



Habari Za Hekima

A Newsletter of Hekima University College Jesuit Community

February 2023



Cling to God

- Moïse Bahuwimbuye, SJ

As required by Canon Law, scholastics in the third year are prepared for diaconate ordination through a spiritual retreat. This year, Hekima Jesuit Community organized a triduum for the fourteen Jesuit scholastics and one member of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) who is also a classmate to the Jesuit scholastics. The triduum started in the evening of Friday, February 10, 2023, and ended at 11 am on Sunday, February 12, 2023. To allow for a prayerful ambience, the weekend of meditation and sharing was spent at the Little Sisters of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus in Karen and the Spiritual Father, Fr. Jean-Luc Enyegue, SJ, was the animator.

To help us meditate and reflect on the mission of an ordained minister, we saw a movie titled *Silence*. Directed by Martin Scorsese in 2016, *Silence* highlighted how carrying one's cross and following Jesus is not always easy. Many of us have watched this movie before but that weekend we watched it with new eyes and in a different context. We were invited to put ourselves in the scenes of the movie and ponder on what we would do in times of ambiguous choices, when even our own lives are at stake. At the end of the movie, its title became more meaningful and we went to sleep in silence, challenged by the contents of the movie. The movie helped us to better meditate on our vocations and further edified our sharing the following day.

Among other meditations, another movie was of paramount importance in our reflection on mission, community life and work, prayers and discernment. *Of Gods and Men* is a movie about life in times of crisis and terrorism. The Trappist monks of Atlas near the village of Tibhirine in Algeria presented a good point of reflection on the complexity of a religious vocation. With the movie and the word of God, we did our meditation and had a fruitful sharing.

In a nutshell, the triduum was an occasion to challenge our *status quo* views about our vocation. In fact, our prayers helped us to discover that we have to continue to cling to God because many ordeals are on our paths and we cannot overcome them unless we keep our hope in God through constant prayer and discernment about God's will in particular circumstances.



A Day Different from Others

- Guidione Frederico Macamo, SJ

It is in the tradition of Hekima Jesuit Community to have the third-year scholastics ordained to the diaconate on the Saturday preceding Ash Wednesday. This year, the tradition was maintained with 16 men ordained deacons by His Lordship George Muthaka O.F.M. Cap, the Bishop of Garissa Catholic Diocese in Kenya, on Saturday, February 18, 2023. Among these men were fourteen of our Jesuit companions, one from the Congregation of the Missionaries of Marianhill (CMM) and another one from the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI).

The life of a Jesuit is that of a man on a journey. From the Novitiate up to Theological studies, he is a man on the way. Even after his diaconate and priestly ordinations he is still a pilgrim until he goes to meet the Lord whom he has been serving. His life is not a life of achievements, but a life of service. The diaconate is an opportunity for him to exercise this ministry of service in the Society of Jesus and in the Church.

In his homily, Bishop Muthaka emphasized the aspect of service. A deacon is ordained for three kinds of service: the ministry of the word, the ministry of the altar and ministry of charity. The diaconate is not just a stage in formation but a life style. The ministry of the diaconate is a commitment for life. Once one is ordained a deacon, he remains always a deacon, even if he becomes a priest, a bishop or even a pope. He should never forget the service which he has been ordained for as a deacon.

The mission of a deacon is to serve. In order to serve in the best way, he needs to have a particular attitude of closeness. Firstly, he must be close to God in prayer. Secondly, he ought to be close to his superiors. Thirdly, he should be close to his peers and, fourthly, he has to be close to those he serves.

This ministry of service implies that the one who is ordained a deacon is chosen to serve. God calls him by name and he freely and courageously responds to this divine call. This response shows his readiness to serve and this service is supposed to be put into practice daily. This call comes in various forms: from young people who are seeking direction and guidance in life or from poor people who need someone to encourage them and journey with them. In these situations of life, a deacon is invited to be present and ready to serve the people of God.

This service is not like that of an activist or a philanthropist. It should be founded on love because it is a self-giving without counting the cost. Its inspiration lies in the spiritual life of a deacon. Therefore, personal prayer, the Eucharist and other spiritual activities need to be at the center of the deacon's life. This ministry is a gift from God.

As we congratulate and pray for our new deacons, we remind them that they are set apart but not set above the people of God, as Fr. Marcel Uwineza, SJ, the Principal of Hekima University College, often reminds his students.



A Call to Holiness

- Kanda Paul, SJ

A Shona proverb says: *kutenda kwakiti kuri mumoyo* (the gratefulness of a cat is in its heart). This can be taken to mean that gratitude is a must, even if we may not verbalise it. If a cat is capable of gratitude, how much more are the human beings. Therefore, the thanksgiving Mass was a response to the overwhelming joy brought about by the actualisation of the dreams of many years which had finally become a reality. This moved some to tears on the ordination day.

The thanksgiving Mass for the newly ordained deacons took place at Hekima Chapel on Sunday, February 19, 2023 at 9 am, the day after they had been handed the book of the Gospel, ordained to feed the people of God with God's word and charged "to believe what they read, teach what they believe and practice what they teach." Indeed, the ordination was a worthy cause for celebration.

The Provincial of Madagascar, Fr. Fulgence Ratsimbazafy, SJ presided at the Mass which was concelebrated by the Rector, Fr. Deogratias Rwezaura, SJ. They were joined by thirteen of the new deacons. The sanctuary looked fuller than ever as the new ministers of the word "cow-hornly" stood behind it. It then dawned on the rest of us that mother Church has just robbed herself of a choir as their usual places among the congregation were empty.

On behalf of the deacons, Rev. Felix Shiran Fernando, SJ was set apart to feed us with the word of God. In a substantial homily punctuated with rhetorical questions worthy of reflection, he exhorted us all to holiness. "Are you holy?" he questioned. This question was prayerfully uttered and as I pondered on the question, he made it clear that in our sharing in the likeness and image of God, we ought to be holy and good, just as God is. "We are called to be the ambassadors of love who reach the hearts of the excluded," he added.

Indeed, his exhortation to holiness was a call to discernment with and in the spirit of Jesus, asking ourselves what Jesus would do in the different circumstances we find ourselves. We were called to imitate Christ. "Let us treasure Christ-like attitudes and leave behind evil attitudes which ruin our humanness". He reiterated that as Christians, we should exude Godliness and the terrible happenings around us should not make us terrible people. "If there is a rude person among us, I do not have to be like him" and this can only happen when we are deeply rooted in God's love and spirit.

The call to holiness was married with the theme of forgiveness from the Gospel of the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time from Matthew 5:38-48. He drove the word home, noting that "the person who often annoys you may stand beside you or live in the same community or family with you". We have had encounters which can make us say: "I can forgive everyone in this world except this person." Yet, God is calling us to be non-exclusive in our forgiveness. As difficult as it is, "Jesus made it possible through his death". Some people we know have done it, like Pope John Paul II who forgave a man who attempted to assassinate him. Therefore, we too can do it.

We were fed and satisfied by the word. A number of us left the celebration ready to walk towards holiness and ready to forgive those who had trespassed against us. We prayed for God's grace and guidance "to transform this broken world by becoming holy ambassadors of Christ" and to enkindle others with the fire of holiness.

Hekima University College (HUC)

Joseph Kangethe Road,
Postal Address: 21215

Postal Code: 00505

Plot No: 209/10170

Nairobi, Kenya.

Kindly stay in touch

Instagram: @Hekimahuc

YouTube: @Hekima University College

Twitter: @HUChekima

Website: www.hekima.ac.ke

Email: habari@hekima.ac.ke