that fills the earth with abundant gifts  
Gifts that flow freely from your providence

Providence that never ceases

We thank you for the bountiful harvest

These are gifts of the Land

Land that tells us we should work

Work that you do not stop yourself doing

Doing that animates our own being

We thank you for the bountiful harvest

Teach us Lord to remember your generosity

Generosity that should permeate to our neighbors

Neighbors whom loving unites us to you

You who never forsakes us

We thank you for the bountiful harvest

Our lips praise you in thanksgiving

Thanksgiving that should go on for all life

Life that shows us your presence

Presence everlasting

We thank you for the bountiful harvest

....TOBIAS Dindi



# Understanding Reflexology

**PATRICK Oyet**

From the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> of August 2013, the first year novices together with other participants from other congregations here in Arusha attended a seminar on foot reflexology at the neighboring Canossian spirituality centre. The following are a few of the things we learnt about foot reflexology.

Reflexology, in alternative medicine, a healing system in which specific points on the feet or hands, known as reflex points, are manipulated to bring about changes in other parts of the body. These reflex points are believed to correspond to every major organ, gland, and area of the body.

Reflexology was first introduced to the United States in the early 1900s as Zone Therapy. It is based on the principle of ancient Asian medicine in which a life force circulates throughout the body, connecting one part to another; when this energy is blocked, disease develops. By stimulating reflex points on the feet or hands, reflexology is thought to restore the energy flow and the body's own natural ability to heal itself.

## Colors on the reflex chart.

The colors used on the developed human organ layout chart, the reflex areas chart, and the Yin-Yang five element chart, are all clear at a glance, making it easy for everyone to understand, learn, and remember easily. All the solid and hollow organs are designated with colors based on their natural properties suggested and substantiated by the five elements theory. These new, medically sound mapping approaches are both pleasing to the eye and clear to the readers. For example, eye problems can be treated by first notifying the liver. These two organs are both represented by the same color.

## Reflex point locations

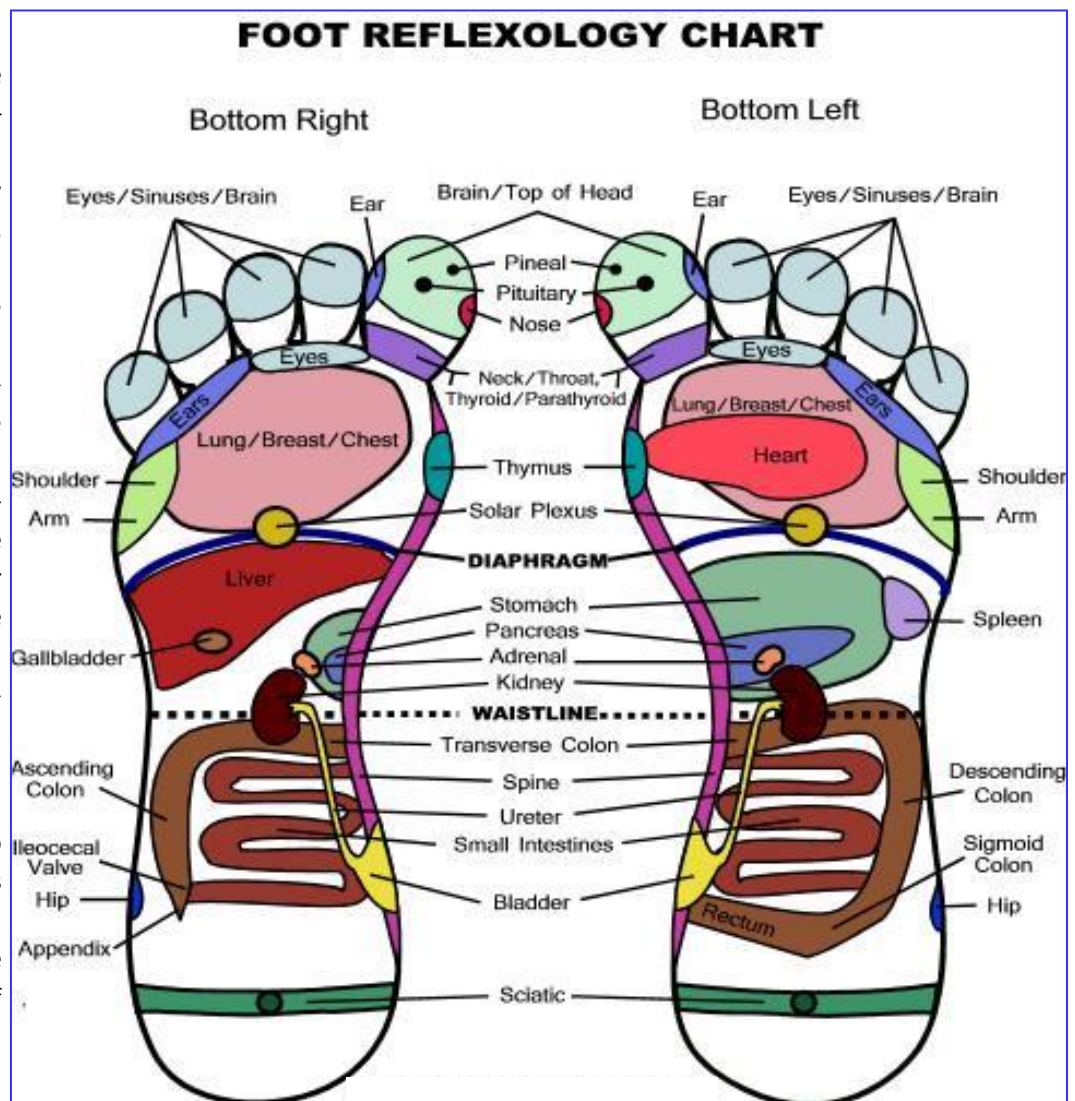
The human body is mapped on to the feet. Reflex point locations are precise as they are oriented according to the bones in the foot and anatomical positions of the vital organs in the body.

## Application sequence

It is executed in an up-and-down, inside –to–outside fashion on the foot. Omission of reflex areas is not likely. Zonal sequential reflexology is efficient, time saving and easy to do. This sequence, I believe, promotes blood circulation.

Reflexology can improve people's health, increase healing and reduce disease complications if it is given in combination with other forms of therapy like chemotherapy, psychotherapy, physiotherapy etc. In my opinion this therapy can work better in non-communicable diseases rather than communicable diseases.

I have tried this therapy clinically and I do confirm that it truly does work for stress relief, depression treatment etc.



# Making Meaning of the Mission.

**BONIFACE Mutuku**

In several occasions we have heard, read or met Jesuits in the frontiers. On the other hand, we have had our own experience. This is something I reflected on especially after considering the two months of apostolic experience I had outside the novitiate. I want to share my experience.

To begin with, pilgrimage for one's religious life specifically for a Jesuit begins in the novitiate. There are two purposes of novitiate but today I would like to talk about spiritual formation. To make it easy for me to express my idea fully I would consider three areas of reflection; that is, A.B.C. (acknowledge, believe and communion).

**Acknowledgement:** On understanding/ acknowledging that I was still a novice regardless of the place, was sufficient to keep me focused on the reason for being sent on apostolic experiment. I had to consider my primary apostolate first and this demanded all my attention. The demand for my services were greater than in the novitiate, with no one to instruct and plan activities other than myself. I also had in mind that nothing completely new was expected of me since the novitiate had equipped me well. The only difference was the time and environment for this particular apostolate.

**Believe:** Christ's teachings which are the reasons for our faith remain core to our lives. Believe hereby strictly refers to faith in the gospel promises. I believed that there was a purpose for this particular experiment ranging from physical, social to spiritual. After being prepared for about a year I knew that challenges were there in the same areas but believed that I had the courage to face and work on them for it is written, 'I can do all things through Him who strengthens me' (Ph. 4:13).

**Communion:** A group of people with the same religious beliefs or, the state of sharing or exchanging thoughts and feelings; these are definitions of communion according to Oxford Dictionary. With the companionship of my two fellow novices with whom I was sent on the mission, we had a small communion. Ours was a unique group in that, other groups were sent in twos like the disciples while we were three in the same apostolic mission. Communion is reached through prayer by spending a meditative time in the presence of God; that is, allowing God's word to impact and change our souls. Through this, one really becomes ready to be a servant of Christ's mission. It is my feeling that GC 35 (Decree 2) speaks of this in that; Jesuits know their identity by looking at Christ. This demands our total surrender to Christ hence growth in communion. Life of communion is clearly expressed and encouraged in the novitiate. To obtain perfect communion, it follows that one has to love and serve for the greater glory of God and not a matter of winning fame or reputation. Life in community *'Jesuits know their identity by looking at Christ. This demands our total surrender to Christ hence growth in communion.'* is not part of our mission but it is a mission by itself.

Someone asked me, whether through the experiments I was looking for recommendation as a requirement in the novitiate. This came to me as a surprise for I had never considered it. After digesting the matter I responded that as for the recommendation, whether a requirement or not, was not of greater importance than the task I was asked to perform. According to me, the main purpose of the experiments was for my own growth at the service of God in others.

Finally it is my feeling that it doesn't matter whether in the wilderness or in the market place as Thomas Green would say, a Jesuit is moulded for all sorts of apostolates as long as through it God will be praised.

Holy Mary,  
Mother of God  
You have given the world its true  
light,  
Jesus, your Son,- the Son of God.  
You abandoned yourself completely  
to God's call  
And thus became a wellspring  
Of the goodness which flows forth  
from him.  
Show us Jesus  
Lead us to him.  
Teach us to know and love him,  
So that we too can become  
Capable of true love  
And be fountains of living water  
In the midst of a thirsting world.

*From Deus Caritas Est,  
Encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI*

# GAME OVERTURN



Sports



## FRANCIS Kyalo

The novitiate is strictly keeping sports alive. Indoor games like table football have been having few players but two have kept the table disturbed almost every day. Unfortunately, this is one of the noisy games in the room. The dominant players are Lasway Gilbert and Shalamo Ayele. Shalamo has proved to be the all season's winner in this game so far. Not only has he shown his prowess in table football but also in other games like table tennis and pool table.

However, in other games dominance is not a vocabulary to employ. Day in day out progress and change of victory is the way of proceeding. Now, full fun is being experienced in scrabble. New words in and out of the oxford dictionary are coming up. This game has drawn many fans for not only does one enjoy the play but learn new words.

The summit of entertainment was on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013 when two of our companions, that is, Gilbert Lasway and Paul Kilonzo, disagreed on who is faster than the other on the athletics track. Since it was only theoretical conviction, the practical part had to prove the truth of the matter. At 4pm, we were in the football grounds for a hundred meters race between the two *champions*. In a few seconds the truth was bare in front of the fans. Lasway sprinted in such a way that by the time he was crossing the finishing line, his contender was only half the way. What a gap! It was thrilling anyway but we count on the importance of such a good exercise rather than the position. Congratulations companions for this daring attempt.

Basketball and volleyball are still on and all is well. However, lawn tennis seems to lack fans lately, we hope the spirit will be revived in the near future. In the meantime, this pitch is being used for volley ball. More friendly games are expected to begin soon. Our football main contesters the missionaries of Africa have finished their time in their novitiate, there are new novices there. Soon we shall meet the new friends.

For a reasonable period of time the Secundi have proved to be indomitable in many games since last year until the last episode dawned to them otherwise. On welcoming the Primi after their first probation, a football match was organized which left the Primi heads down after enduring a six goal defeat to zero. The Secundi therefore proved to be still the men standing.

However, St. Paul put it clear when he said that those who are standing should take care not to fall. Two months down the line have proved this verse true. After the Secundi returned from the Experiments, the Primi requested for a second leg in welcoming the elder brothers back home.

Everyone one seemed confident and so to predict the victor was not easy. At 4pm green and blue jerseys coloured the pitch as warm up took shape. A Jesuit in the field flavored the game and this was none other than scholastic Cyrus Mwangi, SJ who played for the Primi. Fr. Lourduraj completed the circuit by being an active spectator. As early as the 20<sup>th</sup> minute in the first half, the Primi took the lead by letting the ball tactfully pass the Secundi goal keeper. They truly manifested their skills in the game and took the highest ball possession. In the second half the ball continued to roll and dust rose high. Minutes to the final whistle were not easy to manage for the Secundi. It was now or never.

Unfortunately the game hardened and never remained never until the last whistle was blown. Tired and sweating in an indescribable manner, this 1-0 defeat was the turn of the short history of the Secundi victory. Not believing what had just happened, the Secundi were invited in the company of Serena Williams and Roger Federer in a banquet where there was no other option other than to let the bitter juices of defeat go down the throat.

Glory reclaimed however is more reassuring. A week after the return of the primi from the spiritual exercises has brought different tidings in the football pitch. The secundi are now standing at the top of the football table after beating the primi two goals to none, and two days later an even bigger gapped win in the basketball court. One thing is clear, the primi have a good team worth looking out for by the secundi, a little lax will bring news.

All in all, losers make the winners be who they are and that is why we congratulate the Primi for the good display of their talents and for the winning. Kudos companions. To conclude, in the event of game turn over, let's all remember that it is not necessary that we succeed in everything. A man can be perfect and still reap no fruit from his work. There is always another day. See you then.



Are you ready for this?



*Let us Pray for Many and Good Vocations*

Hail Mary, full of grace;  
all generations call you blessed.  
Hail Mother of God; when asked by the angel  
to bear the Son of the Most High,  
filled with faith, you responded:  
"Let it be done unto me."

Holy Mother of Jesus, at the wedding feast at Cana,  
you prompted your Son to perform his first sign.

Be with us as we discern our life's work  
and guide us in the way we are called to follow  
in the footsteps of your Son.

Holy Mother of the Savior, at the foot of the cross  
you mourned the death of your only Son.

Bless and embrace the loving parents of all priests,  
deacons, brothers and sisters.

Holy Mother of the Good Shepherd,  
turn your motherly care to this nation.

Intercede for us to the Lord of the harvest  
to send more laborers to the harvest  
in this land dedicated to your honor.

Queen of Peace, Mirror of Justice, Health of the Sick,  
inspire vocations in our time.

Let the word of your Son be made flesh anew  
in the lives of persons anxious to proclaim  
the good news of everlasting life.  
Amen.